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IN THIS ISSUE READ ABOUT:

1. State Election Result
2. Week in Review
3. Parliamentary Highlights
4. Questions Without Notice

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2007 State Election Result

Election 2007 returns ALP Government

The excitement of the State election on Saturday 24 March has now settled down. The NSW ALP Government was returned to office for a fourth term with a reduced majority of 52 seats. The ALP experienced a minor swing against them of just -3.7 percent.

The Liberal Party had a positive swing in their favour of +2.2 percent. They picked up the new seat of Goulburn (formerly Southern Highlands and part of Lachlan) which was strongly contested by a local independent candidate. They also won the Labor held seat of Port Stephens. Additionally, the Liberals regained the independent seats of Pittwater and Manly. The National Party won the ALP held seats of Murray-Darling and Tweed on a swing of +.42 percent. Rural independents retained their seats of Dubbo, Tamworth, Northern Tablelands and Port Macquarie. The previously ALP held seat of Lake Macquarie also fell to an independent. The Coalition now hold 19 of the 24 so called 'country seats' in NSW. Two are held by the ALP and four are held by independent MPs.

Legislative Council results

In the Legislative Council the ALP won 9 seats giving them a total of 19 Members.

The Coalition picked up 8 seats for a total of 15 members. On the Cross Bench the Greens elected 2 members for a total of 4, the Christian Democrats 1 seat for a total of 2 and the Shooters won an additional seat taking them up to 2 Members. The ALP require just three additional supporting votes in order to pass Bills and Motions through the Upper House.

The new President of the Legislative Council is the Hon Peter Primrose MLC. The new Speaker of the House is Northern Tablelands independent, The Hon Richard Torbay MP. Mr Torbay was elected unopposed.

Cabinet

Premier Morris Iemma has announced the appointment of ten new Ministers to Cabinet. The new Ministers are Matthew Brown (Housing, Tourism), Linda Burney (Fair Trading, Youth, Volunteering), Verity Firth (Women, Science and Medical Research, Cancer, Environment), Kevin Greene (Community Services), Kristina Keneally (Ageing, Disabilities), Phil Koperberg (Climate Change, Environment and Water), Paul Lynch (Local Government, Aboriginal Affairs, Mental Health), Nathan Rees (Emergency Services, Water Utilities), Graham West (Gaming and Racing, Sport and Recreation) and Barbara Perry (Juvenile Justice, Western Sydney and Citizenship). Ian Macdonald has retained Primary Industries and Mineral Resources. He has also been appointed Minister for Energy and Minister for State Development. A major change to portfolios is the merging of the Department of Natural Resources and the Department of Environment under the Minister for Climate Change, Environment and Water.

“Together we’re a force to be reckoned with”

Coalition Front Bench

NSW Leader of the Opposition, Barry O'Farrell, announced the new Shadow Cabinet. The Nationals have retained important key portfolios of roads, water and primary industries. They have also picked up education and community services. NSW Nationals leader, Andrew Stoner has been given education and skills development. Coffs Harbour MP, Andrew Stoner has been awarded the primary industries portfolio, Road Safety and Rural Affairs. Duncan Gay has moved across to the roads, ports and waterways portfolios.

Week in Review

Parliament

Both Federal and State Parliaments sat this week. On Tuesday 8 May the Federal Treasurer passed down his twelfth budget.

On the same day the NSW State Parliament sat for the first time. Mr Richard Torbay was elected, unopposed, to be the new Speaker of the House in the Legislative Assembly. For the first time in the history of the Parliament an independent Speaker has been appointed. In the Legislative Council the Hon Peter Primrose MLC was elected as the President of the Legislative Council. Both the Opposition and the Cross Bench fielded candidates for the Presidency. Most of the daily sittings this week have been taken up with restoring the Notice papers, Committees and procedural aspects of the Parliament following the State election. In addition some Private Members Bills and Motions have been debated.

Following the election of the new Speaker and President the Parliamentarians made their way down to Government House to be introduced to Her Excellency The Governor of NSW, Professor Marie Bashir AC.

Highlights

Legislative Assembly Notices of Motion

With the restoration of the Notice Paper notice was given on a number of Bills and Motions for consideration in the House. The following motions of interest to the Association have been moved by MPs in the Legislative Assembly:

- Mr STONER moved a Notice of Motion to introduce an Act to require the preparation of rural communities impact statements (Rural Communities Impacts Bill)
- Mr FRASER moved a motion on drought and drought assistance schemes
- Mr HUMPHRIES moved a motion on the impact of the drought on the mental health of people in rural New South Wales, particularly in young men.
Mr J.D. WILLIAMS moved a motion calling on the Government to waive fixed water charges for all NSW irrigators.
- Mr STONER moved a motion noting the serious incidence of juvenile crime in regional and rural areas and called on the Government to amend ineffective juvenile offender legislation.
- Mr FRASER moved a motion condemning the Government for the rising road toll in regional New South Wales.
- Mr MAGUIRE moved a motion to note that patients from Tumut, Adelong, Batlow, Tumbarumba and Gundagai who are suffering from renal failure are required to travel thousands of kilometers per month to access renal dialysis. Calls on NSW Health to establish a renal Dialysis service in Tumut.
- Mr J.D. WILLIAMS moved a motion calling on the Government to continue to waive Western Lands lease charges during this continuing drought.

Legislative Council Notice of Motion

Similar to the Legislative Assembly a number of notices were moved during the week by MLC's for consideration. The following motions of interest to the Association have been moved by MPs in the Legislative Council:

- Ms Fazio moved that this House objects to the decision of Bio-Security Australia to lift restrictions on the importation of avocados from New Zealand despite concerns from Avocado Australia that the risk of avocado blight from these imports still exists.
- Mr Cohen moved a motion regarding the River Red Gum forests of south-west New South Wales and logging practices in relation to rail sleepers
- Mr Cohen moved a motion to abolish the Game Council

“Together we're a force to be reckoned with”

Assent to Bills

Assent to the following bills of the previous session were reported:

- National Park Estate (Lower Hunter Region Reservations) Bill
- Companion Animals Amendment Bill
- Deer Bill
- Rural Lands Protection Amendment Bill
- Environmental Planning Legislation Amendment Bill
- Threatened Species Conservation Amendment (Biodiversity Banking) Bill

Questions Without Notice

NATIVE VEGETATION

Mr IAN COHEN asked a question addressed to the Attorney General, and Minister for Justice, representing the Minister for Climate Change, Environment and Water on native vegetation monitoring and if the Government will provide comprehensive annual SPOT-5 satellite monitoring of vegetation loss in New South Wales?

MURRAY-DARLING BASIN WATER

Mr STEVE WHAN asked the Minister for Climate Change, Environment and Water regarding Government assistance to communities in the Murray-Darling Basin