



# John Barilaro MP

## Minister for Small Business

## Minister for Regional Tourism

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### MEDIA RELEASE

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4 November 2014

#### **THREE YEARS OF NSW GOVERNMENT FUNDING FOR *OPERA IN THE PADDOCK***

The NSW Government will continue to support *Opera in the Paddock* for the next three years, with the popular open air music event returning to the New England North West in 2015, Minister for Regional Tourism John Barilaro and Member for Northern Tablelands Adam Marshall announced today.

“The NSW Government understands how important events such as *Opera in the Paddock* are to local communities, so we are pleased to be on board for this exciting next chapter,” Mr Marshall said.

“*Opera in the Paddock* is an integral part of our region’s events calendar, and attracts locals and visitors alike to watch some of the country’s finest opera singers and instrumentalists.

“The 2015 event will be held on 21 March at ‘Mimosa’ at Delungra, so I encourage everyone to put the date in their diaries,” he said.

Minister for Regional Tourism John Barilaro said regional cultural events like *Opera in the Paddock* are important to growing the NSW visitor economy.

“*Opera in the Paddock* is a landmark regional event that contributes strongly to the local economy and is expected to deliver over \$1.4 million to the region over three years,” Mr Barilaro said.

“Regional NSW tourism is an important contributor to the State’s overnight visitation economy, accounting for a massive 75.2 million nights of accommodation and \$9.9 billion in visitor expenditure in the year ending June 2014.

“*Opera in the Paddock* provides a unique experience and yet another great reason to visit this part of Regional NSW,” he said.

Mr Marshall said that those attending *Opera in the Paddock* can set up their camping chair, roll out the picnic rug, and settle in for an evening of exceptional performances with the wonderful bushland setting as the backdrop.

“*Opera in the Paddock* will continue to charm existing fans, and help attract new visitors to the New England North West region and the surrounding areas of Regional NSW,” he said.

The brainchild of opera singer Peta Blyth OAM, *Opera in the Paddock* was first held in 2002 on the family property 25 kilometres west of Inverell, and has since become a fixture of the region’s events calendar.