



MEDIA RELEASE

Hon. John Hatzistergos MLC
Attorney General
Minister for Citizenship
Minister for Regulatory Reform

\$2.85 million renovation of Sutherland Court as part of 2010-11 NSW budget

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The Keneally Government is delivering key frontline justice services to the Sutherland Shire with Attorney General John Hatzistergos today announcing that Sutherland Courthouse will undergo a \$2.85 million upgrade as part of the 2010-11 NSW Budget – the largest renovation of Sutherland Courthouse since it was opened in 1988.

Mr Hatzistergos said the renovation would deliver better facilities to victims of crime.

“Attending court can be daunting for victims of crime and it is important that those who are brave enough to testify have access to facilities that will make them feel more comfortable,” he said.

Member for Miranda Barry Collier said one of the features of the renovation will be a new domestic violence support area giving victims access to a secure room during a trial. The area will also include a baby change station and private amenities.

“The domestic violence support area will have direct access to a courtroom, which will reduce the risk of a victim coming into contact with their alleged attacker as they wait for their matter to be heard,” Mr Collier said.

The courthouse’s Remote Witness room will also be upgraded.

“Remote Witness facilities enable vulnerable people, such as sexual assault victims and children, to give evidence via Closed Circuit Television (CCTV) cameras from a private room,” Mr Collier said.

“The testimony of sexual assault victims is recorded and can be used again in future court proceedings, sparing the victim the ordeal of having to give evidence a second time.”

The court’s registry will be redesigned to make services faster and easier to access, with new features to include:

- A computer terminal, where people will be able to browse legal information on the Internet;
- A split level counter, with the lower level to accommodate people using wheelchairs; and
- More comfortable seating.

The renovations, to start in October, will also include an air conditioning upgrade, recarpeting, painting and some structural repairs. The project is due for completion by early 2011.

The Forum Sentencing program, which gives victims a say in the sentencing of offenders, will be rolled out at an additional 25 locations, including Sutherland Courthouse, over the next 12 months.

The NSW Budget also includes \$1 million in funding for a Graffiti hotspot program that will focus on 10 locations in NSW, including Sutherland.