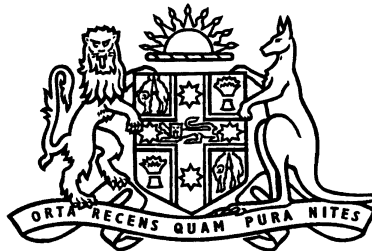


Budget Highlights for Rural and Regional New South Wales

2000-01



New South Wales

INFORMATION ON THE BUDGET HIGHLIGHTS FOR RURAL AND REGIONAL NEW SOUTH WALES 2000-01

Regional Budget Highlights 2000-01 provides information at a glance on key State Government spending outside metropolitan Sydney.

It should not be read or interpreted as a comprehensive list of the total of Government spending on all programs or capital works of benefit to regional New South Wales.

For the purposes of this report, the Hunter, Illawarra and Central Coast are included.

Where capital works are funded over four years through forward estimates, both the 2000-01 spending figures and total project costs are included where available.

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FOREWORD – BY BOB CARR

PREMIER OF NEW SOUTH WALES

The State Government is delivering on its commitment to provide country New South Wales with its fair share of Government services.

People living outside Sydney, Newcastle, Wollongong and the Central Coast account for nearly 27 percent of the State's population.

In this Budget more than 35 per cent of all spending on capital works and road maintenance will take place outside of Sydney, Newcastle, Wollongong and the Central Coast.

That means country communities will get the benefit of \$2 billion of a total \$5.65 billion program.

And when you look at spending outside Sydney, the Budget provides the same fair share.

Forty two per cent of people live outside Sydney and they will receive 46 per cent of spending on capital works and road maintenance this year – a total of \$2.6 billion.

That means new or better schools for Bega, the Tweed, Dubbo, Nowra, Kiama, Scone, Lightning Ridge, Grafton, Tuncurry, Evans Head, Lake Munmorah, Mudgee, Brunswick Heads, Cessnock, Bogangar, Jerrabomberra, Gosford, The Entrance, Dorrigo and Hay.

And it means better training facilities at TAFE campuses in Armidale, Bathurst, Coffs Harbour, Tuncurry, Griffith, Moree, Newcastle, Orange, Singleton, Taree, Wauchope, Wollongbar and Wollongong.

More than \$1.8 billion will be provided for rural and regional health services in New South Wales. This represents a 45 percent increase in funding for regional rural health services since this Government took office in 1995.

A fair share of health spending means guaranteed funding increases to all area health services to meet the growth in demand, particularly in traditionally underfunded regions of the Northern Rivers, Mid-North Coast and the Illawarra.

This Budget also provides for the first stage of building or redeveloping of 20 hospitals in small rural towns with another 14 hospital upgrades in the planning stage.

Regional and rural communities will benefit from the \$1.6 billion record police budget – the sixth record budget under this Government. An estimated \$350 million will be spent on delivering police services to regional New South Wales this year.

A record emergency services Budget means families in country regions will enjoy better protection from fires and natural disasters.

This Budget has a massive 31 percent increase in funding for the State Emergency Service – and it means new divisional headquarter for Albury and further funding for the new divisional headquarters at Cobar to help the communities of the Far West.

New fire stations will be built at East Maitland, Wangi Wangi, Dubbo, Shellharbour, Toronto, Warnervale, Umina, and Doyalson.

This Budget will improve road and rail services across the State. It provides \$115 million for the Rebuilding Country Roads program, including \$29 million to replace timber bridges.

All Countrylink passenger rail services are to be maintained to 334 destinations, including Griffith and Broken Hill and \$170 million will be spent on improving rural rail lines. By December this year the Kandos-Gulgong via Mudgee line will be reopened at a cost of \$1.4 million.

The State Government will continue its strong support for farming families.

This Budget provides \$232 million to help secure the future of our valuable food and fibre industries.

To address the growing problem of salinity, the Government will provide an extra \$5 million this year. This budget enhancement builds on existing salinity-related expenditure, which last year amounted to \$30 million and this year will increase to around \$35 million.

Special help will be provided to the Western Division through West 2000 Plus – a new \$5.9 million program over three years.

And the Government has responded to calls by Country Labor to set up a \$2.4 million rebate scheme to help farming families put rollover protection systems on their tractors. Last year, 16 people died in New South Wales and another 328 were permanently disabled in farm accidents. Most of these accidents were tractor-related.

These are just a few examples of the ways in which the Carr Government is delivering better services for the people of regional and rural New South Wales.



Bob Carr
Premier

PREMIER'S DEPARTMENT

The State Government is committed to working with rural and regional communities to improve their quality of life. The Government is leading innovative approaches to community renewal and the provision of services. The Premier's Department is at the forefront of these efforts.

Regional Coordination Program

- ◆ In 2000-01 \$2.949 million will be allocated to the Premier's Department for the Regional Coordination Program. Established in 1994, the Regional Coordination Program now covers all of rural and regional New South Wales.

Eight Regional Coordinators work in country centres across New South Wales to improve rural and regional service delivery and progress collaboration between Government agencies and communities on issues of concern to people living outside Sydney.

A particular strength of the Regional Coordination Program has been its capacity to lead and support local initiatives. These include:

- job creation and economic development in places facing particular challenges such as the Hunter Region, Wollongong, Bega and Lithgow;
- local community development in Kempsey, Moree, Bourke, Windale;
- a more integrated approach to delivering services in Kyogle, Gunning, Armidale, Murwillumbah; and
- a whole of Government approach to managing the environment and natural resources which involves local government and community participation, for example at Lake Macquarie Estuary, Menindee and Willandra Lakes.

Specific Regional Coordination Program projects include:

The Moree Place Project

- ◆ In response to community and Government concerns regarding law and order and public safety, the State Government and Moree Plains Shire Council appointed a Place Manager in October 1998. The Place Manager has focussed on:
 - crime prevention initiatives;
 - the provision of sporting, recreational, educational and employment opportunities for young people; and
 - community and economic development, with particular emphasis on the Aboriginal community.

There has been significant progress to date: including a marked drop in the crime rate and the establishment of a neighbourhood program, which is helping the community address crime and safety issues.

Lake Macquarie Estuary Taskforce

- ◆ In 1998 the Premier established a Taskforce to respond to concerns regarding the environmental quality of the Lake Macquarie Estuary. The Regional Coordination Program facilitated the Taskforce, which had active involvement from State Government agencies, local government, industry and the community. The Taskforce devised strategies that gained the support of all parties and a detailed plan to improve the Lake and surrounds.

The Premier's Working Together Forum - Dubbo

- ◆ In September 1998, the Premier's Forum in Dubbo: "Working Together", successfully brought together people from 12 towns across Western New South Wales and Government representatives to tackle social and economic problems common to communities in this part of the State. The Forum identified priority issues, shared examples of effective local initiatives, and strengthened relationships and networks between Government and communities. Since then local communities have initiated actions to address community safety issues, relevant education strategies and youth focused activities.

Cessnock Water Pipeline

- ◆ The Regional Coordinator played a key role in developing partnerships between businesses and Government to construct water pipelines from the Hunter River to drought proof the Pokolbin wine region. Construction has commenced, with an estimated total capital investment of over \$100 million and some 600 new jobs created in the region.

Regional Service Delivery Plans

- ◆ During 1999-00 the Premier's Department undertook a Statewide review of regional service delivery. As a result of the review the Government has allocated \$3.5 million in 2000-01 to Regional Service Delivery Plans. These will improve access to Government services in regional New South Wales. Government services will be better shaped to meet the specific needs of local communities.

Office of Regional Communities

- ◆ An allocation of \$779,000 will be made to the Office of Regional Communities in the Premier's Department in 2000-01. The Office of Regional Communities is based at Orange and works on Statewide responses to issues which are common to people in regional New South Wales. Specific initiatives are addressing issues include services for older people and the employment of women in rural areas.
- ◆ As part of its way of consulting with communities, the Office of Regional Communities supports the Regional Communities Consultative Council. The State Government will provide \$150,000 in the 2000-01 State Budget to support the work of the Regional Communities Consultative Council. In 1996 the Government established the Regional Communities Consultative Council with the critical role of:
 - advising on rural and regional policies and services;
 - identifying initiatives to advance social, economic and environmental development; and

- consulting with rural and regional communities regarding community issues, solutions and opportunities.
- ◆ The Office of Regional Communities also manages Government Access Centres, which were established in 1997 to trial integrated government service delivery in rural and remote communities. These Centres provide local, State and Commonwealth Government services and information in small rural communities. Services provided vary depending on local needs and include applications for birth, death and marriage certificates, Centrelink form lodgement and Department of Housing assistance. An allocation of \$370,000 will be made to the Premier's Department in 2000-01 to continue the Government Access Program that manages the Centres.

Strengthening Local Communities Strategy

- ◆ \$530,000 has been allocated to the Premier's Department in 2000-01 to support a new initiative, the Strengthening Local Communities Strategy. This Strategy will design and implement whole of government community renewal responses to social and economic disadvantage. The Government's comprehensive response to addressing social disadvantage in the Windale community is an example of how this strategy is working on the ground. A range of similar local projects will be delivered during 2000-01.

Drug Summit

- ◆ The Government's commitment to the outcomes of the New South Wales Drug Summit includes an allocation of \$1.97 million in 2000-01 to the Premier's Department. These funds will support two key strategies flowing from the Summit: the Drugs and Community Action Strategy and Community Drug Information Strategy. These strategies will help communities respond to illicit drug issues.

