



**Minister Steve Whan**

Minister for Primary Industries  
Minister for Emergency Services  
Minister for Rural Affairs

# MEDIA RELEASE

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## Locust campaign on track across NSW

Monday, 2<sup>nd</sup> August, 2010

The NSW Government said the NSW Plague Locust Emergency Preparedness Response Plan is in full swing across NSW, which involves using insecticide, surveillance, planning, communications and logistics operations to fight locusts.

Minister for Primary Industries Steve Whan today said the campaign is a team effort, which involves the NSW Government, Industry & Investment NSW, Livestock Health and Pest Authorities, farmers and land managers.

“We have our workforce on standby, we will be coordinating aircraft activities as needed, and our Plague Locust State Control Headquarters is being set-up this week at Industry & Investment NSW Headquarters on Orange.

“Control operations centres are being established in other regional areas, including Dubbo and Wagga.

“Today the NSW Plague Locust Commissioner and expert staff from Industry & Investment NSW and LHPAs are attending a meeting of farmers and landholders in Trangie to coordinate the attack on locusts.”

Minister Whan also accused the Nationals’ of scaremongering about the Government’s \$18.5 million funding package.

“The Labor Government has a proud record of managing locusts, for example in the 2004/2005 campaign more than \$1 billion worth of crops and pastures was saved as a result of a partnership between farmers and the NSW Government.

“I am pleased to say the \$18.5 million package announced by the Premier last month is from consolidated revenue.

“This significant package has been applauded by the NSW Farmers’ Association who welcomed the extra resources and the response plan.

“The Nationals criticism is doing absolutely nothing to help the situation our farmers are facing, and only remind farmers that they got nothing from Coalition Governments during previous locust plagues. This is the first time a NSW Government has stepped in with extra money, and we’ve committed to helping farmers with more than the empty rhetoric shown on the Coalition’s record.”

Mr Whan said the \$18.5 million has been allocated across a range of areas including:

- Purchasing extra insecticide
- Staff
- Equipment
- Training
- Aerial and ground contractors
- The Australian Plague Locust Commission
- Setting up of the Coordination Centres.

Mr Whan also said the Livestock Health and Pest Authorities are on track and delivering improved services for producers.



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“Reforms in January 2009 resulted in 47 Rural Lands Protection Boards becoming 14 Livestock Health and Pest Authorities,” he said.

“This resulted in a more efficient, effective and modern world-class service that better addressed the changing needs of our farming community and rural landholders, especially in the area of livestock health management and biosecurity.

“The restructure has created efficiencies across the State, and enhanced frontline services such as rangers and vets.

“Across the State, the LHPAs now employ less people than the former RLPBS.

“However because they are now larger entities and employ more people than the 47 former small boards, their payroll tax has increased.

“I understand this matter has been raised with Treasury.

“It is very easy to attack from the sidelines, but once again the Nationals have shown they have no plans to help our rural communities and they should look at developing some real policies.”

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