

The Minns Labor Government



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A new Government

The NSW Labor Party has returned to power after 12 years in the wilderness, with election victory coming off the back of an energetic and disciplined campaign spearheaded by its Leader, now Premier Chris Minns MP.

At the time of writing, the final seat count remains unclear with several seats still too close to call. It was clear from early on during election night that the NSW Labor Party's gains across the state were so significant that it would be the only party in a position to form government. The concession and victory speeches happened far earlier in the night than most had expected, and Labor has since been promised supply and confidence already from three Independent MPs, paving the way for it to form Government with a likely total of at least 45 seats in the 93 seat Lower House.

It is the first time Labor has won from Opposition in NSW since 1995, when Bob Carr came to power.

The campaign has been dubbed a 'race to the top', with a notable absence of overtly negative and personal attacks between the leaders. Internal critics have lamented the Coalition campaign's lack of negative messaging around Minns and his agenda, as well as Labor's small target strategy and lack of long-term vision. The media and voters, however, appear to have embraced a move away from 'politics as we know it'. Time will tell how long that lasts.

For Dominic Perrottet and the Coalition, winning an historic fourth consecutive term was always going to be a tough undertaking, with only three governments in the history of the state achieving this feat. The electorate ultimately, and quite emphatically decided "it's time" and called time on the Coalition Government, despite the changes in Leadership over the last 12 years and Perrottet's deliberate effort to chart his own path as Premier – arguably with a more enterprising and innovative policy agenda than any of his predecessors. Many voters would certainly have considered how things turned out last time they handed a three-term government its fourth term – the regrettable Labor circus from 2007 to 2011.

The Minns Labor team campaigned heavily on the issues that helped sway votes in critical seats over much of the past six months, and now having reached the summit and won the election, comes the more challenging and substantial duty of governing Australia's largest state.

This document gives an overview of Minns and his likely Cabinet, helping to shed some light on the kind of Premier he will be and the influence and drive of the team around him.

Who is Premier Minns?

Chris Minns was born in 1982, raised by parents John and Cara, a school principal and a solicitor, in the St George area of Sydney. He attended Marist Catholic College in Kogarah before going on to study at the University of New England and Princeton University in the United States.

The Labor Party captured Chris Minns at a young age. He joined Young Labor at 17, inspired by both his father and former Labor Prime Minister Paul Keating. He eventually met his wife, Anna, at a party function whilst volunteering during the 1999 state election campaign. Today they have three sons, aged 14, 12 and 5.

At 24, Minns became a Hurstville City Councillor and the president of NSW Young Labor. Following this, he worked in advisory roles in the ministerial offices of Carl Scully, Morris Iemma, and John Robertson. He did time in Labor's Sussex Street headquarters as Assistant General Secretary of the New South Wales ALP.

Notwithstanding this extensive involvement in politics, Minns also spent time as a stay-at-home dad, whilst his wife Anna pursued a successful career in law and business. He also acted as an on-call firefighter whilst completing his Master's degree in Public Policy at Princeton.

In 2015, Minns was elected to the NSW Parliament as the member for Kogarah. He was promoted to the front bench only a year later; appointed Shadow Minister for Water by then Labor leader Luke Foley.

In 2015 he was selected as the only State ALP nominee in the Labor future leaders training program which included now-Federal Treasurer Jim Chalmers and Albanese Cabinet members Claire O'Neill and Ed Husic. Minn's now deputy Prue Car and Transport Minister-elect, Jo Haylen participated in the two subsequent cohorts.

Minns displayed courage when he began his public life, using his inaugural speech in the parliament to warn against trade union dominance over Labor's affairs. He called for union control within party forums to be reduced, and for Labor to represent not only unionists, but also people not in unions.

This speech earned Minns plenty of enemies in NSW Labor's powerful industrial wing. The fallout was to linger for years and cost Minns the Labor leadership in both 2018 and 2019. But it also marked him out as a Labor moderniser; someone at ease with the modern economy and not a slave to the labour movement's traditions.

In November 2018, after the resignation of Foley, Minns audaciously threw his hat in the ring for the Labor leadership. He lost the caucus ballot to Michael Daley, 33 votes to 12. The key party and union powerbrokers based in Sussex Street intervened to ensure Minns was soundly defeated.