Infrastructure

- ◆ Funding will be provided to the Infrastructure Coordination Unit of the Premier's Department in 2000-01 to continue its work coordinating the State Government's infrastructure initiatives. The Infrastructure Coordination Unit will work with government organisations and industry, drawing upon their skill and expertise to provide targeted infrastructure which better supports regional and community development.

In 2000-01 the Premier's Department will build on its previous success in meeting the State Government's commitment to creating additional public sector jobs in rural and regional New South Wales.

REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT

From April 1995 to March 2000, more than 20,000 full-time jobs have been created in regional New South Wales as a direct result of assistance from the State Government. This help has secured \$4.64 billion of private investment.

The State Government recognises the unique qualities of each region. This is reflected in the wide-range of development programs that include lifestyle promotion, investment readiness, relocation assistance and new industry expansion.

There are 19 Regional Development Offices across New South Wales.

NEW INITIATIVES

- ◆ \$600,000 a year for three years for the New Market Expansion Program to assist 300 regional firms access new markets through a variety of business activities, including market research, business matching, E-Commerce preparation, sales related travel, buyer visits and promotional activities.
- ◆ \$250,000 a year for three years for the Townlife Development Program to create new jobs in towns with a population of less than 2,500. The program will help with the development of new products or services, new markets for existing goods, the staging of special events and tourist promotions.
- ◆ Regional Aboriginal Business Advisory Program will provide advice and assistance to existing and prospective regional indigenous businesses to enhance their establishment and growth.

MAJOR CONTINUING PROGRAMS

- ◆ \$5 million in 2000-01 for the Regional Economic Transition Scheme to help regional communities, hard hit by economic restructuring and substantial job losses, reposition their economic base and create new jobs.

Centres to be assisted in 2000-01 will include Broken Hill, Scone/Aberdeen, Bombala, Kempsey, Eurobodalla, Bega, Eden, Cootamundra and Gunnedah.

- ◆ \$1 million in 2000-01 for The Country Lifestyles Program to promote regional New South Wales as a destination for business, investment and employment through initiatives such as:
 - Regional Business Investment Tours for Sydney-based investors;
 - Investment Readiness Seminars to help businesses win investment;
 - Business Relocation Seminars highlighting the benefits of regional New South Wales as a business location and the support available to those considering re-locating;
 - NSWOnline gives every regional business and community a presence on the Internet; and

- The publication of 'A Guide to Investing and Living in New South Wales' to promote regional centres as viable places to do business, live and work.
- ◆ The Regional Business Development Scheme is designed to encourage metropolitan and offshore companies expand or relocate into regional New South Wales. In 2000-01, some 100 companies are expected to benefit from the program.
- ◆ State funding totalling \$10 million each for the Hunter and Illawarra Advantage Funds to secure new investment and expand existing businesses in the Illawarra and Hunter regions.
- ◆ The Main Street/Small Towns Program assists communities to revitalise and promote their centres through capital improvements and tourism events. Some 30 towns will be targeted in 2000-01.
- ◆ Business Retention and Expansion Program assists communities identify the industries and sectors that are the main drivers of economic growth. Some 10 centres will be targeted in 2000-01 to help them further develop these key industries.
- ◆ A regional network of 12 Agribusiness Development Officers will assist producers and grower groups identify and develop value-adding and alternative agribusiness opportunities.
- ◆ The State Government financially supports a network of 13 Regional Development Boards across New South Wales. The Boards also have access to additional resources to help finance larger, long-term projects.
- ◆ \$995,000 in 2000-01 for the New South Wales Industrial Supplies Office to run the State Government's import replacement program, helping regional business and industries source products from local suppliers rather than importing those from the major cities or overseas.

HEALTH

Over the next three years the State Government will increase funding by \$506 million for rural and regional health. In addition we have committed funding to build or re-develop an extra 20 small hospitals in rural towns as a result of the Sinclair Report. This is a demonstration of the State Government's commitment to protecting rural communities.

Planning will commence on facilities in another 14 rural and remote communities in the 2000-01.

NEW INITIATIVES

Capital Works

- ◆ Build and redevelop 20 hospitals in small towns:

Collarenebri, Holbrook, Coolah, Rylstone, Nimbin, Lightning Ridge, Coolamon, Gilgandra, Emmaville (Vegetable Creek), Denman, Brewarrina, Jerilderie, Blayney, Boggabri, Lord Howe Island, Henty, Tottenham, Harden/Murrumburrah, Berrigan and Gulargambone.

- ◆ New works to commence in 2000-01 at:

- Tamworth Emergency (estimated total cost \$3.7 million); and
- Central Coast Mental Health Strategy (estimated total cost \$6.3 million).

Other Initiatives

- ◆ Over the next three budget years, funds will be progressively allocated to Area Health Services to repair longstanding inequities under the Resource Distribution Formula. This means a faster flow of money to high growth areas over the next three years. For example, by 2002-03:
 - the Mid North Coast will receive \$46.8 million extra per annum;
 - the Central Coast, \$35.2 million extra per annum;
 - the Northern Rivers, \$42.1 million extra per annum;
 - the Hunter, \$57.6 million extra per annum; and
 - the Illawarra, \$35 million extra per annum.
- ◆ An allocation of \$105 million over the next three years to fund incentive programs to improve health care, teamwork and service management. This includes:
 - \$45 million to coordinate care for people with chronic conditions, starting with cardiovascular disease, respiratory illness and cancer;
 - \$45 million to relieve pressure on emergency departments and intensive care units; and
 - \$15 million to showcase new forms of coordinated care, linking hospitals, general practitioners and community health.

- ◆ There will be a provision of \$40 million to immediately address rural debt.
- ◆ Expansion of telemedicine services. It is anticipated that submissions from Area Health Services will result in 20 new telehealth sites across New South Wales. Funding for 1999-00 is \$1 million.
- ◆ An increase of \$107.5 million in recurrent spending for mental health services over the next three years, with rural and regional New South Wales being given priority. Overall spending for rural and regional mental health services will grow by \$45 million or 28.6 percent, including the following enhancements over three years:
 - Mid North Coast \$7.3 million
 - Central Coast \$5.4 million
 - Northern Rivers \$6.4 million
 - Hunter \$9.8 million
 - Illawarra \$4.9 million

CONTINUING INITIATIVES

Capital Works

- ◆ Completion of rural hospital capital works over the next three years:
 - Tweed Heads Hospital redevelopment stage 3 (\$36.2 million);
 - Broken Hill Hospital redevelopment (\$32.2 million);
 - Coffs Harbour Hospital and Ambulance Station (\$80.9 million);
 - Dubbo Hospital Redevelopment (\$19.7 million); and
 - Lower North Coast Strategy, Taree (\$31.6 million).

EDUCATION AND TRAINING

The State Government is committed to delivering high quality education and training for country New South Wales.

In 2000-01, \$2.1 billion has been allocated in recurrent funding for government schools and TAFE colleges in rural areas of the State.

Capital works and air-conditioning projects valued at more than \$40 million for schools and \$20.6 million for TAFE New South Wales will be undertaken to improve facilities and buildings.

NEW INITIATIVES

Capital works projects

- ◆ \$257,000 to begin work on a new primary school at Bogangar. Total cost \$4.5 million.
- ◆ \$456,000 for a new high school in the Tweed. Total cost \$13.2 million (stage 1).
- ◆ \$133,000 for new high school for the Brunswick Valley. Total cost \$2.9 million (stage 1).
- ◆ \$186,000 to begin upgrading Dorrigo High School. Total cost \$1.9 million.
- ◆ \$161,000 to upgrade Woodburn Central School. Total cost \$2.9 million.
- ◆ \$56,000 towards a new library at Cudgen Public School. Total cost \$592,000.
- ◆ \$252,000 for new carpentry and joinery area at Coffs Harbour TAFE.
- ◆ \$497,000 to continue work on the new library at Westlawn Public School. Total cost \$600,000.
- ◆ \$758,000 for new support services and indigenous arts and crafts facilities at Moree TAFE College. Total cost \$1.3 million.
- ◆ \$1.4 million for rural and child studies classrooms at Taree TAFE College. Total cost \$4.5 million.
- ◆ \$1.6 million for new Hospitality and trade course facilities at Wollongbar TAFE College. Total cost \$10 million.
- ◆ \$674,000 for a new Ecotourism facility at Armidale TAFE College.
- ◆ \$681,000 to start the new Jerrabomberra Public School. Total cost \$2.8 million (stage 1).
- ◆ \$543,000 to upgrade Bega High School. Total cost \$3.4 million.
- ◆ \$99,000 for new Multi Purpose Centre at Hay War Memorial High School. Total cost \$1.5 million.

- ◆ \$272,000 to construct a new carpentry and joinery area at Griffith TAFE College.
- ◆ \$560,000 for new rural skills facilities at Thurgoona TAFE College.
- ◆ \$139,000 to upgrade Cudgegong Valley Public School. Total cost \$3.3 million.
- ◆ \$52,000 to complete Dubbo South Public School upgrade. Total cost \$3.3 million.
- ◆ \$1.2 million to build a new rural skills centre at Dubbo TAFE College. Total cost \$1.6 million.
- ◆ \$490,000 for flexible learning area at Orange TAFE College.
- ◆ \$1.744 million towards the consolidation of Bathurst TAFE College onto one site. Total cost \$6.058 million.

