

22 September 2025

Business Hunter backs event day declaration for Newcastle Show

Business Hunter has urged City of Newcastle councillors to vote for the declaration of a Local Event Day for the Newcastle Show in 2026 and 2027, describing it as a sensible compromise.

Councillors will on Tuesday night consider a recommendation to make an application to the Minister for Industrial Relations seeking the proclamation of a Friday public holiday on the Show weekend for the next two years.

The Show has been declared a Local Event Day in Newcastle since 2012 and Business Hunter CEO Bob Hawes said reintroducing a mandated public holiday would have an adverse impact on the business community.

“An additional public holiday comes at significant cost and inconvenience to businesses, staff and their customers, through staff payments, lost trading opportunities and interruptions to business operations and productivity,” Mr Hawes said.

“It also penalises casual staff, who miss the opportunity for a day’s paid work if their place of employment is closed, and customers of businesses that do open will often be hit with surcharges as those businesses seek to offset their additional costs.”

Mr Hawes said Business Hunter supported the declaration of a Local Event Day, which gives employers the flexibility to liaise with staff on any special leave arrangements for the day.

“Business Hunter acknowledges the Newcastle Show contributes to the region’s visitor economy and has historical and social significance for the community,” Mr Hawes said.

“We believe a Local Event Day strikes the right balance between marking this significant event on the local calendar without imposing unnecessary additional pressure on businesses.

“We maintain that that the three-day duration of the Show, which spans the weekend and night sessions, provides ample opportunity for people to attend without the need for a public holiday to be declared.

“We note the Show has been reported in the media in recent years as having attracted strong crowds, according to organisers, which indicates that patrons are accommodating Show visits within the existing arrangements.”

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