

REGULATORY REFORM AND OTHER LEGISLATIVE REPEALS BILL 2015
OCCUPATIONAL LICENSING NATIONAL LAW REPEAL BILL 2015

Bills introduced on motion by Mr Victor Dominello, read a first time and printed.

Second Reading

Mr VICTOR DOMINELLO (Ryde—Minister for Innovation and Better Regulation) [5.26 p.m.]: I move:

That these bills be now read a second time.

I am pleased to introduce the Regulatory Reform and Other Legislative Repeals Bill 2015 and the Occupational Licensing National Law Repeal Bill 2015 as cognate bills. I will deal first with the Regulatory Reform and Other Legislative Repeals Bill 2015, which I will refer to demotically as the "spring clean bill". I am pleased to inform the House that the bill will repeal 30 Acts as well as numerous provisions and schedules of other Acts. Today is a significant day in the Government's commitment to reducing the regulatory burden faced by business, community organisations and individuals in New South Wales. The Regulatory Reform and Other Legislative Repeals Bill 2015 is the first of its kind in New South Wales. It is solely dedicated to reducing red tape and legislative confusion for businesses in our community. It is one step closer to making New South Wales the easiest State in which to start a business. It focuses on removing and reducing unnecessary, counterproductive and burdensome requirements as well as redundant legislation.

The red tape reduction capability of the Regulatory Reform and Other Legislative Repeals Bill 2015 relies on the hard work of agencies to find ways of making it easier and less costly for businesses and the community to meet the requirements the Government sets. That will allow business owners to spend more time operating and expanding their business and will increase productivity in New South Wales. Through the efforts of all Ministers, this Government proposes that each year a repeal bill will be introduced for the purpose of cleaning up the statute book and removing unnecessary legislation. Red tape is a government burden that continues to grow unless conscious effort is made to reduce that burden. Legislation should be easily accessible and deliver on policy outcomes. The repeal of spent and redundant Acts will make it easier to access and understand current and relevant regulation, improve compliance and reduce the costs associated with doing business in New South Wales.

The Global Competitiveness Report 2015-16, which was released by the World Economic Forum, ranks Australia eightieth out of 140 countries in terms of the burden of government regulation as perceived by Australian business. Clearly, governments must do more to reduce the regulatory burden on business and individuals. Businesses and individuals need to be able to quickly and readily access relevant laws with which they must comply without having to sift through outdated and unnecessary regulation to establish whether the legislation still applies. The Regulatory Reform and Other Legislative Repeals Bill 2015 is not about removing protections; rather, it is about removing regulations that are no longer necessary and those that should not continue to be in force. To give members of the House an indication of the types of matters repealed in the spring clean bill, I will describe some of them.

One important example of reforms that will be effected by the bill is the repeal of the Valuers Act 2003. The repeal will give effect to recommendation 13 of the Independent Pricing and Regulatory Tribunal's "Reforming licensing in NSW" report, which was released earlier this year. The Independent Pricing and Regulatory Tribunal [IPART] report identified more than 770 different licence categories in operation in New South Wales, accounting for \$2.8 billion in government revenue each year. The new framework for licences proposed by IPART ensures that agencies are required to ensure that licences are efficient and fit for purpose.

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Valuers in this State are now accredited by a series of peak bodies who are supportive of the repeals, such as Australian Valuers Institute, the Australian Property Institute and the Royal Institution of Chartered Surveyors. The presence of these professional organisations removes the need for government to intervene by way of licences. The Valuers Act 2003 was introduced by the previous Government. The repeal will mean that valuers will no longer have to pay the \$885 registration fee to obtain a licence. It also means that valuers will no longer have to pay a \$747 renewal fee every three years to maintain their licence. This represents a saving to industry of more than \$800,000 a year. For the 3,000 professional valuers operating in New South Wales that is good news. It brings us in line with other States, such as Victoria, which have deregulated the valuation industry.