Following Michael Daley's spectacular campaign implosion and March 2019 state election loss, Minns ran for the leadership in a ballot of the entire Labor Party membership. Again, the Labor machine moved heaven and earth to block Minns. Then General Secretary Kaila Murnain convinced Jodi McKay to nominate for the leadership and ran her campaign. 63 per cent of the Labor Party branch members voted for McKay, who also narrowly won the vote of parliamentary caucus members.

A little over four years into his parliamentary career, Minns was a two-time loser for the Labor leadership. His prospects appeared dim, with Labor's extra-parliamentary machine leaders committed to blocking his advancement.

How did Minns find his way back from the wilderness? As Harold Macmillan said, "events, dear boy, events". For several years after he entered the parliament Minns was on the outer with many of his Labor colleagues, but since 2021 he has enjoyed a political tailwind.

The Independent Commission Against Corruption ended the career of his nemesis, General Secretary Kaila Murnain. Additionally, one of Jodi McKay's closest allies, Blue Mountains MP Trish Doyle, misused parliamentary privilege to force a Nationals MP out of the parliament. The subsequent by-election in the seat of Upper Hunter was a disaster for Labor, effectively marking the end of McKay's leadership after only two years in the role.

State Labor was preparing for its fourth leader in less than three years, and Chris Minns was the only real option for a party desperate for a fresh face and a fresh start. A disparate collection of Labor MPs and non-parliamentary figures came together to back Minns into the leadership, which he assumed unopposed on 4 June 2021.

Minns surrounded himself with a small group of youthful Labor MPs hungry for government. The member for Summer Hill, Jo Haylen, together with Upper House members Daniel Mookhey and Rose Jackson, and Deputy Leader Prue Car, form his praetorian guard and manage caucus relations on his behalf.

Within four months Minns was facing a new Premier due to the sudden resignation of Gladys Berejiklian. With both McKay, Berejiklian and Transport Minister Andrew Constance choosing to leave parliament, Minns was the big winner at the subsequent by-elections. Labor kept hold on Strathfield, via the highly talented Jason Li, and captured Bega from the Liberal Party with a popular local doctor as the ALP candidate. The Liberals barely managed to crawl over the line in Gladys' previously blue-ribbon seat of Willoughby, in a 2022 preview of the collapse of the Liberal vote in its affluent heartland.

Those by-election results, in February 2022, energised Minns's shadow cabinet and parliamentary team. Victory in 2023 suddenly seemed a real prospect. Anthony Albanese then led Labor back into federal government and the safest conservative seats in Sydney's north and east fell to the Teal independents. Suddenly, for the first time in more than a decade Labor seemed a more formidable political beast than the Liberal Party in Australia's largest state. This was comprehensively confirmed in March 2023, as Labor earned a 7% two-party swing under Minns' leadership.

Of the nine living former Leaders of the NSW Labor Party, Minns remains close to former bosses Morris Iemma and John Robertson and to Luke Foley - who initially saw his talent and promoted him to the front bench. He has turned to all three for advice on the business of campaigning, governing and the intricacies of effectively leading the NSW Labor Party. Minns' inner circle also includes Federal Energy Minister, Chris Bowen, AWU National Secretary Daniel Walton, ALP Secretary and now Member of the NSW Upper House Bob Nanva, Minister for the Sydney Olympics, Michael Knight.

Minns focus areas and key policy drivers

Coming to office amidst a period of the highest inflation in a generation, Minns will be obliged to focus immediately on implementing the **cost of living** measures promised during the election campaign, all of which are easier said than done.

Exit polls and analysis of the result have suggested that core state services – **health, education, transport and emergency services** – weighed heavily on the minds of voters this election. Delivery of Labor’s pledges to remove the public sector wage cap, address hospital staff ratios, education standards and improve the retention of the state’s key workers across the board will be key challenges facing relevant Cabinet Ministers from day one.

At the state level these are issues on which voters have historically turned to Labor Governments for solutions. The extent to which standards and staff morale in these essential state services have improved or not will be a decisive metric for voters when it comes time to decide whether they give Labor a second term four years from now.

While **housing** did not feature prominently in the campaign, economic circumstances dictate that it will loom large as an issue for Minns and his Cabinet to keep high on the agenda. This policy area will continue to be a growing challenge, which is indicated by immigration returning to normal levels, the shortcomings of the NSW planning system in delivering supply, and the chronic under-supply of social and affordable housing – all a product of and exacerbating influence on the long running housing affordability crisis.

