



THE COUNTRY MAYORS ASSOCIATION OF NSW INC

"What we want is nothing more than equity"

MEDIA RELEASE

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NSW Country Mayors and Police connect

The Country Mayors Association of NSW (CMA) hosted a special meeting with the NSW Minister for Police & Counter Terrorism, the Hon. Yasmine Catley MP recently, with some 40 members participating.

Minister Catley was joined by NSW Police Force Deputy Commissioner Paul Pisanos. Held via Zoom, Minister Catley and Deputy Commissioner Pisanos accepted the invitation to address CMA Members about various concerns. CMA Chairman, Mayor Rick Firman OAM said the meeting was "most worthwhile".

"The Board and Members of CMA who were in attendance appreciated the frankness of both the Minister and Deputy Commissioner. We appreciate the initiative of Operation Soteria, launched late last month to address an escalation of violence in offenders aged 11 to 16 years of age, across Western and Northern parts of the State.

The new Operation Soteria unit of up to 60 dedicated police will target regional hotspots including Moree, Tamworth, Dubbo, Orange, Tweed Heads, Coffs Harbour, Kempsey, Taree, and Newcastle over the next three months," Mayor Firman said.

"The CMA Board believes that this is a positive step forward for our member communities who have been experiencing very concerning crime behaviour. The Board is aware these problems are not consistent right cross our 89 Member Council footprint in NSW, so the decisive, targeted action by our Police Force seems practical. For some rural and regional Local Government areas, crime is not the concern that it is in others. However, we need to continue standing up those who are going through a tough time, which is completely unacceptable," Mayor Firman said. "Country Mayors should not see crime rate increases far higher than their Sydney counterparts and that has been the case in some areas. We are heartened that the Police Minister and Deputy Commissioner are connecting directly with country Mayors."

"Through communication and collaboration, NSW Police and country Mayors will make our communities safer. There is no single solution but many, and we want to be a part of those solutions, where appropriate," he said

"Our CMA Members are looking forward to again hosting Minister Catley and Deputy Commissioner Pisanos at our Crime, Law & Order themed meeting on 8th August, at NSW Parliament House. While country Mayors severely impacted by youth crime will be monitoring Operation Soteria, our August meeting will be well timed to reflect on the operation, its' taskforce's actions and outcomes," Mayor Firman concluded.

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