

MEDIA RELEASE



Hon. John Hatzistergos MLC
Attorney General
Minister for Citizenship
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Councils awarded \$150,000 to tackle crime in the Inner West

The NSW Government has awarded grants totalling almost \$150,000 to Strathfield, Burwood and Canterbury councils for crime prevention strategies that will tackle crime in the inner west such as home burglaries, street robberies and stealing from motor vehicles.

NSW Attorney General John Hatzistergos, Member for Strathfield Virginia Judge, Member for Canterbury Linda Burney, and Member for Lakemba, Robert Furolo today congratulated mayors and representatives from Strathfield, Burwood and Canterbury councils for developing initiatives that will reduce theft in their respective local areas.

"The NSW Government, through its \$1.61 million *Crime Prevention Program*, enables councils throughout the state to develop and implement initiatives aimed at tackling crime specific to their communities," Mr Hatzistergos said.

"The most recent figures from the NSW Bureau of Crime Statistics and Research show that crime rates for 16 out of 17 major crime categories were falling or stable over the 24 months to March 2010.

"In fact eight crime categories across the state showed significant falls with break and enter dwelling down 7.1%, break and enter non-dwelling down 14.9%, steal from motor vehicle down 12.8% and robbery without a weapon down 7.2%."

"The initiatives put forward by each of the councils today are aimed at achieving further reductions in crime and demonstrates their commitment to keeping their communities safe.

The grants awarded to council are for crime prevention plans that include:

- **\$50,000 to Strathfield Council for a program that aims to protect vulnerable home owners, particularly the elderly, from burglary.** As part of the plan pensioners, victims of break and enters and people living in hotspot areas will be able to apply for free or subsidised security upgrades of their homes. The upgrades will include the installation of door and window locks, while more than 600 ultraviolet security markers will be distributed to the community to allow homeowners to invisibly label valuables. Council will also be promoting the use of a Self Auditing and Home Security Kit developed by the Department of Justice and Attorney General enabling home owners assess the level of risk to their properties and make them more resistant to break and enters. The Kit will be available in English, Korean and Mandarin and can be accessed at www.crimeprevention.nsw.gov.au
- **\$50,000 to Canterbury City Council for a program to reduce motor vehicle theft primarily aimed at owners of older vehicles which are more likely to be targeted by thieves.** Council will offer immobiliser vouchers to local residents whose vehicles were manufactured before 1988 and are deemed to be at high risk of theft. As part of the plan, information packs on vehicle security will also be distributed at commuter car parks, major shopping complexes and at Lakemba, Campsie, Belmore, Punchbowl and Wiley Park train stations. Translated brochures will also be provided to a number of ethnic organisations.
- **\$44,000 to Burwood Council for a project to reduce street robberies.** The project will improve lighting along walkways between Burwood Park and Strathfield train station. The Council will also consult with local businesses on how to protect them against retail crime and warn the public with a *Watch Out* publicity campaign which offers safety tips on how to reduce the risk of being a victim of theft.

Another major component of the council's strategy will involve assessing future development applications with a view to redesigning the urban environment to reduce the opportunities for crime.

Member for Strathfield, Virginia Judge congratulated the councils for the work done in developing their crime prevention plans.

"Street theft and robbery can cause residents and businesses significant financial loss and psychological suffering, and I commend each of the councils for their commitment in reducing crime in the area," Ms Virginia Judge said.

Minister Burney and Mr Furolo also echoed these sentiments.

"In developing these plans, councils work with the community, the police and local businesses.

They seek not only to deter crime, but empower residents to be more vigilant about crime," Ms Burney said.

"I commend all those involved in these crime prevention initiatives for their dedication in keeping their local community feel safe and protected," Mr Furolo said.

Mr Hatzistergos said that in addition to the grants awarded today, each council is eligible to continue to apply for funding for its crime prevention plan as part of the NSW Government's \$1.61 million commitment to crime prevention programs across NSW.