

# 2017/18 Year in Review

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# hard work by us



# Easier for the customer



We've made real progress towards our core outcomes of supporting strong budgets and providing exceptional customer experience

## Foreword from our Deputy Secretary

I look back on 2017/18 with pride and renewed ambition.

At the start of the year we consolidated the separate identities and websites of the Office of State Revenue and the State Debt Recovery Office. We are now a unified **Revenue NSW**, which makes it easier for you to do business with us.

We adopted an 'equals sign' as a visual device on our materials that prompts us always to focus our efforts on a clear outcome.

And we've made real progress towards our core outcomes of supporting strong budgets and providing exceptional customer experience.

This year we have delivered record levels of revenue for NSW, while continuing our emphasis on support for vulnerable customers.

Through landmark legislation, we have become uniquely placed to help customers with both local and state debts to resolve their situations.

We strengthened our practice of first talking with our customers about their experience of working with us before designing or refining our processes.

And our progress highlighted that there is so much more to do. This year in review shares some of our many achievements and confirms our commitment to keep our foot on the pedal in the year ahead.

**Stephen Brady**

Deputy Secretary for Revenue NSW

## Our role

Revenue NSW is the state's principal revenue management agency.

We have a clear vision of a fair, safe and prosperous state.

We contribute to this through our approach to:

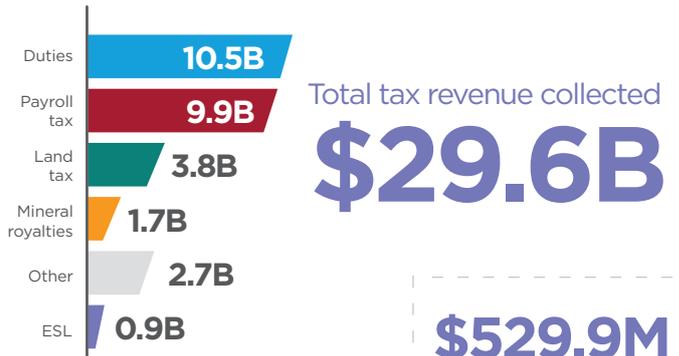
- administering state taxation
- managing fines
- administering grants and subsidies
- recovering debt.

Our revenue management helps to deliver government priorities to benefit citizens.

This includes securing around \$30 billion towards the state budget each year, which goes towards health, education and other important services for NSW.

# Our performance

## TAX COLLECTED



Land Tax variations returns lodged online



\$529.9M

total compliance identified

45%  
above target

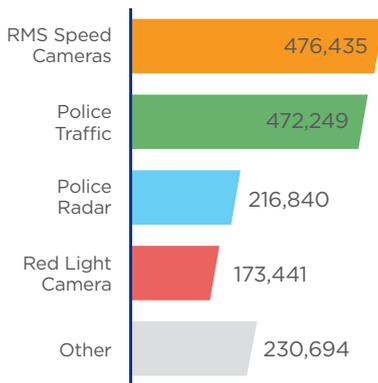


Tax objections finalised

2,364

## PENALTY NOTICES

3,098,885  
Crown Penalty Notices issued



of Penalty Notices favourably resolved

eNominations  
180,644

2,249  
Point to Point infringements issued

electronic statutory declarations received

## DEBT RESOLVED



Fail to vote fines enforced

349,433

\$631M  
fines debt revenue collected

Court fines enforced



174K

\$34.9M  
Work and Development Orders satisfied (WDOs)

\$29.6M  
civil debt collected



28,456  
WDO applications approved

\$1.5B  
overdue tax debt resolved

Enforced fines debt resolved  
\$493M



Collections Centre customer calls

1.4M inbound 70K outbound

All figures are reported as at 30 June 2018

## BENEFITS

**6,620**

Small Business  
Grant positions  
registered



**3,140**

Small Business  
Grant customers  
registered



**32,685**

First Home Buyers Assistance Scheme  
concessions granted

**15,282**

Jobs Action Plan  
positions  
registered



**6,109**

Jobs Action  
Plan customers  
registered

**4,648**

Unclaimed monies  
claims paid

## AND MORE...

**90.58%**

Ministerials were  
completed within 11 days

**90**

Matters referred to  
NSW NCAT



**48,000**

Webinar views



**8,865**

Facebook likes



**14,751,929**

website page views



**155**

webinars  
and 8,300  
seminar  
attendees

**83%**

Customer  
satisfaction

## Our transformation

In 2014, we set out an ambitious seven-year strategy for our organisation. 2017/18 marked the mid-point towards Revenue2021. We considered the pace of change, within and outside our organisation, then reviewed and refined our goals to meet customer expectations. The aims underpinning our strategy are as relevant now as they were four years ago. We want to:

- make it easy for customers to work with us and meet their obligations
- collect the revenue owed to the state to help fund essential services
- become a great place to work, providing better service to customers.