TAFE

- ◆ \$2.2 million for the TAFE Scholarship Scheme.

This program is aimed at students who have successfully completed vocational education and training courses as part of their Higher School Certificate.

These students will be guaranteed places in TAFE to continue their studies full time. Financial assistance will be provided to assist students from rural and low social-economic areas.

Youth Programs

- ◆ \$7.4 million statewide in 2000-01.
- ◆ Joint initiatives between TAFE New South Wales, schools and the department of Juvenile Justice to target youth at high risk and increase their access to vocational education and training.

The Open Training and Education Network

- ◆ Continue to develop technology to provide assistance to people in rural and remote communities.

CONTINUING INITIATIVES

- ◆ \$97,000 to complete the new Camden Haven High School. Total cost \$17.2 million.
- ◆ \$80,000 to complete the new Evans River Community School. Total cost \$14.4 million.
- ◆ \$4.7 million for the Great Lakes Education Precinct. Total cost \$14.7 million (stage 1).
- ◆ \$79,000 to complete the upgrade of Bungendore Public School. Total cost \$3.4 million.
- ◆ \$983,000 to complete permanent facilities at Lightning Ridge Central School. Total cost \$3.1 million.
- ◆ \$19,000 to complete major upgrade at Scone Public School. Total cost \$3.2 million.
- ◆ \$18.4 million to continue work on the new Dubbo Multi Campus School. Total cost \$24.6 million.

Other initiatives

- ◆ \$106 million statewide to improve literacy and numeracy skills through new teaching programs, statewide testing and intensive remedial programs.
- ◆ \$113.6 million statewide in 2000-01 for the Computers in Schools Program. This will include the provision of new computers, training of teachers in the use of computers and network cabling for schools.
- ◆ \$5 million for the Country Areas Program.
- ◆ \$67 million for a range of specific rural education programs including Distance Education Centres, Access Scholarships for Isolated Students, Boarder Scholarships at Agricultural High Schools, Living Away From Home Allowance, Student Assistance Program and Drought Assistance Rural Crisis Package, Isolated Schools Grant, Staffing Betterments in Smaller Schools and Staffing Supplementation for Central Schools.
- ◆ \$19 million for parents in rural areas, under the Back-to-School Allowance initiative, to assist with the cost of providing their children with school uniforms, textbooks and other school needs.

TRANSPORT

NEW AND CONTINUING INITIATIVES

- ◆ All Countrylink passenger rail services maintained to 334 destinations, including Broken Hill and Griffith.
- ◆ \$169.4 million to maintain and improve rural rail lines.
- ◆ \$1.4 million to reopen the Kandos-Gulgong via Mudgee line by December. Total cost \$15.2 million.
- ◆ \$10 million to upgrade the Countrylink XPT fleet to improve travel times and reliability. Total cost \$28 million.
- ◆ \$12 million over two financial years for new XPT carriages for Broken Hill and Griffith passenger services for introduction in 2002.
- ◆ \$72.2 million in rail freight subsidies to assist regional primary producers and businesses.
- ◆ \$9.7 million to extend a “train stops” braking system to the Hunter, Central Coast, Blue Mountains and Illawarra regions to improve safety of inter-city services. Total cost \$15 million.
- ◆ \$10 million to construct rail passing loops to deliver better reliability and travel times for rural freight and passenger services. Total cost \$42 million.
- ◆ \$2.98 million for a feasibility study on the Sydney to Newcastle high-speed rail link. Total cost \$646.2 million.
- ◆ Additional \$1 million for Hunter Valley noise mitigation works. Total cost \$10 million.
- ◆ Planning and design work for easy access for upgrades of Beresfield station for completion in 2001-02 and Thornton station for completion in 2002-03. Total cost \$4 million.
- ◆ \$19 million to continue the electrification of rail services between Kiama and Dapto. Total cost \$28.6 million.
- ◆ \$5 million for easy access works at Wollongong Station.

Pacific Highway Projects

\$160 million will be spent in 2000-01 as part of the State Government’s \$1.6 billion, 10-year Pacific Highway Upgrade Program, including:

- ◆ \$84.5 million to continue the \$334 million Yelgun – Chindera upgrade.

- ◆ \$7 million to complete the \$67 million Raymond Terrace - Karuah upgrade.
- ◆ \$2.5 million to complete the \$27 million Bray to Arthur Street upgrade.
- ◆ \$24 million to continue the \$49 million Tandy's Lane upgrade.
- ◆ \$4 million to start construction on the \$66 million Coopernook Bypass.

Roads

- ◆ \$115 million for Rebuilding Country Roads program, including the country timber bridges program.
- ◆ \$15 million for the \$97 million North Kiama Bypass.
- ◆ \$18 million for the \$78 million West Charlestown Bypass.
- ◆ \$4 million for new bridges west of Bathurst over Dicks Creek and McLeans Creek, part of a \$7 million upgrade of Mid Western Highway.
- ◆ \$5.2 million for new bridges and approaches across the Murray River at Howlong.
- ◆ \$3.8 million to complete a \$5.2 million upgrade of the Crookwell Road, north of Goulburn.
- ◆ \$4.4 million to start construction on the \$6.9 million upgrade of the Princes Highway from Yellowpinch and Millingandi, south of Bega.
- ◆ \$3 million to extend Stewart Avenue to Hannell Street in Newcastle West. Total cost \$5.4 million.
- ◆ \$1.6 million for a new interchange on the F6 Freeway at Helensburgh. Total cost \$8.7 million.
- ◆ \$7.3 million to continue the \$28 million Oak Flats Interchange.
- ◆ \$3.7 million for a new rail overpass on the Castlereagh Highway at Lidsdale.
- ◆ \$1.5 million for a new \$14 million bridge over the Murray River at Corowa.
- ◆ \$9 million to widen the Great Western Highway at Faulconbridge.

POLICE

NEW INITIATIVES

Frontline police

- ◆ By the end of 2003, there will be 2,110 new frontline police on active service across New South Wales. Regional New South Wales is assured of getting its fair share of these new frontline police.

This initiative involves the transfer of prisoner escort duties from the Police Service to the Department of Corrective Services. Prisoner escort duties have in the past placed the greatest drain on frontline police in rural and regional areas.

So far at least 26 police have moved from prisoner escort duties to the front line in Lismore, Tweed, Queanbeyan, Southern Highlands, Dubbo and Bourke. By early 2001, a further 33 police will be freed-up to work on the frontline in Albury, Broken Hill, Wagga Wagga, Bateman's Bay and Griffith.

The freeing up of police officers from prisoner escort duties in the Lismore/Tweed area has meant Casino Police Station can now operate as a 24 hour police station three days a week.

Technology

Whilst not specific to non-metropolitan New South Wales, \$20.2 million will be spent on new technology across the State. This will significantly improve communications, police investigations and management to create a more efficient police service. Police in regional areas will directly benefit from this investment in technology.

- ◆ \$1 million for digital film processing equipment to support digital speed cameras.
- ◆ \$570,000 for computerisation of criminal histories/court results.
- ◆ \$500,000 for the upgrade of the Criminal Suspect Identification System.
- ◆ \$1.2 million for the Integrated Financial and Human Resource Management System
- ◆ \$400,000 for the Informants Management System.
- ◆ \$416,000 for improved radio communications in the New England area.

CONTINUING INITIATIVES

Capital Works

Regional capital works programs will total \$3.870 million in 2000-01 for new or improved police stations and accommodation, including the following ongoing projects:

- ◆ Wellington Police Station.
- ◆ Tweed Heads Police Station.
- ◆ Waratah Police Station.
- ◆ Armidale Police Station.
- ◆ Kingscliff Police Station.
- ◆ Police accommodation in remote areas of the Western Division, including Walgett.

Technology

- ◆ \$2.8 million for the Police Assistance Line across the state, creating 177 jobs at the Tuggerah call centre. This is in addition to 68 jobs at Lithgow.
- ◆ \$1.2 million for the enhancement of the Computerised Operational Police System.
- ◆ \$1.8 million for the Investigation Management System.
- ◆ \$2.6 million for an upgrade of the Forensic Services Laboratory and Systems.
- ◆ \$1 million for Live Scan Fingerprint Computer System.
- ◆ \$5.7 million for radio and telephone equipment.

Other continuing Initiatives

- ◆ \$10.2 million to upgrade Infringement Processing Bureau technology and facilitate the Bureau's relocation to Maitland, creating up to 150 jobs.
- ◆ \$700,000 to upgrade technology for the Firearms Registry and transfer to Tweed creating 50 jobs.
- ◆ \$1.4 million for the ongoing rollout of Glock self-loading pistols.
- ◆ \$300,000 to place bicycle patrols in Local Area Commands.
- ◆ \$1.8 million to upgrade police station holding cells across the State.

Key operational programs

An estimated \$350 million will be spent on police services for regional New South Wales in 2000-01.

In addition, the following key operational programs will be provided in regional areas:

- ◆ \$5 million for Joint Investigation Teams between the Police Service and the Department of Community Services to investigate allegations of child abuse.
- ◆ \$1.9 million for Child Protection Investigations Teams.
- ◆ \$750,000 for Drug Offender Treatment Programs in the Illawarra, the far South Coast and Lismore. These programs seek to divert people from drug use into treatment.

