

## MEDIA RELEASE

**The Hon. Linda Burney MP**  
**Minister for the State Plan**  
**Minister for Community Services**



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**EMBARGO: 6am, Tuesday 13 July 2010**

### **\$152 MILLION SYDNEY OPERA HOUSE UPGRADE UNDERWAY**

The \$152 million Keneally Government upgrade of the Sydney Opera House gets underway today, with Expressions of Interest called for the Vehicle Access and Pedestrian Safety Project (VAPS).

Funded in last month's NSW Budget, the project will help secure the long-term future of one of the world's iconic buildings.

"The Sydney Opera House is the lynchpin of Australia's cultural economy, generating more than \$1 billion to the national economy through tourism, hospitality, travel and other activity," Acting Minister for the Arts, Linda Burney said.

"We are improving visitor and worker safety and offering a revitalised visitor experience of Jorn Utzon's twentieth century architectural masterpiece, befitting its status as a World Heritage-listed icon.

"The call for Expressions of Interest marks the beginning of the largest construction project on site since it opened in October 1973 and puts it on track for a scheduled start on site in early 2011, and planned completion in mid-2013."

Supporting about 500 jobs, key features of the historic upgrade include:

- **Building** a new tunnel from the bottom of Macquarie Street to a new underground loading dock – removing about 1,000 heavy vehicles movements a week from the forecourt and improving pedestrian safety;
- **Installing** a new underground scenery platform lift to the existing Opera Theatre dock to load and unload large and often cumbersome sets;
- **Connecting** the new underground loading dock to new lifts for food and beverage deliveries and deliveries to the concert hall and the three smaller theatres on the western side of the building through additional tunnels; and
- **Diverting** the Bennelong Drain – the stormwater drain which services the northern section of the Sydney CBD.

In 2009, the Sydney Opera House hosted 1.3 million paid attendances at 1,667 performances and attracted more than 7.4 million visitors, making it one of the country's busiest tourist and cultural precincts.

The complete Expression of Interest documentation is available from <https://tenders.nsw.gov.au>. Submissions close at 2pm on Tuesday, 27 July 2010.

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