Customers are increasingly seeking self-service, intuitive ways to interact with us. Like all areas of government, we need to provide a more seamless customer experience and we must work fast, continually, to keep pace and meet our customers' expectations.

And there are revenue challenges ahead, with multiple pressures at play. We will increase our efforts to collect debts owed to the state and efficient revenue collection to support a strong budget to benefit citizens.

So through this past year we have been reviewing how we work and what we need to deliver. This has been both hard and immensely worthwhile and has sharpened our focus on what is important.

Significantly, we honed our focus on our customers' experience of dealing with us. We are increasing our skills with data to better understand our customers and the challenges they describe in working with us. We are using these insights to better engage, educate and empower our customers.

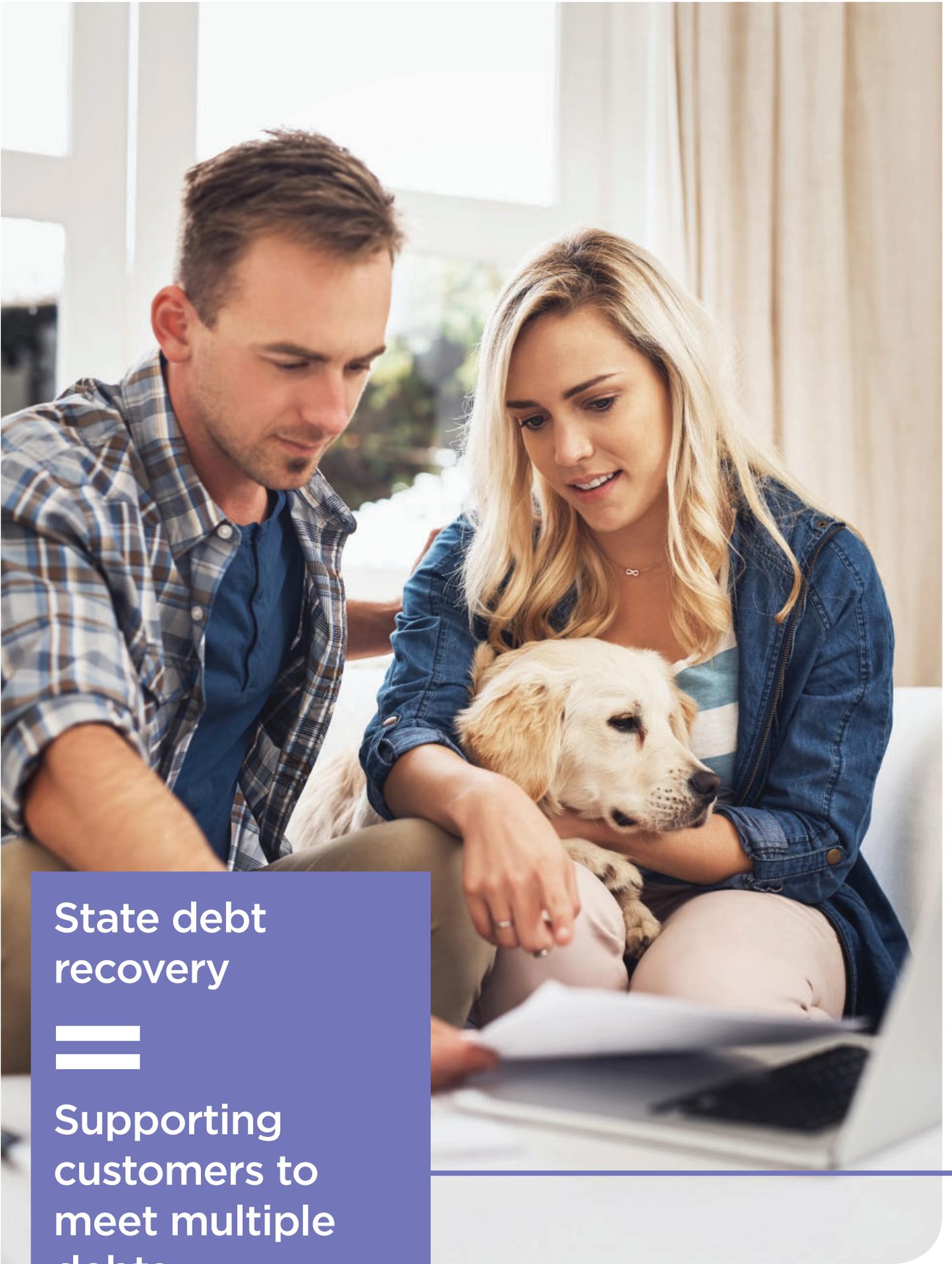
Recognising how critical it will be to get this change right, in June 2018 we appointed an Executive Director, Strategy and Transformation – Kathleen Mackay – to help guide the organisation towards our vision.

