

## Media Release

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### The beginning of a new era for local government in the Hunter

#### **For immediate release**

At 2 pm on Thursday 28 June 2018 the Hunter Joint Organisation will meet for the first time.

Joint Organisations are statutory organisations within the NSW Local Government Act whose job is regional strategic planning and priority setting, intergovernmental collaboration and shared leadership and advocacy. They replace more informal structures such as regional organisations of councils and will take local government cooperation to a new level through close links with State Agencies, a high degree of transparency of operation and mandated requirements in regard to consultation with member councils and the community.

According to the NSW State Government, Joint Organisations will “transform the way the way the NSW Government and local councils collaborate, plan, set priorities and deliver important projects on a regional scale.”

In the Hunter we are familiar with what can be achieved by councils working together and the Joint Organisation model is essentially based on the past achievements of the Hunter’s councils as they have worked together on common goals and services.

Nevertheless the first meeting of the Hunter Joint Organisation is a very significant step for our region and brings with it enormous opportunities.

In discussing the first meeting of the Hunter Joint Organisation its Acting Chairperson, Cessnock Mayor Cr Bob Pynsent, said, “In the Hunter we have a long record of councils working together on strategies and projects and we are proud of the fact that the State Government has chosen to apply our approach to the rest of the State.

Our 28 June Meeting will, however, be the start of a new era of regional cooperation where our councils have a seat at the table of regional and state planning and resource allocation. With a representative of the Department of Premier and Cabinet a permanent member of our Joint Organisation Board and the Joint Organisation having a permanent seat on the State Agencies Regional Leadership Executive we have direct communication channels with the State Government and a legislated role in ensuring that the aspirations of our regional communities are addressed.”

He added, “An important first step will be the adoption of a strategic plan to guide the work of the Joint Organisation and the initiation of a series of consultation processes with our member councils. This is an exciting moment for the Hunter and we are looking forward to reaching new levels of achievement.”

# Hunter Joint Organisation

Members of the public are welcome to attend the meeting with copies of the meeting business paper available on the very comprehensive Joint Organisation website (temporarily to be found at [www.ssalimited.com.au](http://www.ssalimited.com.au)). A wealth of other information is also available on the site.

Meeting details are as follows:

2 pm – 4 pm  
Thursday 28 June 2018  
The Heritage Room, Maitland Town Hall  
285 High Street, Maitland

The agenda can be accessed directly on <http://strategicservicesaustralia.com.au/meeting-agendas-business-papers/>.

The meeting will follow a Regional Summit hosted by our industry body, Local Government NSW (LGNSW). That Summit will begin at 10 am also at the Maitland Town Hall.

Cr Linda Scott, President of LGNSW will be attending our first Joint Organisation Meeting as will representatives of the Office of Local Government.

Ends.

***For further information please contact:***

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