AGRICULTURE

In 2000-01 New South Wales Agriculture will spend \$232 million helping develop profitable and sustainable food and fibre industries in New South Wales – industries that are essential to the long-term viability of rural communities.

Spending will include:

- ◆ \$83 million for research, advisory and regulatory services to assist the New South Wales food and fibre industries.
- ◆ \$68 million for research and advisory services to assist New South Wales farmers develop and adopt ecologically sustainable agricultural systems to combat natural disasters and drought.
- ◆ \$50 million to assist New South Wales plant and animal product industries meet the quality and safety standards required by local and overseas consumers.
- ◆ \$31 million for education and support services to help farm managers improve their business management and farming skills, including the need to recognise animal welfare issues.

Other initiatives include:

- ◆ \$6 million over the next three years (including \$2 million in 2000-01) to combat the problem of soil acidity including acid sulfate soils.
- ◆ \$2.5 million to assist the New South Wales sheep industry combat Ovine Johne's disease.
- ◆ \$6.7 million to help local government combat noxious weeds across New South Wales.
- ◆ A further \$4.5 million towards the establishment of the food safety watchdog and regulator, Safe Food Production New South Wales.
- ◆ A New South Wales Agriculture horticulturist from the Riverina to be based in Japan for nine months to research and develop new fruit export markets.
- ◆ A \$9.6 million capital works program including:
 - Further extensions to teaching facilities at the National Wine and Grape Industry Centre and the construction of a genetic plant research laboratory at Wagga Wagga;
 - Improved training facilities at Tocal Agricultural College, modifications to post-mortem rooms at New South Wales Agriculture's Elizabeth Macarthur Agricultural Institute in Camden;
 - Construction of specialist glasshouse facilities at Gosford to help develop specialised horticulture and flower production; and
 - Development of a laboratory information management system for use across the State.

LAND AND WATER CONSERVATION

The State Government is continuing to fulfil and enhance its commitment to towns and communities in regional New South Wales through the Department of Land and Water Conservation's \$516 million budget.

The State Government's spending on Land and Water Conservation is regionally focused and provide a significant social-economic boost to rural New South Wales, as well as directly delivering services in natural resource management.

NEW INITIATIVES

Salinity management

- ◆ An extra \$5 million, on top of the \$3 million for the Salt Action Program, to build on the \$35 million allocated to other existing salinity-related projects.

The funds will be used for projects such as salinity hazard mapping, pilot planting programs and further research and extension support.

- ◆ Market-based solutions to tackle salinity problems faster and at lower cost will be developed by the Salinity Experts Group established as a result of the Premier's Salinity Summit in March this year.

Other key programs include:

- ◆ West 2000 Plus, a new assistance program for the Western Division of New South Wales to improve the long term sustainability and viability of wool and sheep producers – \$5.91 million over three years (\$1.512 million 2000-01).
- ◆ Community Natural Resource Information Base – \$1 million a year over the next four years to establish this important database in partnership with other government agencies involved in natural resource management.

CONTINUING INITIATIVES

Grant-based programs amount to \$147 million and include allocations for the Country Towns Water Supply and Sewerage Program, flood mitigation work, coastal management, river entrance works and estuary management initiatives.

These important works are undertaken in partnership with local government and the wider community.

Of this total, \$51.8 million is being allocated to the Country Towns Water Supply and Sewerage Program to help upgrade water and sewerage schemes in country towns across the State.

The program is essential for regional development and for improved public health and includes the following new projects:

- ◆ New water treatment plants for Batlow, Corowa, Gulgong, Moulamein, Mudgee, Oberon, Port Macquarie area, Tooleybuc and villages such as Comboyne, Long Flat, Telegraph Point, Gravesend, North Star and Warialda.
- ◆ Improved sewerage systems for Culburra, Moree, Nambucca Heads and Tamworth.
- ◆ New sewerage systems for Cooperook, Hat Head, Kew and Kendall, Landsdowne, Manning Point, Mittagong Villages, Moruya Heads, Napiac and Uki.
- ◆ The construction of the Shoalhaven regional effluent management scheme.
- ◆ The \$51.8 million funding will also see the continuation of more than 250 investigation, design and construction projects throughout New South Wales. This includes work on two new dams for the Kempsey and Port Macquarie areas and upgrading of Ben Chifley Dam in Bathurst.

Floodplain management

- ◆ An extra \$4 million will be spent as part of the State Government's \$16 million, second term commitment.

Native vegetation reforms

- ◆ \$5 million towards incentive-based conservation payments to landholders under the Native Vegetation Management Fund.
- ◆ An additional \$1 million towards native vegetation mapping. This is the first instalment of a \$4 million commitment over four years.

The data recorded through this project will be vital in the development of reliable and successful regional vegetation management plans across the State.

Other key programs include:

- ◆ \$18.95 million towards the Murray-Darling Basin Commission.
- ◆ \$7.8 million for works undertaken by the privatised irrigation areas.
- ◆ \$17.3 million for the implementation of land and water management plans.
- ◆ \$24.4 million this year for the maintenance of dams and water storages, buildings and systems across the State including upgrades of the Chaffey, Glenbawn, Pindari, Burrendong, Copeton and Keepit dams, and ongoing works at Wellington, Bethungra and Wyangala dams.
- ◆ State Water – \$4 million in 2000-01 to extend one of the Department of Land and Water Conservation offices in Dubbo to accommodate the regional headquarters of State Water. The organisation, which manages bulk water supplies, is relocating from Sydney and comprises 20 staff.
- ◆ A further \$3 million to help maintain fishing ports, river entrances and buildings administered by the Department of Land and Water Conservation.

Sydney Water

- ◆ Illawarra Wastewater Strategy

- \$128 million investment in the Illawarra;
 - Wastewater treatment in the Illawarra will be significantly improved following a major upgrade. Work begins in 2000 and is expected to finish in 2002; and
 - The treatment works will be upgraded to tertiary levels to improve beach water quality in the Illawarra and facilitate the reuse of treated effluent by industry.
- ◆ New sewerage services at Gerringong, Gerroa, Jamberoo and Illawarra northern towns
 - \$42 million to construct a sewage treatment plant to provide advanced tertiary level treatment. Construction is due to start late 2000; and
 - \$24.6 million to provide areas in Jamberoo, Coalcliff, Stanwell Park, Stanwell Tops and Otford with a reticulated sewerage service.

Hunter Water

- ◆ Upgraded wastewater treatment in the Hunter
 - \$11 million (\$5.2 million in 2000-01) for the upgrade of the Raymond Terrace wastewater treatment plant due for completion in September 2000; and
 - \$20 million (\$1.3 million in 2000-01) for a new wastewater treatment plant at Morpeth. The new plant will allow for growth in the Maitland area and provide higher levels of environmental protection.
- ◆ Improved security for water supplies
 - \$22 million (\$2 million in 2000-01) for the stage two augmentation of Grahamstown Dam, increasing its capacity by around 50 percent; and
 - \$5 million (\$2.2 million in 2000-01) for the Tomago Sandbeds to increase the output capacity of the Tomago water source and reduce Hunter Water's reliance on the Grahamstown Dam.

SPORT AND RECREATION

The State Government is committed to providing regional and rural New South Wales with the access to the best possible sporting facilities and help for country athletes.

NEW INITIATIVES

Capital Works

- ◆ To improve the standard of accommodation and recreational facilities at Sport and Recreation Centres around the State:
 - \$1.45 million for renovations of the self contained accommodation units at the Broken Bay Sport and Recreation Centre;
 - \$800,000 for the construction of new self contained accommodation units at the Milson Island Sport and Recreation Centre;
 - \$490,000 for the construction of an additional lodge accommodation unit at the Myuna Bay Sport and Recreation Centre;
 - \$400,000 for the extension to the multipurpose indoor recreation hall at Point Wolstoncroft Sport and Recreation Centre; and
 - \$250,000 for the upgrade of self contained accommodation units at Lake Ainsworth Sport and Recreation Centre.

Programs

- ◆ \$843,000 for the New South Wales Institute of Sport High Performance/Development Centre Program. The program will bring the support and services offered by the Institute to the home clubs of country coaches and athletes. Regional clubs involved in the 25 sports currently operating under the New South Wales Institute of Sport banner will receive support such as Sports Science and Athlete Management Services. More athletes and coaches in regional New South Wales will now be able to access the programs and services of the New South Wales Institute of Sport without leaving home.

CONTINUING INITIATIVES

Programs

- ◆ \$4 million Capital Assistance Program. Approximately 60 percent of the Program will be spent in rural and regional areas to help provide better sporting and recreational facilities.