## Getting things done

While we've been accelerating our transformation, we have continued to get things done.

Following are some examples of how we have grown our services, delivered digital-first initiatives, continued our socially responsible approach to debt collection, and put the customer at the heart of our operating model – all while collecting more revenue than ever before.

# Our achievements



State debt  
recovery



Supporting  
customers to  
meet multiple  
debts

NSW citizens may owe debts to any of the various local and state government agencies. The debts can relate to council rates, licences, insurance premiums, leases and other government services.

Collecting debt isn't core business for other government agencies or councils. But it is for us. In fact, Revenue NSW has specialist capability in debt collection and management.

We've established a consolidated approach that provides an end-to-end service, including invoicing, collection, mitigation and support for customers experiencing difficulty in meeting their payment obligations.

The State Debt Recovery Act 2018 is significant as it means we can offer our fair and comprehensive debt management services to any government agency in NSW.

We start this process by working with each agency to understand their needs in extending our services to them.

In the coming year, we'll be hard at work for local councils and agencies that choose to use Revenue NSW, delivering a cost-effective, comprehensive, specialised debt recovery solution.

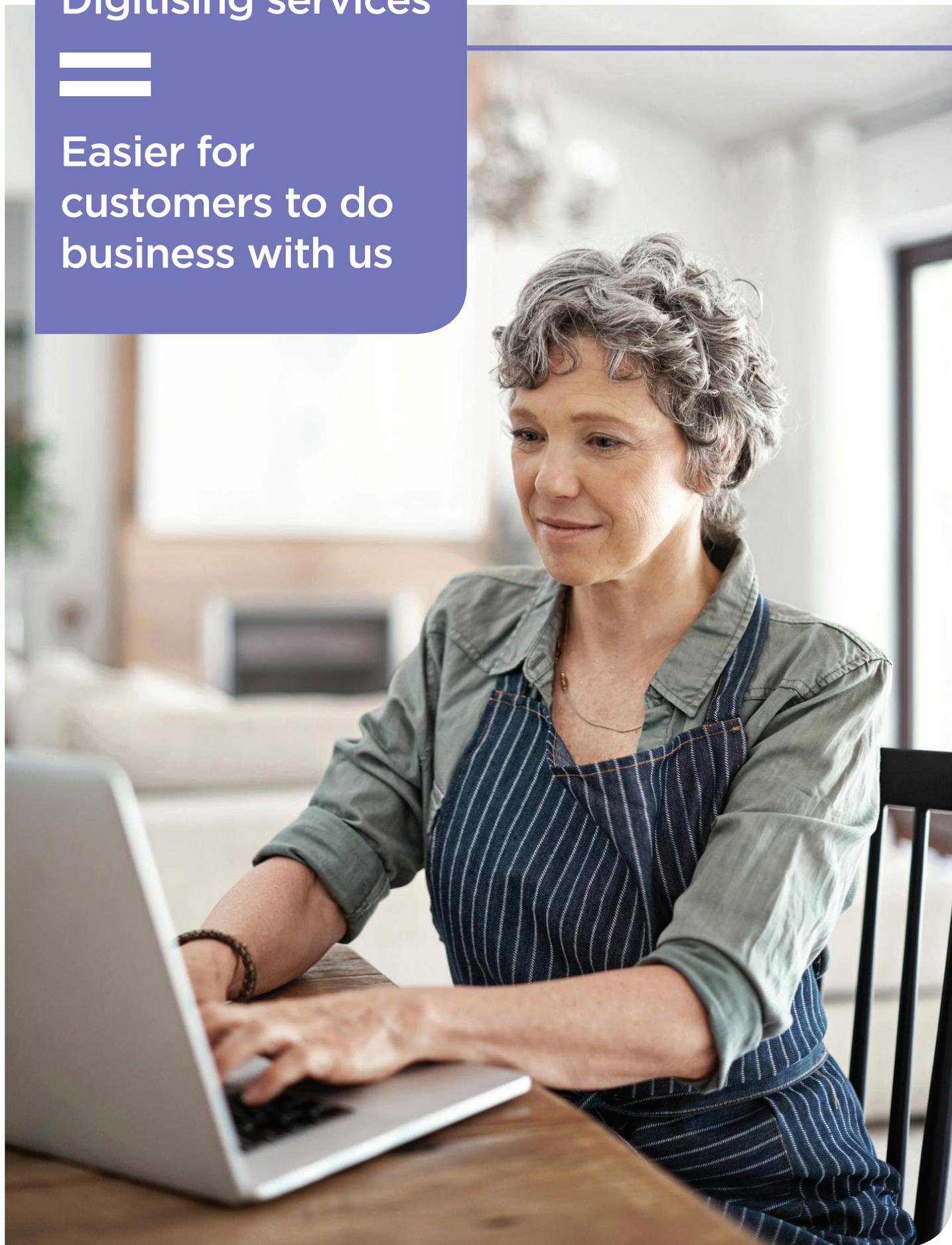
For customers, we'll have a view of their debts and we'll offer support for those who may be vulnerable or might simply need some more time to pay.

