

# MEDIA RELEASE

Thursday 15 December 2011



## NYE Fireworks for people who are visually impaired

More than 300,000 Australians who are visually impaired can now enjoy the shimmering colour and excitement of the Sydney New Year's Eve fireworks displays with the launch of the first ever audio commentary of the amazing event.



The City of Sydney, in collaboration with 2Day FM, has established a special Digital Radio Plus station, NYE2011, which will broadcast a commentary of the two world-class NYE fireworks displays on December 31.

The commentary will be narrated by NYE Fireworks Director Fortunato Foti and will include insights into the visual impact of the explosives as well as personal stories from a seventh-generation pyrotechnician.

Lord Mayor Clover Moore MP said one in five people in NSW are living with visual impairments and the City is committed to producing events that are open and accessible to everyone.

"Sydney New Year's Eve is the biggest event in Australia, attracting 1.5 million people to the Harbour Foreshore, while 2.6 million people across the country watch the fireworks on their televisions at home," Lord Mayor Clover Moore MP said.

"The City is continually looking at ways to make this world-class event accessible to everyone in the community, which is why we have established the NYE2011 digital radio station and commentary.

"We want to ensure that people with visual impairments have the chance to appreciate the excitement and wonder that our celebrations inspire."

NYE11 Fireworks Director Fortunato Foti said narrating the eight-minute 9PM Family Fireworks and the 12-minute Midnight Fireworks was all about evoking the mood that each colourful display creates.

"We choreograph the fireworks months before the event and we don't actually see them until everyone else does, so it's pretty much in our imagination until the day," Mr Foti said.

"A lot of fireworks are based on flowers, such as dahlias, peonies and chrysanthemums and then there are three colour ranges: the classic colours, the pastel palette and then the glittering ones.



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“But it won’t just be a literal description of the fireworks, it will be about the mood that has been created with colours for each segment and I’m also going to talk a bit about the family history and the history of fireworks.”

The Foti family has a rich tradition of pyrotechnology and began mixing gunpowder and chemicals in 18<sup>th</sup>-century Italy.

The family, now based at Leppington, in Sydney’s south west, has been creating the Sydney New Year’s Eve fireworks displays since 1997.



According to the 2006 Census, 300,000 Australians are living with vision impairment and that number is expected to double by 2020.

People who are visually impaired who don’t own a digital radio should visit [www.digitalradioplus.com.au](http://www.digitalradioplus.com.au) for more information.

***New Year’s Eve is a Time to Dream. From the young to the old, from the moonstruck to the love-struck, every New Year’s Eve midnight is a blank canvas for us all. What do you dream for 2012?***

The charity partner for 2011 Sydney New Year’s Eve is CARE Australia, an international humanitarian aid organisation defending dignity and fighting global poverty. The Lord Mayor has established a special East Africa Food Crisis Appeal to generate donations in support of CARE’s work in the famine-affected region. [care.org.au](http://care.org.au)

For more information, contact City of Sydney Senior Media Adviser Jodie Minus, phone 02 9265 9910 or email [jminus@cityofsydney.nsw.gov.au](mailto:jminus@cityofsydney.nsw.gov.au)

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For more information or images, visit the 2011 Sydney New Year’s Eve website, [sydneynewyarseve.com](http://sydneynewyarseve.com)

Facebook: join [facebook.com/cityofsydney](https://www.facebook.com/cityofsydney) for NYE11 information.  
Twitter: use the #NYESYD hashtag to share your dream for 2012.

*2011 Sydney New Year’s Eve is proudly sponsored by 2DayFM, The Daily Telegraph, NSW Government, Destination NSW, NSW Department of Planning and Infrastructure, NSW Government through Destination NSW, Sydney Harbour Foreshore Authority, Transport NSW, NSW Maritime, Sydney Ports Corporation, Royal Australian Navy, Sydney Opera House, The Royal Botanic Garden and Domain Trust, WellCom Group, Production Resource Group, Technical Direction Company, Scarborough Wines, Coca-Cola Amatil, Yellowglens, Ciroc, Crown Lager, The Menzies Hotel, The Sofitel Sydney Wentworth, E Group Security and Action Sound.*

