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MEDIA RELEASE

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DRUG AMNESTY BINS FOR MUSIC FESTIVALS

Music festivalgoers will have a chance to discard illegal drugs into amnesty bins without fear of prosecution or penalty as part of the NSW Government's ongoing efforts to reduce drug-related deaths and injuries.

Premier Gladys Berejiklian said the measure formed a key part of the NSW Government's response to the Deputy Coroner's recommendations following her inquest into the deaths of six patrons at NSW music festivals.

"The recent deaths at music festivals are tragic reminders of the dangers of illegal drugs," Ms Berejiklian said.

"We will continue to send the strong message that drugs can and do kill.

"Amnesty bins will provide a quick and easy way for music festivalgoers to discard their drugs – no questions asked."

Under today's announcement, the NSW Government will extend targeted education campaigns, improve information sharing between State agencies about the toxicology of drugs found at music festivals and will work with festival organisers to ensure they continue to improve the health services being provided at their events.

Minister for Police David Elliott said the Government has been working closely with NSW Police to improve safety at music festivals.

"We want people to use these amnesty bins for illegal drugs and enjoy their time at music festivals," Mr Elliott said.

"The bins give an opportunity to discard dangerous substances without fear of prosecution."

NSW Health has also released updated *Guidelines for Music Festival Event Organisers* which support the delivery of safer music festivals. These were developed in consultation with key stakeholders and health experts.

Health Minister Brad Hazzard said combining illicit drugs with hot weather and cramped festival conditions can be a deadly mix.

“Our health professionals do an outstanding job at music festivals to keep people safe and provide valuable information to festivalgoers about the dangers of drugs,” Mr Hazzard said.

“Amnesty bins are another tool in our arsenal as we fight the scourge of illicit drugs.”

The NSW Government will work with NSW Police, health experts, music festival organisers and other key stakeholders regarding the design and operation of the amnesty bins.

Today’s announcement builds on the NSW Government’s existing measures to keep people safe at music festivals, which includes:

- The introduction of an offence that holds drug dealers responsible for deaths they cause;
- A more stringent licensing regime that requires high-risk music festivals to prepare safety management plans;
- A trial of on-the-spot fines for drug possession at music festivals; and
- The ongoing Special Commission of Inquiry into the drug ice.

The NSW Government’s full response to the Deputy Coroner’s recommendations can be found here:

<https://www.justice.nsw.gov.au/lrb/Pages/coronial-recommendations.aspx>