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Get down to business

Tarik Elmestriebe

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Winners across 11 categories will be announced at a gala event on September 2 at The Club in Campbelltown. Each winner will represent the Macarthur region in the State Business Awards in November.

Sponsors for this year's event include Camden Council and MACROC.

Categories include Young Entrepreneur, Excellence in Business Ethics, Young Business Executive, Excellence in Sustainability, Business Leader, Excellence in Small Business and more.

To enter or for more information visit businessawards.com.au/regional macarthur.

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Transport Roads & Maritime Services
Weekend night work and temporary lane closures on Narellan Road at Currans Hill from Saturday 9 July

Roads and Maritime Services is working the bridge over the Sydney Water canal between the H31 Home, Fitzroyway and Housat Avenue Drive, Currans Hill as part of the \$11.4 million Narellan Road Upgrade. Work will be carried out over two weekends between **Saturday 9 July and Sunday 31 July 2016**, weather permitting. Our weekend night work hours will be from **4pm Saturday to 9am Sunday**. Traffic will be reduced to one lane in each direction during the night work and a contraflow traffic arrangement will be in place to move road users around the work area. This road work will be conducted to **40km/h** during the work and will remain in place until **Monday 5am** to allow the new concrete to set.

Motorists are advised to allow extra travel time. Traffic control will be in place to direct cyclists and motorists through the work area. Signs will also be in place to advise road users of the traffic changes. Thank you for your patience during this important work.

For more information please call our project team on **1800 726 146** or email narellan_community@transportroads.com.au or visit enr.new.sps.gov.au/projects

start a local conversation



Objection to



Macarthur Legal Centre director Robert Pelester and staff are concerned about federal funding cuts. Picture: Ian Szygolic

FUNDING CUT FEARS AT SERVICE

Luisa Cegno

MACARTHUR Women's Domestic Violence Court Advocacy Service is based in Campbelltown's Elizabeth Legal Centre.

Although the service's funding will not be affected by possible Federal Government cuts to community legal centres, there are fears the service will be indirectly affected as women who are referred to the service also have access to the legal centre's custody and family law services, which could be lost in the cuts.

"We put the woman in touch with services such as the Benevolent Society to help them ... get out of the relationship, if that is what is required, and we also help them in the court process," Macarthur Legal Centre director Robert Pelester said.

Advocacy service co-ordinator Tanya Whitehouse said she was concerned that options for women would become very limited due to the cuts, particularly for those who are vulnerable or who have limited financial resources. Phone the advocacy service on 465-07333.

'devastation'

Legal Aid income set to plummet by 30 per cent

Luisa Cegno

MACARTHUR Legal Centre director Robert Pelester fears for the future of the vital organisation amid concerns the Federal Government is planning 80 per cent of funding cuts to community legal centres.

The cuts were outlined in the forward estimates of the 2014 Federal Budget and Mr Pelester fears they could take effect in the next financial year.

"A 30 per cent cut will devastate our already underfunded legal access programs," he said.

Mr Pelester said the Campbelltown-based centre has five solicitors but he fears this could fall to three as a result of the cuts.

"We run 15 outreach and our solicitors in different areas of need throughout the Macarthur area for a day a week or fortnight," he said. "We won't be able to do that. Our legal services will be devastated. We do a lot with very little."

The centre is also home to Domestic Violence Court Advocacy Services. Although this service will not be affected by the proposed cuts, Mr Pelester is concerned the federal government's population



Macarthur Legal Centre director Robert Pelester.

was exploding and there was a bit of mortgage and housing stress in the community.

"Our funding should not be shrinking," he said.

Our legal services will be devastated. We do a lot with very little.

Robert Pelester

"It should be growing to meet the increased demand that the people of the Macarthur area are facing."

The centre is also home to Domestic Violence Court Advocacy Services. Although this service will not be affected by the proposed cuts, Mr Pelester is concerned the federal government's population

cuts will impact on the legal centre's ability to provide custody and family law to help domestic violence victims. "There are so many legal things that our centre helps with that we will not be able to do if our funding is cut," he said.

Mr Pelester said the centre played a vital role in the community because it was a one-stop venue of legal advice and assistance for people. "The courts will become more clogged with unrepresented parties who haven't a clue what they are doing," he said of the cuts.

He said fears of federal cuts came at a time when the recent State Budget had allocated \$30 million for the statewide roll out of the Safe Pathway program for women at high risk of domestic violence.

A Federal Attorney-General's Department spokeswoman said in 2013-14 there was a reduction in Australian Government funding for community legal centres when two time-limited funding arrangements came to an end.

"Future funding decisions are a matter for the incoming government," she said.