The state’s bulging infrastructure pipeline will need immediate attention as Labor takes stock of escalating costs on projects underway, while providing continuity to the sector. Labor avoided making any outrageous infrastructure commitments through its campaign, with **fiscal restraint** a key feature of its pitch.

Moving forward it will need to continue the 2023 procurement on perhaps the largest of our mega projects, Sydney Metro West. Blowouts and delivery risks on the Sydney Metro Bankstown Line upgrade will be top of the agenda for incoming Transport Minister Jo Haylen, who will need to make a call on how and whether to progress with the project.

NSW Labor will also need to find \$3.3b to deliver Parramatta Light Rail Stage 2 between now and 2032. This was the only new “mega project” promised during the campaign. It will also need to meet its own infrastructure promises, with the concurrent constraints of no privatisation proceeds, no new tolls and a preference for local procurement of rolling stock.

With its first Budget set to be handed down in late June, Minns and Treasurer Daniel Mookhey will start work immediately on **reviewing the state’s finances**. The pandemic hangover lingers in the Budget, a fact acknowledged by Labor pre-election in its fiscally restrained approach to major spending promises. While the removal of the public sector wage cap will come at a cost, Minns and Mookhey have flagged savings and efficiencies elsewhere in recurrent expenditure. Exactly how this materialises in machinery of government changes, rationalising of executive roles and department head counts remains to be seen.

Mookhey has made it clear to colleagues to expect to hear more “no” than “yes” from him.

The likely Minns Cabinet team

The core portfolios belonging to Minns' leadership team in Opposition appear likely to remain with them. Confirmed during the campaign and again since the election night victory speech. An interim Ministry will be sworn in early to receive public service briefings, including most of the senior leadership team outlined below.

Daniel Mookhey, Treasurer

Daniel Mookhey, the youngest of three siblings, was born in Blacktown to Indian migrant parents, and raised in Merrylands. When he was five years old he lost his father from a heart attack. He and his siblings were raised by their mother. He attended Model Farms High School in Baulkham Hills and Girraween High School for his senior years.

Before entering politics, Mookhey studied economics and law and completed his master's degree in Defence Studies. He previously has worked as a Transport Workers Union official and lawyer and held senior roles in the Australian Council of Trade Unions.

Mookhey entered the NSW Legislative Council in 2015, the first Hindu to serve in the NSW Parliament.

As Shadow Treasurer he has performed effectively in budget estimates and parliamentary committee hearings, scrutinising ministerial conduct and performance and the failings of government agencies. He has terrorised Cabinet members and public servants alike as he sought out government waste and conspiracy.

No other Labor member has been as effective in opposition as Mookhey, whose efforts have hurt the government politically and built momentum for Labor. Mookhey led the Opposition's policy review and will be a sobering force on ministerial spending ambition as he tries to balance the books in a tough fiscal environment.

He is a highly intelligent, with an analytical mind, and bureaucrats will be amazed/scared of his capacity to understand the detail. He is quirky and somewhat insular and certainly doesn't bring with him, nor will he be captured by, a coterie of business mates to the Treasury portfolio like many before him. He is, however, very receptive to private investment. He will be forensic in his commitment to budget repair and in restoring Treasury's position as a core 'central agency' that drives economic growth and brings a genuine assurance role to public spending. He is certainly not from 'central casting' as a politician, preferring good policy outcomes to politically popular ones.

An unresolved question for both the state's public sector union leaders and the new Labor cabinet is whether their relationship will be marked by confrontation or cooperation. The relationship between the last NSW Labor Government and the unions collapsed spectacularly, with electricity privatisation the most public point of dispute. A body of opinion in the union wing retains hostility towards Labor's parliamentary wing and will be keen to show the new government who is boss. There will be no shortage of union claims for 'catch up' after twelve years of Coalition rule.

Daniel Mookhey will be central to efforts to forge a new consensus between the Minns Government and the state's public sector unions. He is a close confidante of Unions NSW leader Mark Morey and will be the key conduit to Health Services Union chief Gerard Hayes and Public Service Association Stewart Little.

He will bring a focus on the largely unregulated gig economy. He will look to extend protections to the low paid, youthful gig economy workforce using his familiarity with the provisions of the NSW Industrial Relations Act that allow the Transport Workers Union to represent owner drivers.

