

The Sydney Morning Herald

<https://www.smh.com.au/politics/nsw/major-reshuffle-as-new-blood-enter-perrottet-s-cabinet-20211219-p59iuk.html>



By [Alexandra Smith](#)

December 20, 2021 — 12.00am

Major reshuffle as new blood enter Perrottet's cabinet

Premier Dominic Perrottet has put his stamp on the NSW government ahead of the 2023 election, increasing the number of Liberal women in his new cabinet by one and elevating nine first-time ministers in a major reshuffle.

As the state battles the highest number of COVID-19 cases of the pandemic, Mr Perrottet said his new cabinet was “the best team to lead NSW out of the” situation and “take it to the next level”.



Premier Dominic Perrottet will announce a new-look cabinet this week. *CREDIT: EDWINA PICKLES*

Long-serving Health Minister Brad Hazzard will stay in his portfolio but in one of Mr Perrottet's most significant changes, the police portfolio will return to the NSW Nationals.

Police Minister David Elliott will take on the politically fraught portfolio of transport, which has been plagued with problems in the new ferries as well as the cracked inner west light rail.

Mr Elliott has told colleagues he would consider leaving state politics if he did not retain the police portfolio.

There are nine first-time ministers in the new cabinet: Miranda MP Eleni Petinos, Goulburn MP Wendy Tuckerman, Natasha Maclaren-Jones MLC, Cootamundra Nationals MP Steph Cooke, Manly MP James Griffin, Oatley MP Mark Coure, Dubbo MP Dugald Saunders, Ben Franklin MLC and Sam Farraway MLC.

Mr Perrottet's cabinet includes the new portfolios of Minister for Cities (Pittwater MP Rob Stokes), Minister for Science, Innovation and Technology (Ku-ring-gai MP Alister Henskens) and Minister for Homes (Lane Cove MP Anthony Roberts).

Mr Roberts, who was demoted by the former premier Gladys Berejiklian, returns to his former portfolio of planning while Treasurer Matt Kean will now only be responsible for energy.

Mr Griffin takes over from Mr Kean as Minister for Environment and Heritage.

Mr Perrottet and Deputy Premier Paul Toole called ministers and MPs on Sunday night to inform them of the changes, with the new cabinet to be sworn in before Christmas.

Full NSW cabinet list

[Access to six pages which include:

Ben Franklin: Minister for Aboriginal Affairs, Minister for the Arts, Minister for Regional Youth

James Griffin: Minister for Environment and Heritage]

The Premier said the new ministry "harnesses experience, while allowing for renewal and injecting fresh energy into the team".

"This is a cabinet with a purpose, carefully shaped to deliver on our vision, and my expectation is that every minister will work hard and get outcomes for the people of our state," Mr Perrottet said.

"Our focus remains on getting the people of NSW back on their feet and we will be with them every step of the way as we navigate our way through the pandemic."

Mr Perrottet said four of the new ministers were women and "their presence around the cabinet table will make our government better".

Former local government minister Shelley Hancock announced on Saturday she would not be seeking a cabinet position because she intends to retire at the next election. Ms Berejiklian's resignation from state Parliament means there is only a net increase in Liberal women of one.

Nationals' upper house MP Sarah Mitchell remains as Education Minister and the party retains its female representation with the elevation to cabinet of Ms Cooke.

The longest-serving Nationals MP in the country, Melinda Pavey, was dumped from cabinet. A senior Liberal government minister, who spoke on the condition of anonymity, said Ms Pavey's demotion "was the wrong move and a bad look for the Nationals".

Agriculture Minister Adam Marshall was also dumped and Don Harwin announced his resignation as the arts minister from cabinet on Saturday.

Nationals' deputy leader Bronnie Taylor, who is now the party's most senior female, will be responsible for regional health.

Mr Toole, who replaced retiring MP John Barilaro as NSW Nationals leader, said: "I am so proud of the new talent coming through the ranks of the Nats. I know they are going to bring fresh ideas to our government and throw all their energy into helping us build a bigger, brighter future in the regions".

"The past three years have been some of the most challenging in our state's history – drought, fires, floods, a global pandemic and now more floods."

"We've gone through the darkest of days, but we are focused on ensuring the regions emerge stronger and more resilient than ever before."

The Morning Edition newsletter is our guide to the day's most important and interesting stories, analysis and insights. Sign up [here](#).