Agencies can focus on what they do best and customers will receive a better service. That's a win-win.

## Digitising services



Easier for  
customers to do  
business with us



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It's our aim to be easy to do business with. Both because you expect it, and because customers are then more likely to do the right thing.

This year, we built towards seamless digital transactions and greater self-service. Plus, we cut red tape and saved paper and postage for our customers.

## **eDuties and eConveyancing**

- Built test versions of eforms – to speed up our service to customers.
- Made digital transactions possible for more types of property.
- Electronically processed 97 per cent of dutiable transactions.
- Processed 26,638 property settlements electronically, 373 per cent more than last year.

## **eNominations**

- 45 per cent more customers used an electronic statutory declaration to transfer the camera-detected fine to the person responsible.

## **Land tax and surcharge land tax self-service**

- An online form allowed 1,378 customers to get their registrations underway before the deadline and led to \$4.6 million in taxes assessed.
- 273 customers used the online self-service option to set up an instalment payment plan.
- Online services now give customers more information and let them upload documents. This makes it easier for them to know and meet their obligations, and to get faster service.

## **ePrivate rulings**

- Digitised private rulings on taxes and grants for faster and more secure service.

## **Managing fines electronically**

- Began to use some electronic notifications, making it faster and easier for customers to pay fines.

## **Passenger Service Levy**

- Delivered a fully electronic process, paper-free from the get-go.



**Work and  
development  
orders**



**Giving customers  
non-monetary  
ways to  
finalise fines**

Yes, we're debt collectors. We have extensive powers to collect fines, such as taking money from bank accounts or wages. We will act when people refuse to pay what they owe the state or provide false information about offences.

That said, for customers who are in hardship or may find it hard to pay on time, we offer no interest payment plans, more time to pay or reduced default fees and other services.

Beyond that, we helped to design the compassionate, socially responsible Work and Development Order (WDO) program – the first of its kind in Australia.

Through WDOs, people complete unpaid work, education, treatment or counselling to resolve their fines.

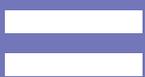
WDOs are for eligible people who:

- have serious medical, mental health or addiction problems
- have a cognitive impairment or intellectual disability
- are homeless or are experiencing severe financial hardship
- may be disproportionately impacted by fines debt.

This year, we approved 28,456 WDOs and \$34,896,136 in fines were satisfied. We also made it easier and faster for the organisations we work with to become WDO sponsors. And we've now approved more than 100,000 WDOs since the scheme began in 2011. We're rather proud of that.



Community  
outreach



Helping vulnerable  
customers

For people living outside the big cities, our outreach team know there's no substitute for talking face to face. And to do that, we go where these most vulnerable customers are.

