



# **Robyn Parker MP**

## **Minister for the Environment**

## **Minister for Heritage**

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### **MEDIA RELEASE**

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Wednesday, 5 June 2013

#### **ILLEGAL DUMPING SQUAD FOR THE ILLAWARRA AND SOUTHERN NSW**

Environment Minister Robyn Parker today announced the establishment of a new Regional Illegal Dumping (RID) squad for the Illawarra and Southern NSW region, saying illegal dumpers in the area were officially on notice.

Ms Parker said that the RID squad was a partnership between the Environment Protection Authority and Wollongong, Wingecarribee, Shellharbour, Kiama, Shoalhaven, Eurobodalla and Bega councils, and was only the second now operating in NSW.

Ms Parker was joined at Bulli Tops by Heathcote MP Lee Evans, a week after announcing new legislation in NSW parliament that introduced jail sentences for repeat offenders.

“Combating illegal dumping is a priority for the NSW Government and the Regional Illegal Dumping squad are an important part of the solution,” Ms Parker said.

“The establishment of the southern RID program will help us detect, identify and penalise illegal dumpers from Wingecarribee and Wollongong down to the Bega Valley.

“The NSW Government is co-funding the new RID program, with an investment of \$900,000 over the next three years, managed from Kiama.”

Kiama MP Gareth Ward said the program will operate across council boundaries identifying illegal dumping incidents through a variety of means, including helicopter flyovers of rural areas and will work closely with officers from the EPA.

“Illegal dumping is an environmental crime that has the potential to harm human health and the environment,” Mr Ward said.

“It also imposes unnecessary costs on land owners and councils, with clean-up costs estimated at more than \$10 million dollars a year.”

Mr Evans said in areas like Heathcote and the Illawarra, where the urban fringe backs onto bush, illegal dumping can be a real challenge for local councils.

“The RID squad will play an important role in our community and combating illegal dumping is a key priority for the NSW Government with \$58 million being announced earlier in the year as part of our Illegal Dumping Strategy.

To report illegal dumping call the EPA’s Environment Line on 131 555.

**Media: John McCormack 0467 731 806**