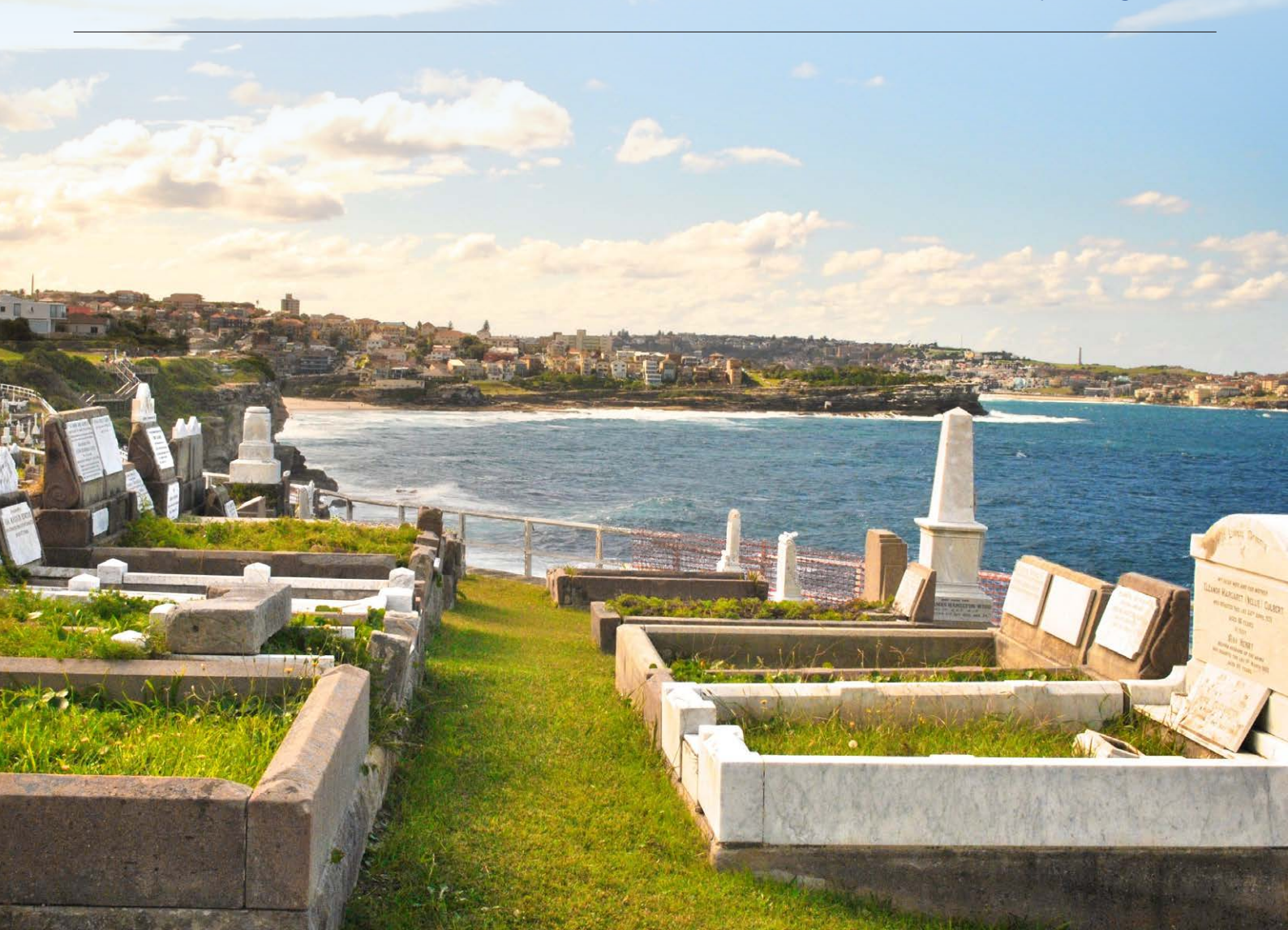


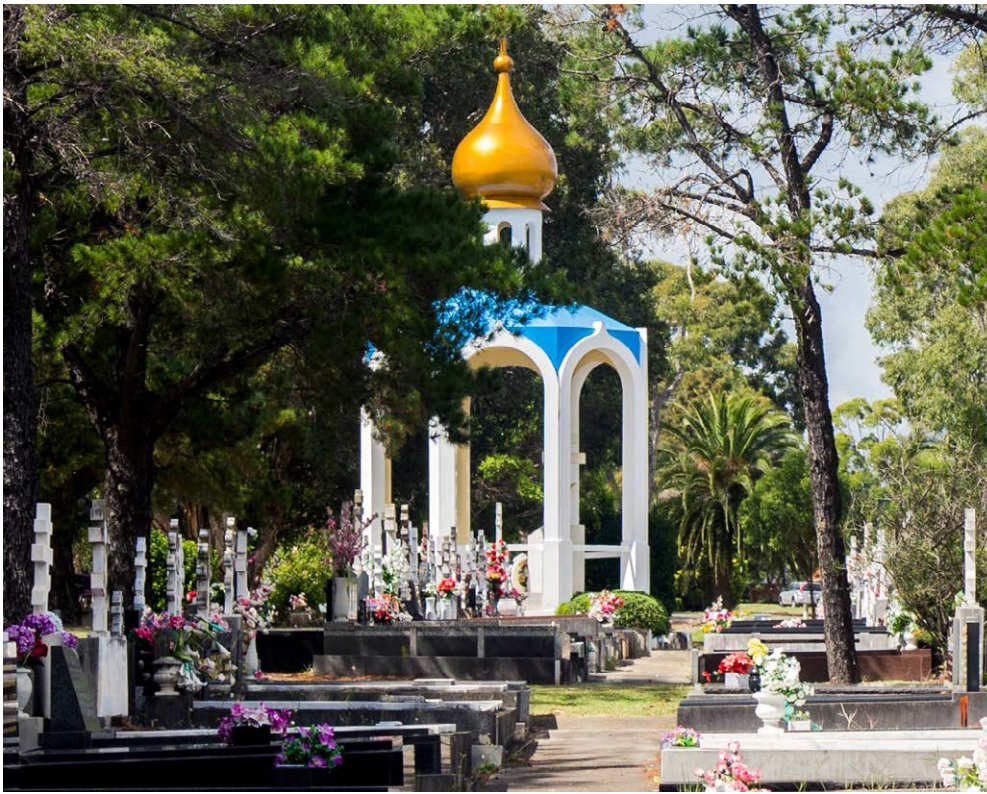
The proposed Interment Industry Scheme for NSW

An overview to guide public consultation

June 2022

dpie.nsw.gov.au/iis





Introduction

To make sure people in NSW have access to clearly defined, respectful and affordable burial and cremation (interment) services, the NSW Government proposes a new licensing system for the interment industry.

Two recent reviews – [The 11th Hour: Solving Sydney's Cemetery Crisis](#) and the Independent Pricing and Regulatory Tribunal's [Review of costs and pricing of interment in NSW](#) – made significant recommendations to strengthen the interment sector and implement consumer protections.

Clearer industry standards, as outlined in the regulations, will benefit both consumers and operators.

It will give families the comfort of knowing the cemetery or crematorium operator they deal with will be licensed and must abide by certain requirements.

It will give operators certainty around the requirements that they need to comply with, and help them meet community expectations, with the support of the regulator.

To be administered by Cemeteries & Crematoria NSW (CCNSW), the state's interment industry regulator, the proposed Interment Industry Scheme sets out requirements for:

- clear, plain language contracts
- minimum maintenance standards for cemetery and crematorium grounds and buildings
- easy-to-understand pricing for basic burial and ash interment products
- standards for customer service
- principles for respecting people's religious and cultural requirements, and specific principles for Aboriginal peoples' cultural and spiritual requirements.

What is interment?

Interment is the burial of human remains or cremated ashes in a grave or cemetery plot, or placement in a mausoleum, crypt, vault, columbarium, niche wall or other similar structure.

Ash interment specifically refers to burial or on-site storing of cremated remains.



The proposed Interment Industry Scheme

NSW has approximately 400 cemetery and crematorium operators with nearly 1,500 cemeteries and 60 crematoria around the State.

The proposed Interment Industry Scheme introduces a licensing system under the *NSW Cemeteries and Crematoria Act 2013*, for all existing and future operators.

Operators include large, government-owned cemeteries such as Rookwood General Cemetery, private sector businesses, council-owned cemeteries and smaller cemeteries managed by churches or community groups.

The Scheme will tailor compliance requirements based on an operator's size, activity level and risk.

