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Axe falling on silly laws

SIMON BENSON
NATIONAL POLITICAL EDITOR

THE three million people expected to eventually sign up to the NBN will no longer be forced to store giant back-up batteries in their homes, shaving almost \$100 million off the cost of the rollout.

The Daily Telegraph has learned scrapping of the mandatory requirement for all new NBN customers — to power their phones in case of a blackout and imposed under the previous government — will save broadband customers \$20 million.

Instead the installation of the cumbersome battery would be optional, with the government claiming that with 23 million mobile phones in use in Australia, a back-up battery for a home phone was redundant for most people.

Scraping the NBN battery pack is just one of more than 1000 laws and regulations to be axed this week by the government

in what it describes as a "bonfire of bureaucracy".

Regulations to be axed include onerous obligations on retiring defence personnel who will be relieved from having to

undergo new identity checks just to collect their pensions.

The manufacturing industry will be \$14 million better off a year with the scrapping of mud flaps on motorbikes.

Other areas facing the axe are in beef exports and the requirement that universities complete an annual sustain-

able research excellence staff hours survey, saving \$2.1 million, and abolishing a number of bodies including the Fishing Industry Policy Council which has not met once in 23 years.

On taking office, the Coalition promised two "repeal days" every year to cut \$1 billion worth of red tape.

Almost 10,000 redundant or bureaucratic laws and regulations have been axed since the first repeal day in March.

A second round will be put to parliament in an omnibus

bill and several separate legislative repeals on Wednesday, adding about 1000 more laws that will be struck from the statute books.

Opposition business manager Tony Burke said: "The government will want to do better than they did last time. Round one was about getting rid of legislation that was irrel-

evant anyway.

"Labor abolished more than 16,000 redundant acts, providing genuine relief for business, without the hype."

TO BE SCRAPPED

Motorcycle mud flaps:

No longer a requirement for the 70,000 motorbikes manufactured annually.

Aussie beef exports:

End of putting green 'tail tags' on beef exports to Europe, costing farmers \$500,000 a year.

Rest in peace:

Death of a 14-day wait for veterans or families to get funeral benefits.

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Tabled by:

Senator McKenzie