Minns will rely heavily upon Mookhey to bring discipline to governing as he has led much of the internal thinking in Labor in recent months about ‘governing’, while Minns focused almost exclusively on ‘winning’.

Prue Car, Deputy Premier and Minister for Education

Prue Car was born and raised in Western Sydney. She attended Caroline Chisholm College in Glenmore Park and attended her first Labor Party function at 15.

She has earned her stripes as a bare-knuckled political brawler in outer western Sydney, fighting the Liberal Party in fiercely contested campaigns for local, state and federal government in and around Penrith. Car is immensely popular with Labor’s branch members across western Sydney.

Car served on Penrith City Council for 7 years before running as the Labor candidate for Londonderry in the 2015 state election, winning the seat off the Liberal Party. Under the leadership of then leader Luke Foley, Car was promoted to the frontbench and appointed to the role of Shadow Minister for Skills and Shadow Assistant Minister for Education.

Drafting Car as deputy leader was the final piece in the jigsaw that allowed the Labor caucus to transition from Jodi McKay’s leadership to Minns, and helped it build a stronger reputation in Western Sydney.

As Minister for Education and Early Childhood Learning Car will manage the roll out of universal pre-kindergarten for all four-year-olds, tackle the acute teacher shortage and negotiate with the notoriously challenging Teachers’ Federation leadership.

Prue Car will be the most senior minister in Greater Western Sydney and will have the responsibility for not taking the region for granted, as past Labor Governments have. She will lead the government’s constant campaigning in the suburban commuter and mortgage belt that encompasses the arc between the M2 and M5 motorways across the Greater West.

Jo Haylen, Minister for Transport

Jo Haylen grew up in Sydney, attending Willoughby Girls High School. She studied a Bachelor of Arts at the University of Sydney. She worked in the office of former Prime Minister Julia Gillard and as deputy chief of staff for Anthony Albanese during his time as Deputy Prime Minister in 2013, and is a ‘charter member’ of Albo’s inner west circle, remaining close to the PM.

Haylen served as youngest ever female Mayor of Marrickville Council in 2013-14. In 2015 she entered the Parliament as member for the newly redistributed electorate of Summer Hill, beating the Greens in a tough campaign.

She joined the frontbench under the leadership of Jodi McKay, serving in numerous junior portfolios. Upon Minns’ ascension to the leadership Haylen was promoted to the transport portfolio.

Jo Haylen’s was one of the 12 votes for Minns when he made his first run at the job in 2018. She remained a supporter and confidante throughout his wilderness years. She remains close to him, providing left faction support for the right faction Premier. She is a senior member of Labor’s leadership group.

Haylen will have her hands full managing the huge Transport portfolio. She will focus on rebuilding commuter confidence in service delivery, establishing trust with the unions, managing the roll out of new metro and light rail lines within extreme budget constraints and delivering Labor’s promises around boosted local content.

Haylen has spent more time than most of her colleagues preparing to be a minister. In addition to the standard shadow ministerial tasks of criticising and opposing, Haylen has diligently concentrated on building her knowledge base, consulting widely with transport industry veterans, former mandarins, and the private sector.

She will likely bring the experienced Scott Gartrell on board to establish her ministerial office. She is more likely than most of her colleagues to hit the ground running as a cabinet minister.

Paul Scully, Minister for Planning & Public Spaces

Paul Scully was born and raised in Wollongong and is the third generation of his family to call the area home. He attended Figtree High School, before studying at the University of Wollongong, and was the first in his family to complete both high school and university, and now holds degrees in economics and management. He joined NSW Young Labor, which is where he met his wife Alison Byrnes, the Federal Labor MP for Cunningham.

Before entering parliament, Scully worked at the University of Wollongong's Australian Institute for Innovative Materials, and has also worked for state and federal Labor ministers. In 2016, Scully was elected to parliament in a hard fought by-election contest with Wollongong Lord Mayor Gordon Bradbery. His major responsibility as a shadow minister has been in the politically sensitive planning portfolio, however, Minns also handed him the police and counter terrorism portfolios to look after when Walt Secord resigned from the shadow cabinet.

Minns has anointed Scully as the man to break through the bureaucracy and approve new residential land release to help ease the housing affordability crisis. The job of Planning Minister is more than a full time one, meaning that Minns will need to find someone else to look after the Police portfolio.

