



MEDIA RELEASE

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PARTNERSHIP WITH THE UNIVERSITY OF NEWCASTLE TO SHAPE OUR REGION'S FUTURE

Hunter Water has signed a Memorandum of Understanding with the University of Newcastle (UON) to launch a research partnership that will shape the region's future.

With an extra 240,000 people expected to make the Hunter home over the next 20 years, the partners will work to understand how tomorrow's communities will want to live, and how social and technological innovation will contribute to a more integrated and sustainable future.

Hunter Water Managing Director Jim Bentley said the Hunter is at a crucial point of growth and development, and building partnerships to learn how innovation can support future communities was essential to Hunter Water's planning.

"This year Hunter Water turns 125, and as we celebrate our past we need to look to the future, so as the decisions we make today enable a better tomorrow.

"The Hunter is at one of the most crucial points in its history, with the NSW Government projecting our population to swell to 862,000 by 2036, supported by an additional 61,500 new jobs and a diversified local economy.

"A growing population and advances in technology will change how communities of tomorrow will want to live. In the coming years Hunter Water needs to make significant decisions that will impact the way we deliver services, and it's critical that this decision making considers the community of today, as well as the community of the future.

"The University of Newcastle partnership is broad reaching and will take advantage of local research not only in engineering, but also in fields like social science, the environment, and information technology. This research can then feed improvements in how we operate and support the future development of our communities.

"Hunter Water will also be sharing with the University our own knowledge and resources, plus the expertise of international experts working with our organisation in the fields of resilience, economics and learning.

"From Grahamstown Dam which has staved off a new water supply for more than 50 years, to Burwood Wastewater Treatment Works which keeps our beaches the cleanest in the State, Hunter Water has a 125 year track record of making good decisions that enable a thriving region. This partnership will help us maintain that record with a sustainable, secure and liveable future."

UON's Vice-Chancellor Professor Caroline McMillen said the partnership highlighted how the University can work collaboratively with local business and industry in research, innovation and education to build the capacity and sustainability of the region.

"Hunter Water has been a great supporter of our University for many years, particularly in providing work experience opportunities for our students. We are delighted that today's announcement builds on this long relationship, and establishes the University as its primary research partner.

"Our University is committed to working with partners to develop solutions and ideas that will secure a better future for our region. This exciting research collaboration provides a significant opportunity to draw on our talented researchers' knowledge and skills, and work with Hunter Water to safeguard a vital resource for our community."

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