



# Dominic Perrottet MP

## Minister for Finance and Services

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### MEDIA RELEASE

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#### RARE WAR RECORDS REVEALED

NSW State Records is offering a rare inside look into how the state was affected by WW1 in the “A Call to Arms” exhibition at the Authority’s records centre in Kingswood, which will be opened today by NSW Minister for Finance and Services Dominic Perrottet.

“A Call to Arms documents the lives of the people of NSW and in particular the lives of NSW Government employees, from the declaration of war on 4 August 1914 up until September 1916, when the first plebiscite was held on the conscription of young men into war service,” Mr Perrottet said.

“Drawing on State Records’ vast collection of historic material, the exhibition features photographs, letters, posters and government documents, many of which are on public display for the first time.”

The collection includes many moving personal letters from soldiers fighting on the Gallipoli peninsula. These letters hold an extra sadness because they have all been extracted from probate packets held in the State archives

State Records Director, Geoff Hinchcliffe, said the exhibition explored how the people of NSW contributed to the war effort and the activities they participated in such as patriotic fundraising and recruitment campaigns.

“Documents in the exhibition provide insight into how the NSW Government responded to the outbreak of war,” he said.

“The State Records archives detail how William Holman, NSW Premier throughout WWI, continuously monitored information on anyone of ‘enemy origins’, including obtaining lists of ‘aliens’ employed in the public service, churches, schools and holding hotel licensees.

“Many immigrants who had lived in Australia for many years were declared ‘aliens’ and enemies of Australia following the outbreak of war in 1914.”

From the arrival of news of the very first casualties of the war, families and communities across NSW dedicated memorials to their loved ones.

To commemorate the first anniversary of the landing at Anzac Cove on 25 April 1915, 4,000 returned soldiers either marched or were driven in cars through Sydney’s streets. The parade was followed by recruitment rallies, starting a tradition that quickly spread across the country.

Mr Perrottet said A Call to Arms is the first of a number of exhibitions State Records will host progressively over the course of the Anzac Centenary commemoration from now through to 2018.

“The next exhibition will launch in early 2015 showcasing the role of the NSW Public Service and the thousands of public servants who enlisted and went off to fight in the Great War,” he said.

“These wonderful exhibitions are an inaugural part of State Records’ planned activities to commemorate the Great War over the next four years.”

State Records’ Centenary of Anzac website will be further developed over the coming years to include links to regional partners across NSW. Tools will be added to help family historians retrieve their family's WW1 stories from Government archives.

A Call to Arms will be on display at the State Records Authority’s Kingswood headquarters until April 2015.

For further details please visit the State Records’ new website, NSW Anzac Centenary – Records of NSW and World War 1 online at [nswanzacentenary.records.nsw.gov.au](http://nswanzacentenary.records.nsw.gov.au).

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