



T R E A S U R E R

MEDIA RELEASE

Roozendaal calls on Opposition to support laws to help first home buyers in the military

NSW Treasurer Eric Roozendaal today issued a direct challenge to NSW Opposition Leader Barry O'Farrell to support reforms which help defence personnel buying their first home.

This was after the Coalition attacked the plan in Budget Estimates hearings today.

"I am appalled Coalition members showed such hostile opposition to these important changes when I announced them today at a Budget Estimates hearing at the NSW Parliament," Mr Roozendaal said.

"The men and women who serve in our armed forces are prepared to sacrifice their lives in active duty and deserve to be supported in every way possible.

"I am disgusted by Liberal Upper House parliamentarians Greg Pearce and Matthew Mason-Cox, who mocked the gesture to help first home buyers who are in the defence forces."

Mr Roozendaal today announced that the NSW Government will lead the nation by expanding eligibility criteria for First Home Owner Grants to ensure defence personnel don't miss out on this generous program.

A key regulation of the First Home Owner Grant is that the new home owner must live in the dwelling for six months. This regulation becomes problematic for defence personnel when they are called away at short notice for duty.

"We will reform the rules so the men and women protecting our country are not unfairly disadvantaged," Mr Roozendaal said.

"Revising the residency provision in the First Home Owners Grant will support service men and women doing their job and gives them one less thing to worry about while they're serving Australia's interests."

The Australian Defence Force has about 3,000 members deployed to 12 different overseas operations including Iraq, Afghanistan and East Timor.

About 500 ADF personnel are involved in domestic operations such as protecting Australia's borders and they can also be called interstate at short notice.

NSW first home buyers currently receive up to \$41,990 in grants and stamp duty cuts – among the most generous in Australia.

Since the introduction of first home buyer grants in July 2000, more than 422,000 first home buyers have received grants and stamp duty exemptions worth in excess of \$6.2 billion.

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