

Media Release

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All funeral providers should be open about pricing

The Independent Pricing and Regulatory Tribunal (IPART) has found that some funeral providers don't provide enough information to the public about funeral prices.

However, there has been an improvement since IPART highlighted the issue earlier this year.

The findings are contained in IPART's final report on costs, pricing and competition in the NSW funeral industry.

"Consumers need to be able to get the right funeral for them at a price they can afford. To do this they need to be able to access that information quickly and easily, particularly at a time when they are grieving and under time pressure," said Tribunal member Deborah Cope.

"We found that at least 75% of funeral providers have some price information on their websites, compared to only two thirds when we published our draft report in April. However, they can and should do better," Ms Cope added.

"It has been a legal requirement for funeral providers in NSW to publish pricing and other information on their websites for over a year now, and we want to see higher levels of compliance."

IPART received positive feedback on a sample consumer checklist to help people compare funeral providers and understand their rights, responsibilities and choices when it comes to organising a funeral

The final report recommends that the checklist and a consumer guide be further developed by NSW Fair Trading.

IPART's funeral review looked at affordability and choice for funeral services in rural and regional NSW, as well as across Sydney.

"We found that most people in NSW have access to a choice of funeral providers and a range of funeral services that meet their needs.

"Most people are satisfied with the funerals they purchase. However, people told us that the process of organising a funeral can be confusing, and that more information would help," said Ms Cope.

There are wide variations in price to navigate, with even a 'no service no attendance' simple cremation without a ceremony ranging from less than \$2,000 to more than \$7,000. A standard funeral with a service ranges from \$5,000 to around \$9,000 (not including burial costs).

Ms Cope said "Some people called for more regulation of the industry, but we found that this would likely only add to the costs of a funeral without increasing industry standards."

The Final Report is available at www.ipart.nsw.gov.au.

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