When Labor was last in office, successive planning ministers became lightning rods for discontent, earning the ire of both the property sector and community activists. Under Minns's leadership, Labor has spruiked the benefits of increased density around public transport corridors, a far cry from the rhetoric of many state oppositions that allege 'overdevelopment' at every opportunity.

Factionally aligned with the Right, Scully will bring a no-nonsense approach to the Planning portfolio. He could form a successful partnership with dynamic Planning Department boss, Mick Cassel as they together try to unblock the delays that have beset the north-west flood plain, the Aerotropolis and the implementing Labor's policy of rebalancing housing growth towards inner city areas where NIMBYism often prevails.

One of the most important internal tensions will be the relationships between Scully, Haylen, and Housing Minister-elect Rose Jackson about the integration of planning and transport, including the TAHE development portfolio, the future of Landcom, LaHC and the need to expand the supply of social and affordable housing. Scully is likely to take on the Infrastructure portfolio also.

Penny Sharpe, Minister for the Environment and Leader of the Government in the Legislative Council

An 18-year veteran of the state's Upper House and former parliamentary secretary under Labor Premiers Emma, Rees, and Keneally, Penny Sharpe will bring executive experience to a government dominated by men and women who have only known opposition.

Sharpe was born and raised in Canberra, later moving to Sydney to attend the University of New South Wales. Prior to entering parliament, she worked as a policy advisor to state ministers in the areas of vocational education and training, community services, homelessness, drug and alcohol, juvenile justice, and young people. She also designed programs for young people with the Australian Student Trainee Foundation, developing partnerships between schools, businesses, and communities to provide workplace learning.

When Michael Daley was elected leader in late 2018, the Party's left faction insisted on Sharpe's ascension to the Deputy Leadership, an unusual development as she was not a member of the Lower House. Following Labor's 2019 defeat, Sharpe acted as Leader for three months while McKay and Minns contested the leadership in a ballot of Labor's entire membership.

When Chris Minns assumed the leadership in 2021, Sharpe was appointed as Leader of the Opposition in the Legislative Council, replacing Daley, and McKay loyalist Adam Searle. She sought and received the environment portfolio from Minns, adding heritage in 2022.

Penny Sharpe will be a valuable asset for the Minns Government, negotiating with the minor parties in the Upper House pass legislation in a chamber that Labor does not control. She is a calm and considered legislator and will bring stability to the Party and to the Cabinet.

John Graham, Minister for Roads & Arts and Deputy Leader in the Legislative Council

John Graham grew up in regional NSW in Albury, and attended Newcastle High, before studying a Bachelor of Economics at the University of Sydney. He is married to federal Assistant Climate Change Minister, Senator Jenny McAllister, and has two children.

Graham has been involved in politics for much of his career, working as an advisor for state governments in both NSW and QLD, including as the Deputy Chief of Staff for former NSW Premier Nathan Rees. Graham served as the Assistant General Secretary for the NSW Labor Party for six years, before joining the Legislative Council in 2016, filling the vacancy left by Sophie Cotsis, who had resigned to contest the seat of Canterbury in the by-election.

He became the Deputy Leader of the Opposition in the Legislative Council in 2021, and appointed as the Shadow Special Minister of State, Shadow Minister for Roads, and Shadow Minister for Music and the Night Time Economy. He made his name as a forensic examiner of government practice in the Upper House Inquiry environment and has balanced his conservative approach to the Roads portfolio with a more expansive foray into Arts and the Night Time Economy.

The development and prosecution of Labor's campaign on motorway tolls and traffic fines has given Graham significant political standing, alongside his partnership with Daniel Mookhey attacking the Coalition via Upper House inquiries. As a senior member of the new leadership team, he will now have the authority to flex some muscle in government.

Despite his Left faction background, Graham emerges as one of the most entrepreneurial Ministers and might be given wider responsibility in areas like Tourism, Trade and Investment, which will be vital growth and job drivers in a fiscally constrained government.

Rose Jackson, Minister for Housing & Minister for Water

Rose Jackson was raised in the eastern suburbs of Sydney, and attended Newtown High School of the Performing Arts, before studying law and economics at the University of Sydney. She participated heavily in student activism, became involved in the labour movement, and moved into the NSW ALP Head Office as the key left faction figure.

