



**Jillian Skinner**  
Minister for Health

## **MEDIA RELEASE**

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### **LIFT OFF FOR NEW NSW AMBULANCE HELICOPTER BASE AT BANKSTOWN**

Health Minister Jillian Skinner and NSW Ambulance Acting Chief Executive David Dutton today turned the first sod on the new state-of-the-art NSW Ambulance/TOLL Bankstown Helicopter Retrieval and Training Base.

The NSW Government has invested funding of \$151.2 million to establish a new NSW Helicopter Retrieval Network. The TOLL Group will operate NSW Ambulance's southern fleet of eight helicopters from Bankstown, Orange, Wollongong and the ACT.

"This exciting new partnership will deliver improved patient retrieval coverage across the state, with patients responded to in AW139 helicopters receiving emergency care faster due to the capability of this model of aircraft," said Mrs Skinner, who was joined by Member for East Hills Glen Brookes.

"In less than 12 months, this vacant site at Bankstown Airport will house three operational helicopter hangars, two major servicing hangars, administration offices and a state-of-the-art training centre, including simulators, water training pool, environment training facilities, medical simulation rooms and an auditorium."

The NSW Ambulance aeromedical fleet has a doctor and paramedic on every flight and carries out more than 3,000 missions a year. The need for aeromedical retrieval in NSW is predicted to increase another 23 per cent by 2022.

Mr Dutton said the Bankstown facility would be a centre of excellence, allowing NSW Ambulance and TOLL to deliver the world's best helicopter emergency retrieval service.

"Already the world looks to NSW Ambulance as a benchmark provider of aeromedical operations. This facility and the new partnership with TOLL Group will cement us as a mobile emergency health service in the sky," Mr Dutton said.

"This site will represent much more than infrastructure of training buildings and a base. It's a significant investment in our aeromedical staff of doctors, flight nurses and paramedics, whose clinical capability virtually allows them to take the emergency department to the patient."

Training operations are scheduled to begin at the Bankstown facility from 1 July, 2016.