In the past year, our outreach team connected with customers at 1150 outreach events across NSW. We participated in events everywhere from Armidale to Brewarrina, Bourke, Dubbo, Foster, Grafton, Gunnedah, Kurri Kurri, Lightning Ridge, Maitland, Menindee, Muswellbrook, Newcastle, Parramatta, Tamworth, Taree, Walgett, Wellington and Wilcannia.

At each place, we encouraged Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal service providers to use our Advocacy Hotline to resolve fines or to become a Work and Development Order (WDO) sponsor. And, with a laptop and wifi, our team went to community halls, court houses, rehabilitation facilities and juvenile justice centres, and helped vulnerable customers.

Take Law Week, when we helped 70 customers with their fines and advice about WDOs. We also set up 55 payment plans and helped 22 people meet the requirements to get their driver licence back. This is particularly important in remote communities, where a licence often means being able to get work, education, or medical attention.

By easing the burden on people who most need support, we avoid further entrenching disadvantage and help to build a fairer society.

## CX developments



Improving our  
service model  
for customers



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Each time you deal with Revenue NSW, we want you to get professional service from us. We aim to be fair, accountable, responsive and informed.

We made a clear public commitment of what to expect from us when we published our Customer Charter. It also includes what we expect from you so we can best meet your needs.

Our success relies on us thinking about you first. That's where our Customer Experience strategy guides us. It keeps us focussed on understanding and anticipating your needs and giving you the online, on-demand services you expect.

In practice, that included surveying land tax customers and changing the way we did things after studying the results. We updated our service level agreements, gave our staff new, extra training and streamlined our systems to better serve you if you call.

Putting our customers at the heart of everything we do is shaping our culture. From this year, it's mandatory for each staff member's performance plan to include a customer service objective.

We're bringing consultation and insights ever more deeply into our work. And we now have a group of people as Customer Experience Champions, carrying your needs front of mind through each piece of work every day.

# Housing affordability measures



## Giving financial support to first-home buyers



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Buying your first home is likely to be your most memorable – and perhaps nerve-wracking – property transaction. We support first home buyers with concessions that keep money in their pockets and grants that bolster their budget.

In 2017/18, we put in place the new First Home Buyer's Assistance Scheme. Subsequently, we helped 32,685 purchasers to manage their transfer duty obligations, with exemptions or concessions worth \$476 million.

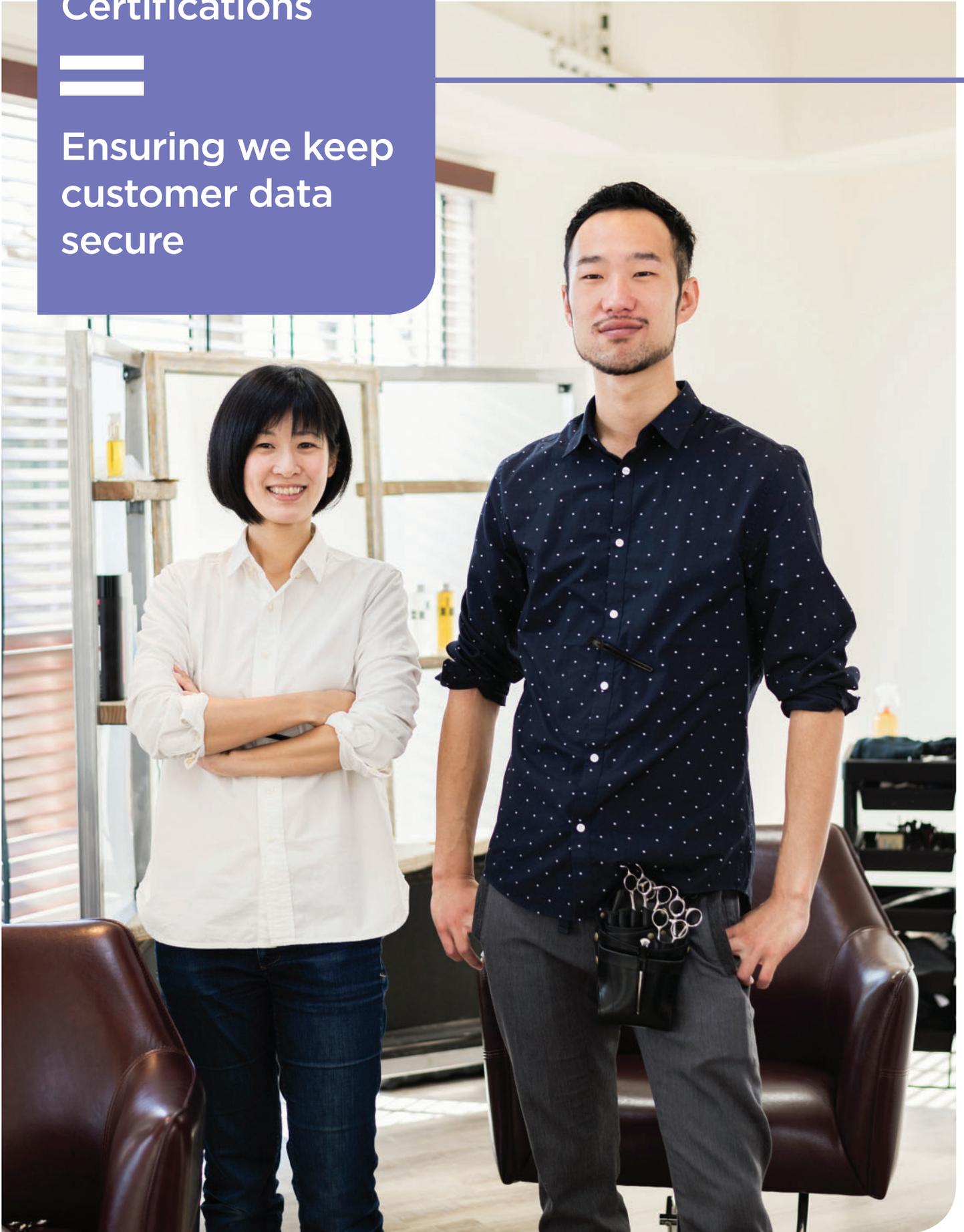
We also helped another 8,948 buyers with a grant to purchase their first home. The total value of these grants was \$107 million.