Together with her close ally Jo Haylen, she supported Chris Minns during the years he was on the outer with his Party colleagues. She entered the Legislative Council in 2019, immediately impressing as an effective operator on parliamentary inquiries and estimates committees. When Minns became leader in 2021, Jackson joined the frontbench as Shadow Minister for Water, Housing and Homelessness.

Jackson is ambitious, talented and a member of Minns's 'kitchen cabinet'. She will have an ongoing political management role, as the conduit to the Party's left leaning activists, explaining and defending government policies and actions.

The interaction between Jackson and Planning Minister Scully will be very important for Labor as it tries to manage the housing crisis. This includes matters such as the creation of the promised Homes

NSW and the reporting lines of various government property and placemaking agencies, including the dismantling of TAHE, the owner of the State's rail assets.

Ryan Park, Minister for Health

Ryan Park was born and raised in the Illawarra and attended the University of Wollongong. He completed his Bachelor of Education and Master of Education, worked as a teacher at Lake Illawarra High School and then within the Department of Education as a Curriculum Adviser. He has two children with his wife, Kara.

He served as Chief of Staff to then Minister for Transport and Roads David Campbell, and following Campbell's resignation from the ministry in 2010, Park was appointed as the Deputy Director General of the Department of Transport. Park was endorsed as the Labor candidate for Keira and won the seat in the 2011 NSW election. He has chalked up over a decade as a shadow minister, serving in a host of portfolios, including Treasury.

None of this is a sufficient preparation for taking on perhaps the most challenging portfolio of all in government. All state oppositions are prone to 'ambulance chasing', trotting out victims for the media and highlighting lengthy waiting lists. A Health Minister actually has to run a health system, and NSW has the biggest one in Australia.

Park, like every Health Minister, will be challenged by the sheer size of the state's public health system, the difficulties of negotiating with its key interest groups and wrangling the intractable problems of hospital staffing, doctors in the West and the bush, and cost-shifting between Canberra and Macquarie St.

To date, Minns has taken the lead on dealing with the health unions. Health Services Union leader Gerard Hayes drives a hard bargain and will not stay silent if he perceives that the Nurses' Association are receiving more favourable treatment than his members in ancillary roles. Minns will expect Park to quickly come to terms with not only these unions, but the powerful doctors in the NSW health system and their own industrial clubs that sensible measures such as skilled migration initiatives.

Other portfolios will be confirmed following the first meeting of the NSW Labor Parliamentary caucus. While no major changes are expected, some are likely as Minns may take account for the return of former Minister Steven Whan in the seat of Monaro. It is also likely that there will be appointments that reflect early and obvious machinery of government changes – for example the Transport Cluster was previously reporting to four Ministers.

Jihad Dib, Minister for Energy & Climate Change

Jihad Dib was born in Lebanon and migrated to Australia when he was two years old, growing up in the Sutherland Shire and attending Heathcote High School. He studied at the University of Wollongong completing a Bachelor of Arts and Graduate Diploma of Education, and first taught at Ulladulla High School. He is married to wife Erin and has three children.

Dib is well-known for his work as Principal of Punchbowl Boys High School between 2007 and 2014, in which time he revolutionised the school and its reputation within the community. During his tenure, Dib doubled enrolments, reduced absenteeism and dramatically improved educational outcomes and culture. The school was awarded a National Literacy and Numeracy award and the Director General's Award, and Dib won the 2013 Pride of Australia Award in the Inspiration category.

In the 2015 election, Dib ran for, and won, the seat of Lakemba, receiving a swing of almost 15% to Labor. After the resignation of Linda Burney in 2016, who did so to contest the federal seat of Barton, he was appointed as Shadow Minister for Education. Following the 2019 election Dib was appointed the portfolios for Youth, Juvenile Justice, Skills and TAFE and became Shadow Minister Assisting on Multiculturalism. In 2021, this changed again, and Dib was appointed Shadow Minister for Emergency Services and Shadow Minister for Energy and Climate Change.

High on his agenda will be the renewable energy zones the Coalition promised but dithered over, including the frustration of global investors keen to develop a hydrogen industry and export sector in Newcastle. Importantly, he has to keep the lights on as respected agencies and experts predict massive energy shortfalls for the east coast in the next few years. Energy affordability and its role in the increasing cost-of-living will be at the forefront of the minds of the community and critics. Dib, who is very close to Minns and former Labor Leader, Morris Iemma, will need to bring urgency to the portfolio, resisting the temptation that overtook Matt Kean to focus more on the politics of inner city progressives than the practicalities of the portfolio in his decision making.

