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TASKFORCE ESTABLISHED TO LEAD NEXT STAGE OF HAWKESBURY-NEPEAN FLOOD MANAGEMENT REVIEW

The NSW Government has established a taskforce to coordinate and oversee the next stage of the review into flood management Hawkesbury-Nepean Valley, Minister for Primary Industries Katrina Hodgkinson announced today.

Ms Hodgkinson said the taskforce has been established in response to Stage One of the Hawkesbury-Nepean Valley Flood Management Review, which is now complete.

“The immediate priority of the taskforce, which will work in partnership with Infrastructure NSW under the direction of an Independent Chair, is to support communities and businesses of the Hawkesbury-Nepean valley to better prepare for and respond to future flood events,” Ms Hodgkinson said.

“The taskforce will look for input from key stakeholders, including local councils, the insurance industry, flood and water management and other NSW Government agencies, as it undertakes its priority tasks.

“The aim of Stage One of the review was to identify opportunities to improve the ways in which future floods in the Hawkesbury-Nepean Valley are managed.

“This overdue and vital review followed work completed by Infrastructure NSW in 2012.”

Several priority areas for action were identified in Stage One of the review, including:

- increasing flood awareness and preparedness in the community;
- the enhancement of emergency planning, response and recovery;
- better consideration of flood risk in land use planning;
- detailed cost-benefit assessment of potential infrastructure options; and
- reviewing effective flood management arrangements.

“There is no single option that can address all of the flood risk in the Hawkesbury-Nepean Valley,” Ms Hodgkinson said.

“The review commenced in early 2013 and found that existing flood management in the Hawkesbury-Nepean Valley can be improved through implementing an integrated and well-coordinated approach.

“The taskforce will now undertake a detailed cost-benefit assessment of the most practical and cost effective flood mitigation options for the NSW Government to consider.
“The NSW Government has added to the extensive arrangements already in place for flood warnings; management and evacuation procedures to ensure community safety.”

The taskforce is due to report back to the NSW Government in mid-2015. For more information about the review, visit www.water.nsw.gov.au.