- ◆ \$500,000 for the Shooting Club Development Program to improve facilities for responsible shooters. More than 30 projects have already received grants.
- ◆ \$1.9 million to the Regional Sports Facility program. In 1999-00, 11 of the 14 major projects that received Government grants were in communities outside the Sydney area. Again in 2000-01, a significant proportion will be allocated to regional and rural areas.
- ◆ \$420,000 for Independent Regional Academies of Sport in the Illawarra, Western Region, Riverina, Hunter, North Coast and Northern Inland. These academies provide essential services for athletes from rural and regional New South Wales closer to their local communities.
- ◆ \$200,000 for the Far West Academy of Sport, based at Cobar, to provide services for isolated communities in the west of the State.
- ◆ \$2.7 million for the Sports Development Program. This program provides grants to State sporting organisations to help develop sport and recreation across New South Wales.
- ◆ \$240,000 has been allocated to Swimsafe, a program designed to teach children and adults to swim. The program is operating in the NorthWest, Western Riverina, and North Coast Region.
- ◆ \$1.022 million for Safety/Rescue Services Grants for the New South Wales Ski Patrol Association, Surf Life Saving New South Wales, The Royal Life Saving Society New South Wales and Austswim New South Wales. Surf Life Saving New South Wales conducts the 'Beach to Bush' tours to promote beach and water safety to rural communities - 8,000 school children and teachers from 80 schools have participated in the tours over the last five years.
- ◆ \$495,000 for Water Safety Education programs for 1998-99 to 2000-01. Using funds from this program, The Royal Life Saving Society (New South Wales Branch) opened a new branch office in Orange in June 1999 to deliver water safety education programs to rural communities in the western districts of the State.
- ◆ \$150,000 for the Country Athletes Scheme to provide much needed assistance to athletes under 19 years of age from rural areas. This program can help budding champions with travel, accommodation and other expenses associated with training and competition.
- ◆ \$100,000 for the Remote Area Travel Assistance Scheme. This scheme provides grants to organisations and individuals in remote areas of New South Wales that often have great distances to travel to be able to compete in sporting competitions.
- ◆ \$259,000 for the Active and Able Program providing grants to promote opportunities for people with severe disabilities to participate in sport and recreation activities at a grass roots level.
- ◆ \$300,000 for the Youth in Sport Program with Police and Community Youth Clubs. More than 3,000 young people are participants in the program at Police and Community Youth Clubs across the State. The program aims to help prevent crime through providing recreational opportunities and positive role models for young people.

FAIR TRADING

The Department of Fair Trading provides a wide range of services to consumers and traders in New South Wales. Regional and rural communities across New South Wales will benefit from a range of programs and initiatives to be funded in 2000-01.

NEW INITIATIVES

- ◆ \$4 million for a range of information technology and telecommunication projects. This will improve access to fair trading services and information for people in rural New South Wales in areas such as licensing, the register of encumbered vehicles and rental bond service. Online service delivery is being implemented progressively and will be of particular benefit to people in regional New South Wales.

CONTINUING INITIATIVES

Highlights of this year's budget include:

- ◆ \$10.6 million to run 17 of the Department's 23 Fair Trading Centres in regional New South Wales. These Fair Trading Centres operate outreach and access programs so rural and remote areas of New South Wales have better access to the Department's services.
- ◆ To provide access for even more regional and rural communities, \$58,000 is allocated to fair trading services through the seven Government Access Centres located in country New South Wales.
- ◆ \$57,000 to fund four television information commercials about fair trading rights and responsibilities including building a home, renting, credit and buying a car.
- ◆ The Registry of Cooperatives moved to Bathurst in February 2000 creating 38 new jobs. In 2000-01 \$3.2 million has been allocated to fund the Registry and the Australian Centre for Cooperative Research and Development. The Centre was established as a joint venture between Charles Sturt University, Bathurst, University of Technology, Sydney and the Department of Fair Trading.
- ◆ Approximately \$1.75 million to fund 10 community-based tenancy advisory services in regional areas to provide better assistance for rural and regional tenants.
- ◆ \$650,000 is allocated to provide financial counselling in country areas. 23 advisory services will be funded.
- ◆ \$924,000 a year to run a Regional Aboriginal Customer Service Program providing specialist advice to Aboriginal communities and employing eight Aboriginal Customer Service Officers in Fair Trading Centres outside Sydney.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT

The State Government has introduced a number of methods to strengthen the local government sector and create partnerships to boost job creation and economic growth, particularly in regional New South Wales.

As part of the State Government's commitment to create jobs to regional New South Wales, the Department of Local Government will move to Nowra and is now in planning phase of that process. It is expected that the Department will be a tenant in a multiple occupancy building. The Department of Public Works and Services has been engaged to manage the process.

CONTINUING INITIATIVES

- ◆ \$71.25 million in 2000-01 to provide the state's 415,000 pensioner households, about one-third in country areas, with rebates on council rates.
- ◆ The continuation in 2000-01 of the \$4.5 million Septic Safe Program to help councils, particularly those in sensitive catchment regions, monitor septic systems in their local areas.
- ◆ The Australian Stock Exchange's Enterprise Market, with the help of the State Government and Local Government and Shires Association, has expanded into regional New South Wales making it easier for regional firms to access, via the Internet, the capital they need to expand and create local jobs.

NEW INITIATIVES

- ◆ A new \$300,000 Western Division Project Fund. Under this three-year program, councils in the State's Western Division can apply for grants for special council or economic development projects.

ATTORNEY-GENERAL

NEW INITIATIVES

- ◆ \$400,000 in 2000-01 for the Graffiti Solutions program including \$150,000 for community Graffiti Solutions Grants and \$250,000 to local councils to buy 10 graffiti blaster machines.
- ◆ \$6.4 million in 2000-01 to expand Video Conferencing into regional New South Wales allowing witnesses and judges in remote areas easier and faster access to the legal systems.

CONTINUING INITIATIVES

- ◆ Children and Young Person (Care and Protection) Act 1998

As a result of the reform package implemented by the State Government, Local Magistrates with the professional and personal skills necessary to deal with children and young people will be specifically appointed as Children's Magistrates.

Children's Magistrates will attend country areas to hear defended care matters.

- ◆ \$500,000 for the Safer Communities Development Program to increase community safety, reduce crime and increase public amenity. The program will provide grants to councils and non-Government organisations to undertake crime prevention activities.
- ◆ A further \$1.3 million to improve Court Security at the State's Local Courts. It will provide for a visible security presence by professionally trained and equipped Sheriff's officers.
- ◆ A new Juror Induction Video has been produced to help jurors deal with the emotionally impact of jury service.

Qualified counsellors will also be available across the State to provide help to distressed jurors.

Other programs

- ◆ \$500,000 to the Victims Support Fund to provide support services across the State for victims of crime funded from the sale of assets of criminals.

ONGOING CAPITAL WORKS

- ◆ Orange Court House

\$7 million for extensions to meet the growing demands in the Central West. Expected to be completed in 2002.

FORESTRY

The State Government is committed to developing new opportunities in forestry, taking care of timber workers and helping the New South Wales timber industry move to a sustainable footing.

By 2004 the hardwood plantation estate will have increased by almost 30,000 hectares since 1995. Softwood plantations will have increased by more than 14,000 hectares in the same period.

The issue of 20 year wood supply agreements has already provided a sustainable future for the New South Wales native timber industry. The Forest Industry Structural Adjustment Package will provide a further catalyst for more investment by the timber industry in value adding than has ever been seen before.

Development of new environmental services is generating more than \$120 million new private sector investment in forestry with more to come.

FORESTRY SPENDING INCLUDES:

- ◆ Between 1994-95 and 1999-00, the State Government has spent \$92 million to expand and manage New South Wales hardwood plantations ensuring long term timber supplies to industry, creating carbon sinks and supporting regional jobs and communities. This investment has established 23,800 hectares of new hardwood plantations.
- ◆ A further \$21 million over the next four years is committed to expand hardwood plantations by 2000 hectares per annum.
- ◆ Since 1995 the State Government has invested \$42 million to establish 14,000 hectares of new softwood plantations. Up to \$1.6 million will be spent in the coming year to establish a target of nearly 700 hectares of new softwood plantations.
- ◆ It is estimated that for every 50 hectares of new plantation one new long-term job is created over the life of the plantation.
- ◆ Since 1995, the State Government has contributed \$80 million to support timber workers and help the native timber industry manage changes.
- ◆ In this time, \$15.4 million has been approved for industry development assistance for 29 timber businesses, which has led to more than \$50.5 million in private sector investment. This has resulted in more than 170 new jobs in rural New South Wales.
- ◆ Additionally, \$25.9 million has been approved in Worker Assistance and \$2.3 million in training initiatives under the Forest Industry Training Strategy to assist workers manage changes in the native timber industry in New South Wales.

New Markets

- ◆ The State Government is developing new markets and investment in forestry to address greenhouse, salinity control, land repair and mine site rehabilitation. This work involves local councils, the private sector and farmers.
- ◆ In March 2000, the State Government signed an agreement with the Tokyo Electric Power Corporation to invest up to \$120 million over the next ten years to establish up to 40,000 hectares of new planted forest under State Forests' Greenhouse program to establish carbon sinks. The program is ongoing and will result in further jobs and investment in regional New South Wales.
- ◆ The State Government is establishing the world's first exchanged-traded market for carbon sequestration credits with the Sydney Futures Market. Carbon trading will commence later this year
- ◆ State Forests will establish 100 hectares of new-planted forest in key recharge areas within the Macquarie River catchment to help offset salinity. It is the first salinity control trade of its kind and will be used to develop an innovative, cost-effective and market-based approach to the problem of dryland salinity.
- ◆ 50 trial plantings are being established between Narrandera and Wagga Wagga in southern New South Wales and Inverell and Moree in northern New South Wales to determine the most suitable species to be grown in lower rainfall areas to address dryland salinity.
- ◆ State Forests has established a new Investment Services Division that has seven fulltime staff working on development of new business opportunities in environmental services.
- ◆ State Forests maintains a substantial workforce in rural New South Wales. More than 80 percent of State Forests employees are based in regional New South Wales.