Greg Warren, Minister for Western Sydney

Greg Warren was born and raised in Dubbo and enlisted in the Australian Regular Army at seventeen, serving in both the Royal Australian Infantry Corp and Royal Australian Corp of Transport for eight years. Warren moved to Campbelltown and joined the Labor Party after his discharge. He studied a Master of Business Administration with the Australian Institute of Business and has two children with his wife Simone.

Warren joined the Camden Council as a Councillor, and served as Mayor from 2011 to 2012, before being elected to the NSW Parliament. In the 2015 NSW election, he became the Member for Campbelltown, replacing his Liberal predecessor with a swing of more than 14% to Labor. Following the 2019 election, Warren received an even further swing, securing his seat on a 17% margin, and in July 2021 he was appointed the shadow portfolios of Local Government, Veterans and Western Sydney.

Anoulack Chanthivong, Minister for Finance & Shadow Minister for Industry and Trade

Anoulack Chanthivong was born in Laos and migrated to Australia with his family at age six, growing up in the Campbelltown region. He attended Robert Townson High School before completing a Bachelor of Commerce and Master of Economics at the University of Sydney, and a Master of Economics at the London School of Economics and Political Science. He is married to wife, Anna, and has a daughter.

Chanthivong has served on the Campbelltown Council since 2004, and was Mayor between 2011 - 2012 where he also worked as an economist, before his successful election as the Member for Macquarie Fields in 2015. He is the first person of Laotian descent to be elected to NSW Parliament. Chanthivong joined the frontbench and was appointed the portfolios of Industry and Trade and Finance in June 2021 by Chris Minns.

Julia Finn, Minister for Sport & Youth

Julia Finn was born and raised in Canowindra, in Central West NSW, and has been a resident of the Granville and Rosehill areas for almost thirty years. Finn studied a Bachelor of Arts at the University of Sydney, a Master of Social Science at RMIT and a Master of Environmental Studies at Macquarie University. She is married to husband, Dr Leigh Martin.

Finn has a long background in public policy within the New South Wales public service, including advising for the Department of Water and Energy, Housing NSW, and Transport for NSW. She served as a Councillor on the Parramatta City Council between 1999 and 2015, and as Lord Mayor between 2004 to 2005.

Finn first joined Parliament in 2015 when she was elected as the Member for Granville, gaining the seat from the Liberal Party with a swing of 5.53%. Under Jodi McKay's leadership in 2019, Finn was appointed as the Shadow Minister for the portfolios of Carers and Consumer Protection. Following an internal investigation into branch stacking issues, in which her involvement was allegedly identified, she temporarily stood down from the portfolios in June 2020 to clear her name, and was reinstated at the end of that year. Finn became the Shadow Minister for Sport and for Youth In 2021, appointed by Chris Minns.

David Harris, Minister for Jobs, Investment and Tourism & Aboriginal Affairs

David Harris has represented the Central Coast seat of Wyong since 2015. A former primary school principal, Harris has served previously as a Shadow Assistant Minister for Education and Skills. He has been Shadow Minister for Aboriginal Affairs since 2016, and has held a variety of shadow portfolios during his time in the Parliament.

Harris has most recently shadowed outgoing Minister for Investment and Tourism, Stuart Ayres and comes into government with the global tourism sector on a strong post-pandemic rebound. The future of the Trade and Investment cluster will be high on the agenda in this portfolio, as will the coordination of destination marketing leading up to the opening of Western Sydney Airport in 2026.

Tim Crakanthorp, Minister for Skills & TAFE

Member for Newcastle, Tim Crakanthorp was elected to Parliament in his Labor heartland seat following a 2014 byelection brought about by ICAC findings against his predecessor. Prior to entering state politics, he served on Newcastle Council for eight years, and worked in a variety of public sector roles. He was elevated to the Shadow Cabinet following Minns' ascension to Leader of the Opposition in 2021.

He has been a vocal critic of the Government and its failings to address skills shortages and invest adequately in the vocational training sector. As Minister for the sector, Crakanthorp will be working to urgently address economy-wide worker shortages, and with Labor Governments in each mainland state and federally, he may face the opportunity to play a pivotal role in the national reform of the sector.