We administer land tax and duty surcharges paid by foreign persons, which help affordability and fund the infrastructure that enables new homes to be built sooner. These measures raised \$299 million for the people of NSW.

## Certifications



Ensuring we keep  
customer data  
secure





Each day, in every interaction, we are asking our customers to trust us with their information. That is one of the reasons data security is so important to us and a driver for us to show that we meet the rigours of independent, third-party verification.

We're proud to have held ISO 9001 certification since 2005 and this year we achieved recertification, to ISO 9001:2015 and to ISO 27001.

A lot of work went into this. We took a collaborative approach and reviewed the processes of six business areas. We also trained 25 new reviewers and completed 12 recommendations from an external ISO 9001 audit.

We didn't stop there. We also planned the reviews of another 16 business processes. This work will again focus on increasing our customers' confidence in us as we continue to improve our information security and processes.

Record revenue



Funding essential  
services for NSW  
citizens





Hospitals, trains, teachers, police. Each is an example of the essential services funded by the revenue we collect that ensure our State is fair, safe and prosperous.

In 2017/18, we collected a record amount of revenue. The \$30.2 billion collected equates to 37 per cent of NSW's finances. This money will be used to better our State and serve its people.

This is the third year in a row that we've set a record for revenue collected. And that's important, given pressures that include a softening housing market which lowers the transfer duty collected, and a lesser share of GST coming to NSW.

Compliance - making sure that taxes that should be paid are being paid - is part of our commitment to delivering strong budgets. For example, in 2017/18, we identified \$529 million of tax compliance revenue, exceeding our target of \$350 million.

There are many factors outside of our control that affect the amount of available revenue in a given year. But collecting revenue as efficiently as possible is our core business - and a third year of record revenue and a strong compliance result suggests we are doing our job well.

# Our focus

Our plan of what to focus on in 2018/19 is different from how we have gone about things before.

We have recognised that our greatest opportunity lies in making key improvements that benefit our whole business. This enterprise approach will also free up some of our capacity to deliver on our transformation in a more accelerated way.

With increasing understanding of our customers, we are being more targeted in the programs we choose to progress.

And we are committing to responding not only to our own pace of change, but to changes in the environment in which we operate. For us, that means a proactive review every quarter of what should - or shouldn't - be in our plan.

However we pivot, we will continue to deliver against our themes of *Know me*, *Empower me* and *Wow me*, that reach towards three, powerful, transformation outcomes.



2017/18 has been a strong year for Revenue NSW. We look forward with you to the next.