



Bronnie Taylor
Minister for Mental Health, Regional Youth and Women

MEDIA RELEASE

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Photos attached

ACHIEVEMENT UNLOCKED - REGIONAL YOUTH TASKFORCE DELIVERING RESULTS FOR YOUNG PEOPLE

Young people living in regional and rural areas can now finalise their P-plate licence applications online without needing to travel considerable distances to Service NSW offices, thanks to the advocacy of the state's inaugural Regional Youth Taskforce.

Minister for Regional Youth Bronnie Taylor said the 18-member Taskforce has made real progress on addressing the everyday issues facing young people throughout regional NSW.

Mrs Taylor said the Taskforce has raised issues and put suggestions directly to NSW Government Ministers, resulting in immediate action to improve education, digital connectivity and public transport.

"The Taskforce first met nine months ago and soon after their ideas were helping shape the Drought Break program that gave hundreds of young people in the hardest hit drought areas the chance to attend recreation camps and sporting clinics for free," Mrs Taylor said.

"A meeting with Minister for Customer Service Victor Dominello resulted in a policy change that allows P1 licence holders to progress to a P2 licence via an online process, instead of having to potentially travel hundreds of kilometres to a Service NSW centre.

"More recently the Taskforce gave feedback to Minister for Education Sarah Mitchell on the NSW curriculum review, also outlining the unique online learning challenges regional students face during COVID-19, which the Department of Education is now considering and acting upon."

Mrs Taylor said the Taskforce members have learned about how Government works and understand how consultation with Ministers can drive real outcomes and results.

"I am so proud of everything this Taskforce has achieved in such a short space of time and the commitment of members to improving life in the regions for their peers," Mrs Taylor said.

The taskforce meeting today coincides with the release of the Regional Youth Framework and an Action Plan, which outline the NSW Government's strategic priorities for young people for the next five years.

"The Regional Youth Framework was created in consultation with young people right across regional NSW and provides the blueprint NSW Government departments need to deliver initiatives and programs that benefit young people living in our regions, with a priority on

connectivity, wellbeing, work readiness and community,” Mrs Taylor said.

“The Office for Regional Youth will collaborate with other government departments on the Regional Youth Framework priority areas and to progress actions and solutions that the Taskforce presents, ensuring the voices of regional young people lead to real changes.”

The Office for Regional Youth’s mission is to ensure regional NSW has a strong future and remains a place young people can live, learn, work and thrive.

To view the NSW Government’s Regional Youth Framework and the Action Plan, go to: <http://www.regional.nsw.gov.au/office-for-regional-youth>

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Regional Youth Taskforce achievements

- The Regional Youth Taskforce was established as the voice of regional youth that helps inform Minister for Regional Youth Bronnie Taylor on issues that affect young people in our regions
- The Regional Youth Taskforce has 18 members representing the nine NSW regions and the diversity of the community
- **Regional Summer School Holiday Program (2019)** – the Taskforce shaped the summer holiday initiatives (Drought Break) that gave young people impacted by drought and bushfires the opportunity to attend free camps and sporting clinics, training and skills hubs and community and family fun days. The program was fully subsidised by the NSW Government.
- **COVID-19** – The Regional Youth Taskforce provided invaluable feedback about the unique experiences of regional students engaged with online learning as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic. This was provided to the Minister for Education and the Department of Education for consideration and action.
- **Education Reform** – The Taskforce provided Minister Taylor with ideas about how education can be tailored to meet the needs and expectations of regional young people. These have been discussed with the Minister for Education
- **Digital connectivity** – The Taskforce met with the Minister for Customer Service to advocate for the creation of a Youth Services hub on the Service NSW website. The Minister agreed to the proposal and the hub is currently being developed. The Taskforce also provided suggestions about how the Service NSW app can better service young people in the regions.
- **Physical connectivity** – The Taskforce identified the barriers standing between young people and public transport, such as cost and timetabling. Regional Transport and Roads (Transport for NSW) have committed to continue consultative engagement with the Taskforce on regional programs, trials and fee review.
- **Drivers licence** – In April the Taskforce met with Minister for Customer Service Victor Dominello and conveyed to him the difficulties regional young people face when applying for a driver's licence, such as the tyranny of distance. Both Minister Dominello and Minister Taylor are advocating these issues on behalf of regional youth. The NSW Government recently announced an online process that will provide learner drivers with a simpler, faster way of progressing from the P1 to P2 licence and then a full unrestricted licence. These changes mean young people do not need to travel to Service NSW, but can finalise their licence application online, saving young people living in remote areas large amounts of time.