Small, volunteer-run cemeteries will have a lower level of expected compliance than large corporate or government operators. This will improve standards across the whole sector and means operators will have appropriate and achievable obligations.

The Scheme does not apply to funeral directors, who are regulated by both NSW Fair Trading and NSW Health.

Licence conditions

To comply with their licence conditions under the proposed Interment Industry Scheme, operators will need to do the following:

Provide standard contract terms and conditions for interments

CCNSW is introducing standard mandatory terms and conditions, in plain language, for burial or ash interment contracts between operators and customers. Operators will have to clearly explain contract details and pricing to help consumers understand what they are buying and on what terms.

Operators must give consumers time and privacy to review their contract before signing.

Ensure cemeteries are safely and respectfully maintained

Following on from CCNSW's voluntary maintenance guide, the Scheme will introduce minimum requirements for cemetery grounds maintenance, including landscaping, roads, and building maintenance. This will ensure operators know and meet the minimum standards for people's final resting places. For larger cemetery operators, a self-assessment checklist will need to be completed and sent to CCNSW on a regular basis.

Make pricing more transparent and comparing products easier

New pricing disclosure requirements will mean operators must make publicly available the pricing breakdowns of their least expensive products in a clear and simple way. This will help consumers compare operators' prices. A price breakdown of their Basic Adult Burial and/or Basic Ash Interment must be easy to find.

Operators will have to make consumers aware of their least expensive products before consumers sign a contract.

Introduce industry-wide customer service standards

Although many operators provide a great service to customers, for the first time, all operators will be held to the same clear standards for how they engage with customers. The standards include respecting personal choices, providing complete information about products or services, and communicating supportively to people who are culturally and linguistically diverse or have specific communication needs. All cemetery and crematorium workers will be appropriately trained for the work they do and know and understand the customer service standards expected of them.

This will make it easy for customers to know what to expect from operators and for operators to meet community expectations.

Ensure respectful interment for people of all religions and cultures

NSW is a proudly diverse community with many religions and cultures, each with rules and practices for interment.

CCNSW is introducing principles for operators so they can meet the religious and cultural requirements of NSW communities.

There will also be a set of principles for meeting Aboriginal cultural and spiritual requirements, in recognition of the unique importance of Sorry Business to Aboriginal people.

These principles will be supported by guidelines to help operators understand and meet the specific requirements of different communities.

For more information on the licence conditions, please visit [the Interment Industry Scheme consultation page](#).

Consultation

Over the past 12 months, CCNSW consulted relevant consumer, community and faith groups, industry and government, to develop the proposed Interment Industry Scheme. Feedback was received from webinars, forums, surveys, working groups and submissions and all views were taken on board.

Now CCNSW invites community, industry and other interested stakeholders to review and provide feedback on the proposed scheme.

You can comment via the Interment Industry Scheme consultation page, complete an online survey, attend a webinar or provide a written submission.

All feedback will be considered before a final version of the Scheme is submitted to the NSW Government.

CCNSW intends to finalise the Scheme later this year and will assist operators to comply, during a transition period.

Have your say by 31 July 2022

There are 6 ways you can submit your feedback, listed below.

Formal submission
Address: Locked Bag 5022,
Parramatta NSW 2124

Email ccnsw.regulatoryreform@cemeteries.nsw.gov.au

[Online consultation](#)
Discussion board
Survey
Webinar
Planning portal

About CCNSW

CCNSW is an independent statutory agency created in 2014 under the *Cemeteries and Crematoria Act 2013* as NSW's interment industry regulator.

CCNSW's vision is that all people in NSW have access to sustainable and affordable burial and cremation services that are respectful of culture and faith and provided in a consistent, transparent and accountable manner.

As well as regulating cemetery and crematorium operators, CCNSW provides information to help consumers make informed decisions. For information on interment rights or advice on planning for burial and cremation, contact CCNSW as follows:

Phone: 02 9842 8473

Email: ccnsw.info@cemeteries.nsw.gov.au

Web: industry.nsw.gov.au/cemeteries-crematoria

Address: Locked Bag 5022, Parramatta, NSW 2124

© NSW Government Department of Planning and Environment.

The information contained in this publication is based on knowledge and understanding at the time of writing (June 2022). The publisher takes no responsibility or liability, for the accuracy, currency, reliability or correctness of any information included in the document. Readers should make their own inquiries and rely on their own advice when making decisions related to material contained in this publication.



dpie.nsw.gov.au/iis