



MEDIA RELEASE

Hon. John Hatzistergos MLC
Attorney General
Minister for Industrial Relations

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COUNCIL AWARDED \$50,000 CRIME PREVENTION GRANT

NSW Attorney General John Hatzistergos today presented a \$50,000 crime prevention grant from the Rees Government to Tamworth Regional Council to kick-start its innovative *Coledale Cares* project.

Mr Hatzistergos said the project, developed in consultation with the police and local community, aims to achieve a five per cent reduction in malicious damage and assault over the next 12 months.

“Opportunistic crime is often committed in poorly lit areas where offenders feel they are less likely to be seen,” Mr Hatzistergos said.

“With this grant, Council will conduct a lighting audit of streets, parks and other public spaces in Coledale. Council will also install additional lights and will increase the wattage of some existing lights.”

Mr Hatzistergos said the *Coledale Cares* program would also focus on improving landscaping in public areas to ensure vegetation does not obscure sight lines or provide offenders with a place to hide.

“The program’s strategies are based on tried-and-tested *Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design* principles that are widely used in the United States, the United Kingdom and Australia,” he said.

The Member for Tamworth, Peter Draper, said a survey of the Tamworth community identified assault as the ‘most important’ crime affecting the city and cited inadequate lighting as a contributor to the problem.

“This project shows that Council is listening to the community and is taking important steps to address their concerns.” Mr Draper said.

Mr Hatzistergos said the program would also help to reduce fear of crime in the community.

“Crime levels in Tamworth have remained stable in virtually all categories over the past two years, yet some residents may still avoid certain public areas because they feel unsafe,” Mr Hatzistergos said.

“Council’s program aims to discourage criminal activity in Coledale and make its public areas more vibrant and appealing to the community.”

“The NSW Government encourages local councils to develop grass roots solutions to emerging crime issues and has set aside \$1.61 million for crime prevention grants in 2008-09,” Mr Hatzistergos said.