ENVIRONMENT

National Parks and Wildlife Service

The National Parks and Wildlife Service makes a significant contribution to regional economies in New South Wales. Both through direct employment and capital works programs the National Parks and Wildlife Service is an important factor in local economic activities. It also helps to create many jobs in the private sector through the development of major tourism infrastructure, which attracts visitors into regional areas, who spend on a wide range of goods and services and create ongoing, permanent jobs.

This year's record allocation of \$223 million to the National Parks and Wildlife Service represents a 135 percent increase since the 1994-95 Budget.

In 2000-01, the National Parks and Wildlife Service will spend \$40 million on continuing and new capital works programs in regional New South Wales. These include:

- ◆ \$11.1 million for Alpine Way remediation works relating to the aftermath of the Thredbo Landslip.
- ◆ \$7 million to continue implementing the Upper and Lower NorthEast Regional Forest Agreement.
- ◆ \$2.2 million to upgrade sewerage treatment at the Perisher ski resort.
- ◆ \$2.4 million for sewerage upgrade programs in National Parks at Myall Lakes, Mount Warning, Warrumbungle, Murramarang, Kosciuszko and Bournda as well as at the Hill End Historic Site.
- ◆ \$13.6 million for land acquisition with particular emphasis on the Western regions.

In addition to the private sector jobs created by these capital works projects, the National Parks and Wildlife Service will employ in excess of 45 new staff during the financial year in the Southern Region. These staff will be the first instalment of the 91 additional jobs to be created as a result of the State Government's decision in the Southern Comprehensive Regional Assessment. As a result of this decision, 100 new national parks and reserves will be gazetted and over 300,000 hectares will be added to the reserve system.

FISHERIES

Aquaculture

- ◆ \$3 million in additional funds over three years for a new Aquaculture Initiative to reduce the pressure on the fisheries wild stock and to develop an important new regional industry.

Aquaculture has the potential to grow from a \$40 million a year industry to more than \$100 million within the next five to ten years.

- ◆ \$500,000 will be allocated to the Aquaculture Initiative in 2000-01:
 - to assist fish farmers with extension officers appointed to work directly with the farmers;
 - to support for fish farmers to better manage the health of farmed stocks;
 - for additional resources to assist investors locate suitable sites for aquaculture investments; and
 - to support a ‘whole of government’ approach to aquaculture strategies.
- ◆ \$3.68 million for the clean-up of derelict oyster leases at Port Stephens

Commercial Fishery

- ◆ Four commercial fisheries managers to be based in Maclean, Wollongong and Newcastle.
- ◆ The Government’s \$1 million Carp Assessment and Reduction Program to continue.

Recreational Fishery

- ◆ Fish production for the stocking of fishways is continuing in the SouthEastern Region costing \$365,000, the New England Region costing \$275,000 and the Riverina Region costing \$350,000.
- ◆ \$415,000 for an offshore patrol vessel for the Mid-North Coast.
- ◆ A permanent fishing clinic at Narranderra and Ebor and the fishing clinic program for children, the disabled and the elderly to continue.
- ◆ A new management plan for the Charter Boat industry.

Conservation

- ◆ \$2 million from 2000 to 2004 for three new marine parks and the three existing parks. Community consultation on new marine parks will continue to be an important priority.

MINERAL RESOURCES

NEW INITIATIVE

- ◆ Exploration NSW: Mining Beyond 2000 is a \$30 million, seven year program designed to encourage mineral and petroleum exploration and investment in New South Wales.
- ◆ This new initiative builds on the outstanding success of the Discovery 2000 project, which generated more than \$150 million in additional exploration expenditure in New South Wales.
- ◆ In 2000-01, \$3.8 million will be spent on projects in support of minerals and petroleum exploration
- ◆ The major focus for minerals projects will be in the Far West of the State, in the Broken Hill and Cobar regions. Petroleum related projects will be focused in the southwest of the State, bounded generally by Menindee, Mildura, Hay and Ivanhoe.

Broken Hill Exploration Initiative

- ◆ The State Government is leading the search for new mineral deposits in the Broken Hill region. The Broken Hill Exploration Initiative is jointly funded by the New South Wales, South Australia and Commonwealth Governments.

Land Use and Infrastructure Planning

- ◆ The New South Wales, Commonwealth, Victorian and South Australian Governments are participating in a major study of the Murray Basin. The study is examining potential infrastructure needs for the development of mineral sand deposits. These deposits have could produce titanium and zirconium minerals for high technology industries.

Environment

- ◆ Protection of the environment in regional New South Wales is a major element of the Government's Mineral Resources Policy. The Government will be spending about \$1.5 million during 2000-01 to ensure that any potential environmental impact from exploration and mining activities is minimised.
- ◆ \$1.5 million for the Derelict Mined Lands Rehabilitation Program to reclaim mine sites where no one can be held responsible for the environmental damage of past mining.
- ◆ In 2000-01 Woodsreef waste rock dump and South Bellambi Colliery, involving an estimated expenditure of \$100,000 each will be rehabilitated. In all, 15 sites in various areas of the State are expected to be treated.

Mine Safety

- ◆ \$3.2 million for 2000-01 (\$13.7 million over five years) to implement the recommendations of the Mine Safety Review and the Gretley Inquiry into mine safety
- ◆ \$1 million in new funding over the next two years to prosecute individuals and companies that commit serious breaches of mining occupational health and safety laws.

WORK SAFETY

WorkCover

- ◆ Some \$2.4 million over two years to provide rebates for the purchase of tractor roll over protection systems.
- ◆ \$600,000 to the WorkCover Rural team dedicated to providing occupational health and safety services to the rural sector.
- ◆ \$500,000 for a statewide education program to inform regional employees of their responsibilities under the Occupational Health and Safety Act.
- ◆ \$600,000 for new safety inspectors and safety services in rural New South Wales.

INDUSTRIAL RELATIONS

The Workers Compensation Resolution Service will continue to hold conciliation conferences in more than 30 locations across the State in 2000-01.

The State Government will continue to support a number of initiatives designed specifically to provide better access for regional New South Wales to a range of Departmental services. Some of these initiatives include:

- ◆ A statewide central phone number (131628) for the Award Enquiry Service.
- ◆ The establishment of Awards call centres in Newcastle and Wollongong.
- ◆ Six new Industrial relations call centres, three in regional New South Wales – Coffs Harbour, Newcastle and Wollongong to provide front line client service.
- ◆ A statewide central phone number (132005) to contact industrial inspectors.
- ◆ Regional information sessions and workshops to inform employers of their industrial responsibilities and opportunities.

PORTS AND NEW SOUTH WALES WATERWAYS AUTHORITY

Hunter

- ◆ Newcastle Port Corporation to spend \$25.7 million on operations and maintenance and \$2.63 million on new infrastructure and management initiatives including:
 - a rail link (\$1.25 million) and reclamation (\$585,000) to support the Eastern Basin Distribution Terminal;
 - new vessel traffic information system for harbour management (\$500,000);
 - trial of the transfer of marine pilots by helicopter (\$300,000)
- ◆ Waterways Authority is spending \$2.1 million on operations such as the provision of moorings, boat licensing and registration, boating safety education and regulatory compliance

South Coast

- ◆ Port Kembla Port Corporation to spend \$15.1 million on operations and maintenance and \$2.03 million on a range of infrastructure upgrades to assist trade diversification including:
 - upgrading the tug berth/base (\$700,000)
 - upgrading the road network supporting the port (\$900,000)
 - new state of the art computerised port management system (\$200,000)
- ◆ Waterways Authority is spending:
 - \$2 million on the development of a multipurpose wharf for commercial and industry use at Twofold Bay, Eden.
 - \$800,000 on safety signage and navigation aids
 - \$1.5 million on operations such as the provision of moorings, boat licensing and registration, boating safety education and regulatory compliance.

North Coast

- ◆ Waterways Authority is spending:
 - \$250,000 on safety signage and navigation aids.
 - \$800,000 on operations such as the provision of moorings, boat licensing and registration, boating safety education and regulatory compliance.

PLANNING

This year the State Government will spend \$15.1 million on regional planning through the Department of Urban Affairs and Planning.

- ◆ The State Government will continue to lead the implementation of the Northern Rivers Regional Strategy, a joint planning exercise with the Northern Development Task Force and eleven local councils, to encourage sustainable resource management and new types of agriculture, such as coffee, viticulture and indigenous food.
- ◆ A Regional planning exercise in New England will streamline Government services and provide a coordinated, cost effective approach to regional development and natural resource management.
- ◆ Implementation of the Alpine Strategy will continue this year. The strategy seeks to balance development aims and conservation issues in the State's Alpine Region, including the Kosciuszko National Park and five adjacent local government areas.
- ◆ Continue working with Griffith City Council to develop a value-added industry, providing affordable housing and planning solutions for retiring farmers and also work with the council to protect of the scenic range of hills which form the backdrop to Griffith.
- ◆ Continuation of work with the University of New England on a three-year project in the Upper Hunter to develop a community based process to bring together aspects of regional development.
- ◆ Work with Shoalhaven Council to finalise the Jervis Bay settlement strategy by late 2000. The strategy will identify the location, timing and extent of local development.
- ◆ Creation of a partnership with Bega Council to maximise economic development in the Eden-Twofold Bay area particularly with regard to the armaments depot, the Regional Forest Agreement, any redevelopment of the former cannery site, the tourism industry and the fishing industry.
- ◆ Work with Shoalhaven Council and the other government agencies to improve land use planning and environmental management measures for Lake Wollumboola and its catchment.
- ◆ Completion of a Regional Environmental Plan for the Sydney and Regional Centres Drinking Water Catchments.
- ◆ Sustainable Development Outcome budget of \$7.5 million.