These changes include the role of professional associations such as the Australian Property Institute. A number of pieces of legislation that currently refer to registered valuers will now refer to the requirement to be a qualified valuer, which includes a person who has membership of the Australian Valuers Institute, the Australian Property Institute and the Royal Institution of Chartered Surveyors. Also, the nature of the client base of property valuers being 80 per cent to 95 per cent large corporations that repeatedly and frequently engage property valuers means they are well placed to assess the quality of a service. The changes since 1975 suggest that in the case of property valuers there is no ongoing rationale for government intervention.

The Internal Audit Bureau Act 1992 is being repealed. The original purpose of the Act was to ensure that even small entities would be able to purchase quality internal audit services from an outsourced provider. Given the much stronger emphasis on internal audit capability in the public sector, the New South Wales Government has made a decision that the Internal Audit Bureau will be wound up or sold by 30 June 2016. The West Scholarships Act 1930 is being repealed, with the remaining funds in the trust, established under the Act for schools in the Cooma-Bega area, to be distributed to the 42 schools in that area. The Act is being repealed because the time taken to administer the trust is not commensurate with the benefit to students and the interest on the capital invested has decreased.

The Land Acquisition (Charitable Institutions) Act 1946 will be repealed as government involvement in acquiring land for charitable institutions for charitable, benevolent and philanthropic purposes is seen as an unnecessary interference in private property rights. The last body to be declared a charitable institution was the Australian Boy Scouts Association in 1981. Charitable institutions are able to negotiate acquisitions and purchases of land of their own accord as are other private entities. The Sydney Entertainment Centre Act 1980 no longer has a purpose to fulfil and will not have a purpose to fulfil in the future, and accordingly the Act will be repealed. The Sydney Entertainment Centre will be demolished in December 2015 as part of the transformation of Darling Harbour. A replacement venue is being built as part of the new International Convention Centre Sydney, which will open in December 2016.

The spring clean bill will also repeal six amending Acts that have already commenced but are now included in the principal legislation and five provisions of Acts that cannot commence because they amend Acts or provisions that have since been repealed. The spring clean bill's repeal of nearly 30 Acts will reduce red tape, deliver clearer laws and make accessing the law simpler for both businesses and individuals in New South Wales. Other principal Acts to be repealed as a result of the spring clean bill include: Appropriation Act 2014, Appropriation (Budget Variations) Act 2014, Appropriation (Parliament) Act 2014, Forestry (Darling Mills State Forest Revocation) Act 2005, Home Fund Restructuring Act 1993, Insurance Protection Tax Act 2001, Land Acquisition (Charitable Institutions) Act 1946, Lane Cove National Park (Sugarloaf Point Additions) Act 1996, National Parks and Wildlife (Adjustment of Areas) Act 2005, State Revenue and Other Legislation Amendment (Budget Measures) Act 2013, Statute Law (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 2015, Succession to the

Crown (Request) Act 2013, Transfer of Records Act 1923 and University of Sydney (Law School Site) Act 1967.

I turn to the Occupational Licensing National Law Repeal Bill 2015. This bill gives effect in New South Wales to the decision of the Council of Australian Governments to terminate the national occupational licensing reform in favour of jurisdictions minimising licensing impediments to labour mobility. For that purpose, the Mutual Recognition (Automatic Licensed Occupations Recognition) Act 2014 has been enacted in New South Wales to provide for the automatic mutual recognition of certain occupational licences issued in other jurisdictions so that an individual who holds a recognised licence is taken to hold the equivalent New South Wales licence. The Occupational Licensing National Law Repeal Bill 2015 repeals the Occupational Licensing (Adoption of National Law) Act 2010 and dissolves the national entities that have been established under the Occupational Licensing National Law. The bill also provides for the necessary savings and transitional arrangements consequent on that dissolution. I commend both bills to the House.

Debate adjourned on motion by Mr Guy Zangari and set down as an order of the day for a future day.