MEDIA RELEASE

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ABORIGINAL LAND RIGHTS ACT AMENDMENTS

Proposed administrative amendments to the 30-year-old Aboriginal Land Rights Act will assist Local Aboriginal Land Councils become more efficient, Minister for Aboriginal Affairs Victor Dominello said today.

The News South Wales Aboriginal Land Council (NSWALC) had been advocating for changes to the legislation for some time to allow the 120 local land councils to reach their full economic potential.

“The NSW Government has responded by committing to amend the legislation early next year,” Mr Dominello said.

“These proposed amendments will simplify the legislation resulting in improved day-to-day functioning of Aboriginal land councils.

“They will address administrative inefficiencies that will, for example, help simplify the land claims system, leading to greater economic outcomes for Aboriginal people across NSW.

“The amendments also help to clarify some existing provisions of the Act where the terminology has changed over recent years and address minor inconsistencies that exist in the Act.

“The amendments are seen by both government and the Land Council network as evidence of the NSW Government’s commitment to increasing the capability, productivity and sustainability of Land Councils,” Mr Dominello said.

NSWALC CEO Geoff Scott said: “These are the first tranche of amendments to fix many errors and oversights in the ALRA which have been with us for many years.

“They will assist and facilitate the proper functioning of the Land Council System,” Mr Scott said.

“The next round of amendments, which will be subject to a series of consultations, will address the balance of governance, decision making and facilitation powers to clarify and enable the land rights network to begin to realise its potential.”

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