AREA ASSISTANCE SCHEME

- ◆ The State Government will continue to support the North Coast, Hunter and Illawarra regions through the Area Assistance Scheme.

EMERGENCY SERVICES

Record funding for the New South Wales Emergency Services will ensure that the New South Wales Fire Brigades, New South Wales Rural Fire Service and the State Emergency Service will be even better equipped to protect and assist the community during emergencies.

Over the next year the State Government will spend a record \$469 million on New South Wales emergency services.

For regional New South Wales this means better services and better equipment.

NEW INITIATIVES

New South Wales Fire Brigades budget includes:

- ◆ New fire station at Shellharbour.
- ◆ New fire Station at Doyalson.
- ◆ New fire station at Warnervale.
- ◆ New fire station at Umina.
- ◆ New fire station at Toronto.
- ◆ New fire station at East Maitland.
- ◆ New fire station at Wangi Wangi.
- ◆ Refurbishment of fire station at Lawson.
- ◆ Refurbishment of fire station Moss Vale.
- ◆ Refurbishment of fire station at Mittagong.

New South Wales Rural Fire Service budget includes:

- ◆ \$91 million for rural fire fighting in 2000-01.
- ◆ \$4 million for safety enhancements to existing tanker fleet.

State Emergency Service budget includes:

- ◆ Construction of a new headquarters for the Murray Division in Albury.
- ◆ \$217,000 to provide computer links to all State Emergency Services units.

- ◆ \$750,000 over three years for purchase of computers for State Emergency Services units.

CONTINUING INITIATIVES

New South Wales Fire Brigades budget includes:

- ◆ Completion of new fire station at Dubbo.
- ◆ \$13 million for the replacement of fire engines (including up to 36 fire engines to replace older appliances in country locations, for example: Morpeth, West Tamworth, Nyngan, Cobar, Kandos and Barham).
- ◆ \$5 million for the purchase of specialist fire appliances.

New South Wales Rural Fire Service budget includes:

- ◆ \$24.4 million for tankers – 146 new and 115 second hand.

State Emergency Service budget includes:

- ◆ \$2.3 million for protective and safety equipment for volunteers.
- ◆ Public education campaign to assist the public to protect themselves.
- ◆ Update and maintain flood plans for more than 120 local councils.

DEPARTMENT OF CORRECTIVE SERVICES

Corrective Services continues to make a significant contribution to New South Wales regional economies through its capital works program, especially in creating jobs both at the construction stage of new facilities and in ongoing jobs in correctional centres.

MAJOR PROJECTS

In 2000-01 the following major projects will be undertaken in regional centres:

- ◆ \$15.4 million to be spent on the new mid-north coast correctional centre, which will house 350 inmates. The total project cost will be \$47.2 million. More than 800 jobs will be created during the construction phase and on completion, the new gaol will create more than 130 jobs.
- ◆ \$10 million in 2000-01 to continue the redevelopment and refurbishment of Goulburn Correctional Centre. This includes the completion of the high security facility to house 75 high risk inmates and a new centre housing an upgraded gatehouse, visitor processing area, administration offices and a new control room. An estimated 250 workers will be employed on these construction works over the year.
- ◆ \$3 million has been allocated to recruit and train additional staff. The Department will employ another 315 Correctional Officers over the year, many of them based in regional centres including Goulburn, Bathurst and Broken Hill. This is on top of the 518 officers who have joined the prison system since January 1999. Of these 518, 125 new officers have been posted to regional areas such as Bathurst, Goulburn and Cessnock.

JUVENILE JUSTICE

- ◆ 2000-01 will be the first full year of operation for the Department's new Juvenile Justice Centres in Dubbo and Grafton.

These centres have an operating budget of \$3 million each, representing a significant boost to the local economies.

- ◆ Much of the Department's work arising from the Drug Summit will be focussed on regional New South Wales including:
 - \$800,000 to establish drug rehabilitation beds at Dubbo and Coffs Harbour; and
 - \$800 000 for 10 new Alcohol and Other Drugs Counsellor positions in Wagga, Dubbo, Broken Hill, Orange, Lismore, Kempsey, Tamworth, Gosford, Grafton and Batemans Bay/Queanbeyan.

TOURISM

The State Government's Regional Action Plan includes support for tourism initiatives throughout the state. Each region has a Regional Tourism Organisation providing an umbrella for cooperative tourism marketing and development programs.

PROGRAMS

The Government is committed to providing a minimum of \$8 million to the Regional Tourism Action Plan for the development of viable well-marketed tourism products and destinations. The plan includes:

- ◆ More than \$2 million to Regional Tourism Organisations to support marketing and development plans.
- ◆ More than \$4 million to run Touring By Car, Short Breaks and other innovative advertising and promotional campaigns highlighting the holiday experiences available in regional New South Wales.
- ◆ \$1.2 million to fund international marketing and advertising campaigns to promote regional New South Wales to overseas markets.
- ◆ \$480,000 for development and marketing of regional events including the Regional Flagship Events Program.
- ◆ \$100,000 for Stage two of the new "i" signs system for accredited visitor information centres.
- ◆ \$150,000 to the Sydney Convention and Visitors Bureau to implement the Regional Conferencing Strategy to promote meetings and conventions in regional New South Wales.

OTHER INITIATIVES

- ◆ Almost \$700,000 this year to consolidate Gateway Centre sites at key entry points to regional New South Wales to establish centres at Tweed Heads, Eden, Bulli, Tenterfield, Gosford and Lithgow.
- ◆ \$250,000 to support the Australian Masters Games, to be held in the Hunter in October 2001.
- ◆ \$50,000 as part of the four year \$600,000 Regional Attractions Strategy to improve business skills and practices of regional attraction operators.

SMALL BUSINESS

NEW INITIATIVES

- ◆ \$1 million to establish the Export Opportunities program designed to encourage new and existing regional exporters into new markets.
- ◆ \$150,000 to expand the E-Commerce program into another three regional locations.
- ◆ \$250,000 for new programs targeting regional business women including new mentoring programs in Bathurst, Coffs Harbour, Tweed Heads and the Illawarra, a regional pilot project in Griffith and workshops on Internet marketing.
- ◆ Extension of support for the \$350,000 Aboriginal business development program through a seminar program on selling to Government, particularly in relation to the construction industry.

OTHER INITIATIVES

- ◆ An export marketing program for Aboriginal arts and cultural products.
- ◆ An export marketing project involving Aboriginal small business operators growing Australian Wildflowers.
- ◆ The development of Aboriginal aquaculture projects.

CONTINUING INITIATIVES

- ◆ The Small Business website at www.smallbiz.nsw.gov.au will be expanded to offer self-help tools to assist with financial analysis, business planning and home-based business operations.
- ◆ \$2.9 million to fund 48 Business Enterprise Centres and small business service providers – 35 in regional areas – deliver advice to start-up and micro businesses across the State.
- ◆ \$250,000 for a network of Innovation Advisory Centres in Taree, South Coast, Tamworth and other parts of New South Wales to help regional innovators with technical and business advice. An innovation website has also been established at www.itc-online.com.au.
- ◆ Under the Small Business Expansion Program 70 of the most dynamic small businesses in regional New South Wales will be helped to improve their planning and management capabilities.
- ◆ New networks will be developed under the High Growth Business Program to assist regional firms in wastewater management and non-traditional meat products develop export markets.

INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY

The State Government recognises the important role information technology plays in the lives of the people of New South Wales.

The Government will continue to improve the delivery of information technology to regional and rural New South Wales.

- ◆ \$12 million over three years for Australian Centre for Advanced Computing and Communications to provide regional companies with access to high performance computing power to help develop new business, investment and export opportunities. The Centre has regional facilities in Bathurst, Newcastle and Wollongong.
- ◆ \$8 million was allocated in the 1999-00 Budget for a four-year program to extend NSW.net to all 385 New South Wales libraries providing free access to the Internet. So far 61 councils/libraries have connected and a further 91 are committed to joining the program.
- ◆ \$10 million for the connect.nsw project in 2000-01. This builds on the \$8.5 million provided in 1999-00. Connect.nsw uses information technology and the internet to improve access to, and delivery of, government services.
- ◆ A network of regional web portals will provide easy access to local, national and international web based services for regional companies. Portals will help regional business launch their products to the world and will provide a window into a region with info about business service facilities and tourist attractions.

Riverina Regional Portal was piloted in 1999-00 and another is planned for 2000-01.

CITIZENSHIP

The State Government has introduced legislation into the Parliament to set up a Community Relations Commission in place of the current Ethnic Affairs Commission.

The new Commission will give communities a greater voice on issues at a local level and promote community harmony by building relations between ethnic communities and the broader society.

- ◆ A focus for the Commission in 2000-01 will be the extension of interpreter services into rural and regional New South Wales.
- ◆ A network of community based Regional Advisory Councils will be set up to give communities a say on solving local problems and promoting new initiatives.

