



**BOURKE  
SHIRE  
COUNCIL**

“From the  
General Manager’s Desk –  
25 July 2024”

### **Public Safety Network**

The NSW Public Safety Network (PSN) is a radio network used by frontline emergency services, government agencies and essential services to communicate via radio handsets and other devices during emergencies. The purpose of the PSN is to help save lives. It provides critical, secure and reliable radio communications to frontline responders. For instance, PSN sites were pivotal in providing radio support in protecting communities and supporting the emergency response to the 2019/2020 Black Summer bushfires and the widespread floods of 2021 and 2022 across NSW. Next to Australia’s triple zero (000) emergency hotline, the PSN is the most important critical communications network in NSW and one of the largest of its type in the world.

The PSN has been developed for Emergency Services Organisations, essential services, government agencies and local councils with the network currently covering 52% of the 801,000km<sup>2</sup> area of NSW. Under the NSW Governments Critical Communications Enhancement Program (CCEP), the footprint of the PSN is being expanded to reach 85% of the States land coverage and 99.7% of the state’s population. Prior to the Enhancement Program commencing, there were 150 PSN sites in NSW. With the \$1.4 billion program, the number of sites will increase to 669 across the state.

Activities to expand and enhance the Network are underway in the Bourke Shire Local Government Area. New radio communications sites located adjacent to existing communications infrastructure are planned at Mt Deerina at Louth, North Bourke and at Mascot Road at Yantabulla; upgraded equipment is planned for existing communications infrastructure at Dungarvan Road Wanaaring, Burrawantie Rd Enngonia, the Enngonia Police Station, Tara Rd at Louth, Vicary St in Wanaaring, Oxley St in Bourke and understandably, at infrastructure on Mt Oxley. New greenfield radio communications infrastructure is also planned to be installed at Fords Bridge and on the Bourke-Wilcannia Road at Gundabooka.

### **Get Ready NSW**

With the NSW Government doing its bit for emergency first responders with the upgrades to the Public Safety Network, they are also promoting the importance for the community to be prepared for extreme weather and have a plan in the case of an emergency. To this end, the Government is promoting four (4) mobile phone applications (apps) that can help the community prepare for a natural disaster. The apps are Hazards Near Me; Emergency Plus; Live Traffic NSW and the BOM Weather (Bureau of Meteorology). I would imagine that people might be familiar with the traffic and weather apps, but not particularly so with the hazards and emergency apps. The Hazards Near Me app shows current information about local emergencies, including flood and bushfire and provides advice on what to do to stay safe. The app can send you push notifications when there are new incidents or when information changes. The Emergency Plus app allows you to accurately communicate your precise location to emergency services. It offers nationwide coverage and includes additional support numbers for services like the State Emergency Service and police. It pays to be prepared, so I would encourage people to

download the apps and check out their various features. Be prepared for natural disasters. Visit [nsw.gov.au/GetReadyNSW](https://nsw.gov.au/GetReadyNSW)

## **Bourke Medical Services**

I was happy to read a Media Release earlier this month from Federal Senator, the Hon Malarndirri McCarthy, Assistant Minister for Indigenous Health, announcing a funding investment of \$100 million for 33 Indigenous health infrastructure projects across the country. The funds are being directed towards constructing new clinics, renovating existing clinics, and building staff housing for workers.

For the Bourke Aboriginal Corporation Health Service, funding of \$5.34m was announced as part of the construction of a new Primary Health Care facility. This new funding for the Bourke project is in addition to the \$8.06m in funding previously announced in December 2022. Council has previously resolved to sell the Service various parcels of land in Mitchell St, Bourke upon which to build the new facility, been working with the Service's planning consultants in respect of the requirements for development approval and resolved to construct a sealed laneway at the rear of the proposed development. The new facility is certainly an exciting proposal for Bourke and the eventual completion of its construction will be a most important day for Bourke.

## **Wire Rope**

I recently drove to Sydney and was interested to see the ongoing installation of new wire rope barriers on the road between Bathurst and Orange which are understood to have prevented dozens of potential crashes. The installation of flexible wire rope, when placed along the centreline of the road, provides a physical barrier between oncoming traffic travelling at up to 100 km/h in each direction. Along with flexible wire barriers — which can also be placed on the edges of the road — the upgrades on the Highway also feature a range of safety measures including the installation of audio tactile line marking (rumble strips) to alert drivers when they have crossed the centre line or run off the road.

In addition, the road has been widened in numerous places, there are new and upgraded turning lanes, improved drainage and removal of some roadside vegetation to decrease the risk of black ice during the winter months. I don't drive to Sydney all that often these days, but I certainly remember when I regularly travelled the path from Bourke to Sydney of some interesting trips during winter when ice and snow were aplenty on the Bathurst – Orange section of the Highway.

## **Paris Olympic Games**

With the Paris Olympic Games commencing tomorrow, it was considered appropriate to reflect on the history of the Olympics. The first written evidence of the Olympics dates to when they took place in 776BC. They began as part of an Ancient Greek festival, which celebrated Zeus, the Greek god of sky and weather. The whole competition lasted for up to six months, and included games like wrestling, boxing, long jump, javelin, discus and chariot racing. In 393AD, the games were cancelled due to the Roman Ruler of the time, Theodosius, being of the view that the Olympics were a pagan festival, which had no place in his Christian country. The Games didn't recommence again for over 1500 years, until 1896 when the modern Olympics were instigated. As a reminder of the Greek origins of the Games, the Olympic torch was created and then burned throughout the Games, as it did in Greece as a tribute to the goddess Hestia. Since 1928, this tradition has continued in the modern Games with the flame burning in a special torch. The torch flame for each Olympics is always initially lit by the sun in Olympia, Greece, as this is where the first Greek games was held. It is then passed from torch to torch by way of a relay that ends in the host city of the Games.

I am sure that long term Bourke residents will recall, as part of the lead up to the 2000 Olympic Games in Sydney, the day when the Olympic Torch Relay, that travelled from Greece and across Australia, came to Bourke. The date was Sunday 20 August 2000, day 74 of the relay. The Olympic Torch came from Broken Hill to Bourke on board a Royal Flying Doctor Service aircraft. I found a report from SOCOG that "Lunchtime celebrations in Bourke included an aboriginal dance group and the combined schools choir, who performed an original piece composed to fanfare the torch into town. After lunch, the torch was carried to the Fred Hollows commemorative wall, before continuing its journey — travelling on to Lightning Ridge and then Moree for evening celebrations."

With Bourke being 8 hours ahead of Paris, time wise, I think it's a case of either very late nights/mornings, watching the events live, or early starts watching the replays the next morning before heading off to work. Regardless, good luck to all our athletes over the next 7 weeks and it is hoped that a level playing field exists amongst the athletes and doping runs a very long last at the various events.

### **Sombre Thought**

Did you know that more people die in July than in any other month. I was at the recent Murray Darling Association Conference where the Public Safety Training and Response Group presented their online CPR 101 Course to prepare people who may need to perform CPR on someone suffering a cardiac arrest. A link to their website follows: <https://dontdiejuly.com/> Check it out. If it saves one life it is worth it.

**Quote: "The punters know that the horse named Morality rarely gets past the post, whereas the nag named Self-interest always runs a good race." – Former Prime Minister, Gough Whitlam**