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MEDIA RELEASE

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NEW REGIONAL ILLEGAL DUMPING SQUAD AND NEW REPORTING ONLINE

Environment Minister Mark Speakman has announced two new measures to help reduce illegal dumping.

The first is the expansion of the 6-council Inner West Regional Illegal Dumping (RID) squad to southern and eastern Sydney to become a new 14-council Sydney RID squad, now in operation thanks to an additional \$1.7 million in funding. .

“The new super squad will combine the resources of the councils to target illegal dumpers across approximately 670km² of Sydney through dedicated patrols, investigations and cleanups,” Mr Speakman said.

The squad will make it more difficult for illegal dumpers to operate, targeting industrial, residential and demolition waste.

“The new squad is funded with \$1.7 million from the *Waste Less, Recycle More* initiative managed by the EPA with funds matched by participating councils,” he said.

“The RID Squads are one of our most powerful tools in the fight against illegal dumping which continues to be a major problem for local councils and costs taxpayers millions of dollars each year.”

The participating councils are Bankstown, Ashfield, Auburn, Botany Bay, Canada Bay, Canterbury, Hurstville, Kogarah, Marrickville, Randwick, Rockdale, Strathfield, Sutherland and Waverley Councils.

Mr Speakman said reducing illegal dumping was a key priority of the government. \$58 million is being allocated from *Waste Less, Recycle More* over 5 years to tackle illegal dumping.

The government also has a target of reducing the volume of litter by 40 per cent by 2020.

EPA Waste and Resource Recovery Branch Director Steve Beaman said illegal dumpers could face heavy fines while repeat offenders could face prison time.

NSW has the toughest penalties in the nation for illegal dumping offences, with fines of up to a million dollars for individuals and \$5 million for corporations.

The full strategy is available on the EPA website.

<http://www.epa.nsw.gov.au/illegaldumping/NSW-strategy.htm>

Meanwhile, the second measure announced is the streamlining of the reporting and management of illegal dumping incidents across NSW with the launch of a new online reporting portal, RIDonline.

“RIDonline not only will facilitate the clean-up and investigation of illegal dumps, but will also enable centralised data collection on illegal dumping sites and trends.

By capturing centralised data the EPA will be able to build a complete picture of illegal dumping in NSW to gain a better understanding of the behaviour of dumpers and the locations they prefer,” Mr Speakman said.

Initially open only to registered land managers and agencies, the portal will be open to the public from early next year to enable reports of illegal dumps to be logged by anybody from anywhere with details including waste type, GPS location mapping and photos.

This will allow members of the public to report illegal dumping, in the same way they can report littering via the EPA’s Hey Tosser campaign.

Reports will be followed-up by the appropriate agency or RID Squad.