MEDIA RELEASE

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GOVERNMENT ROADSHOW TO REGISTER BIRTHS

NSW Attorney General, John Hatzistergos is today urging community members to take advantage of a travelling Aboriginal Birth Certificate and Registration Service visiting Kempsey and Wauchope next week and register their births.

The service which is part of the project *Who You Are, Where You From* provides an opportunity for Aboriginal and Torres Straight Islander people to get assistance to register their children and apply for birth certificates.

“Having a birth certificate, establishes your identity and helps in providing access to a range of services and documents such as drivers’ licences, passports, bank accounts, and health and social security benefits,” he said.

“It’s also an important and handy document to have when seeking employment, enrolling into school and even registering for organised sport.”

Mr Hatzistergos said the service which is being run by the NSW Registry of Births Deaths & Marriages in conjunction with the Department of Premier and Cabinet seeks to raise awareness about the importance of birth registration.

Registry officers have also traveled to Tabulum, Wardell, Yamba, Bowraville, Dubbo, Newcastle, Raymond Terrace, Lake Macquarie, Taree and Forster to receive birth certificate applications and registrations from Indigenous people as part of its awareness campaign.

“The success of this program can be seen by the fact that the number of Indigenous people attending the registration events continues to grow each year.

“In 2006, the first year this service was run, 66 birth certificate applications were received. Last year this service received 1,000 applications and more than 500 people are expected to attend the event next week,” he said.

The service and information days will be held at Kempsey Showground on March 9 and the Wauchope Golf Club on March 10. The events will be held from 9am to 4pm.

“These events are part of a government approach aimed at increasing service delivery to communities to help close the gap in Aboriginal living standards and equality,” Mr Hatzistergos said.

“These services also help strengthen employment opportunities for Aboriginal people and foster community partnerships.”

A wide range of government agencies and non-government organisations will also be represented at the events next week covering areas such as education and training, health, legal and financial matters, taxation, disability support, family services, and unemployment.