ARTS

- ◆ New funding of \$300,000 in 2000-01, rising to \$500,000 a year from 2002-03, to further develop the arts in regional New South Wales including funds for regional arts boards, indigenous music and museum advisory services.
- ◆ \$750,000 over three years to tour the Bell Shakespeare Company and other smaller companies into regional New South Wales.
- ◆ \$150,000 in 2000-01 rising to \$500,000 a year from 2001-02 for the New South Wales Film and Television Office to encourage filmmakers to shoot on location in regional New South Wales.
- ◆ A further \$100,000 to create a regional cinema office within the New South Wales Film and Television Office. A regional cinema officer will work with local communities keen to return or introduce for the first time a big screen to their towns.
- ◆ The New South Wales Film and Television Office will also receive \$250,000 in improve audience and industry development and to market New South Wales as a filmmaking destination for both national and international filmmakers.
- ◆ \$2.2 million to digitise the collection of the Art Gallery of New South Wales and put it on-line.
- ◆ \$2.25 million over the next three years to update collections and improve access to electronic resources for regional libraries.

COMMUNITY SERVICES

CONTINUING INITIATIVES

Community and disability services in regional New South Wales will benefit from record statewide funding of \$1.485 billion.

Far North Coast

- ◆ In 2000-01, \$1.380 million base recurrent funding has been provided to implement *Families First*, which is a coordinated strategy sponsored by the State Government to increase the effectiveness of early intervention and prevention services to help families to raise healthy, well adjusted children.
- ◆ Increasing collaboration with Department of Health through the joint partnership initiative 'Working Together in Partnership'.

Southern Highlands

- ◆ Reconfiguring services with the Department of Health in Yass in line with *Families First*.
- ◆ Working with other government agencies to review activities in Crookwell, Eurobodalla, Gunning and Goulburn. Using Goulburn as a case study, establish a Human Services Case Management Team to focus on client service, identify case management opportunities in the community and integrate approaches across agencies. The Team will develop protocols for case management addressing issues of privacy, staff expertise, training and resources.

Central West

- ◆ Co-ordinating and facilitating involvement of government and non-government agencies in improving delivery of services for people at Murrin Bridge.

Orana Far West

- ◆ Department of Community Services' Western Region, in collaboration with the Department of Health, Education, Ageing and Disability and Housing, is participating in the planning and implementation of the *Families First* Strategy in the Orana Far West Area.
- ◆ In 1999-00, \$85,000 one-off funding was provided to continue to develop the Supported Accommodation Assistance Program Aboriginal Case Management Project.
- ◆ Wilcannia Community Coordinated Care Trial. This initiative, which is currently being evaluated, aims to reduce duplication and fill gaps in human health care service delivery in Wilcannia, by better managing existing resources and creating structures which promote cooperation amongst service providers.

- ◆ Schools as Community Centres project (also known as TUFF), is a jointly funded and managed program involving Police, Department of Education and Training, Department of Health and Department of Community Services. The aim of the project is to influence planning and integration of service delivery to meet the needs of families with children under five years of age.
- ◆ In 1999-2000, \$85,000 one-off funding was allocated, under the Drug Summit strategy, for the establishment of a Youth Case Management position in Broken Hill/Wilcannia. Funding of \$120,000 per annum over 3 years from 2000-01 has been provided to fund this position. The position, which will be an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander specific service, will assist vulnerable young people between the ages of 12 and 18. The aim of the service is to address petrol and solvent sniffing amongst Aboriginal young people.

Riverina/Murray

- ◆ Complete Balranald/Wentworth redevelopment project – identification of culturally appropriate early intervention and family preservation models of service delivery.
- ◆ Funding of \$200,000 per annum in 2000-01 and 2001-02 has been provided for the Walla Walla Information and Access Centre. This Centre is an Aboriginal owned and managed centre providing a culturally appropriate service to facilitate access to existing Government and funded human services. It will also provide outreach services to isolated Aboriginal communities in the Richmond Valley.

Mid North Coast

- ◆ In 2000-01, \$1.4 million in base recurrent funding has been provided to assist in the co-ordination of *Families First*, which is a coordinated strategy sponsored by the New South Wales Government to increase the effectiveness of early intervention and prevention services in helping families to raise healthy, well adjusted children.
- ◆ Schools as Community Centres project is a jointly funded and managed program involving Police, Department of Education and Training, Department of Health and Department of Community Services. The aim is to influence planning and integration of service delivery to meet the needs of families with children under five years of age.

Proposed project – Towards Strengthening Communities Joint Planning Project.

- ◆ The joint Human Services Chief Executive Office Group has endorsed in principle the Towards Strengthening Communities Joint Planning Project. This project has the following objectives:
 - develop a planning model, compatible with other population group planning models, which combines information gathered centrally and locally to determine communities of relative disadvantage across New South Wales;
 - develop a consistent approach to resource allocation to communities commensurate with need;
 - provide an objective basis for defining benchmarks for service provision across human services agencies; and
 - provide an objective basis for understanding the relationship between need, demand and supply of human services and use this to project future needs.

AGEING AND DISABILITY

The State Government's plan for older people, people with disabilities and their carers will ensure those living in rural and regional New South Wales get their fair share.

In 2000-01 rural and regional areas will share in:

Disability

- ◆ Funding of \$10.4 million for additional supported accommodation placements for people with a disability and \$3 million in capital facilities to support these places.
- ◆ Funding of \$10.8 million to provide a range of flexible support options for people with a disability, including respite, local area coordination, support coordination and other flexible immediate support needs.
- ◆ In addition, the Government will provide an additional \$2 million in capital funding for equipment for children with disabilities.

Older People

- ◆ Estimated growth in the Home and Community Care Program in Round 16 of around \$21.5 million including indexation.
- ◆ Continued funding of \$700,000 for three specific services for older people:
 - expansion of transport demonstration projects;
 - dementia projects, including two regional Dementia Advisory Services in the Far North Coast and the Western Region for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people; and
 - continuation of the *Experienced Hands* (Older Volunteering) Projects.
- ◆ Expansion of the Department's Seniors Card scheme. Seniors Card events and concerts in regional areas will continue.

Boarding House Reform

- ◆ The roll out of the State Government's Boarding House Reform strategy will also continue with a further \$9 million funding in 2000-01.

Business improvement

- ◆ Further development of the Department's electronic business capabilities across New South Wales with funding of \$213,000.
- ◆

WOMEN

STRATEGIC PROJECTS AND PARTNERSHIPS

- ◆ The State Government will fund a community organisation in Kempsey to develop a culturally appropriate training package for indigenous women to develop their community/business management skills. This was identified as a key need through a previous Department for Women project in the region.
- ◆ The State Government's commitment in Orange will continue. The project will involve strategies aimed at increasing women's employment and training opportunities and was identified through skills gap analysis needs research.
- ◆ The partnership will continue with *Australis*. Four workshops will be conducted in regional New South Wales aimed at increasing young women's financial independence through small business development.
- ◆ In partnership with Telstra the Department will install contact phones in Aboriginal women's and community leader's homes in identified rural and regional locations to improve women's safety and access to services.

New South Wales Women's Grants Program

- ◆ Eleven projects were funded in Regional New South Wales to the value of \$329,305 or 39 percent of the total allocation include:
 - \$20,000 – Bourke Aboriginal Health Services;
 - \$11,875 – Eden Merimbula Adult and Community Education Centre;
 - \$75,000 – Goulburn Family Support Service;
 - \$5,700 – Jindabyne Country Women's Association;
 - \$48,907 – Kurrajong Waratah Industries;
 - \$10,000 – Ngadrii Ngalli Way (Bourke Family Support);
 - \$6,160 – Sapphire Community House;
 - \$20,000 – Streetwize Comics;
 - \$30,900 – Summerland Olive Inc;
 - 40,311 – University of Newcastle; and

- \$60,452 – University of Wollongong/Local Aboriginal Employment Promotion Committee.

Partnership Project

- ◆ Under the 1999-2000 Women's Grant Program UTS Shopfront were funded \$100,000 for a Partnership Project to design a framework for sustainable economic, social, environmental and cultural development for women in three remote and regional communities.

Women's Information and Referral Service

- ◆ The Women's Information and Referral Service 1800 freecall number is in all regional telephone books to enable women access to the service.
- ◆ The Key Phone List and Women's Information and Referral Service fridge magnet have been updated and distributed and continue to be in high demand as a valuable resource for women in rural communities.
- ◆ Statistics collated by Women's Information and Referral Service from caller inquiries are available (On request) to rural municipal and shire councils. These statistics provide information about the needs of women by local government area.
- ◆ A Shop-a-Docket advertising campaign promoting the Women's Information and Referral Service freecall number is planned to commence in the Batemans Bay and Broken Hill areas. This campaign aims to increase the awareness of the service in rural New South Wales. Further areas will be targeted through this advertising campaign.
- ◆ Women's Information and Referral Service Information Officers are conducting Outreach in the South Coast, Southern Tablelands, the Riverina and Central West regions of New South Wales to inform service providers of the services available through Women's Information and Referral Service and to ensure the accuracy of information about the providers.

Website

- ◆ The Department for Women website is undergoing constant review and development to ensure greater accessibility to the site by women in general and rural women in particular. The issue of download time of pages and sites and the ability of servers to access sites is a key focus of all development
- ◆ The Women's Information and Referral Service Database is to be downloaded onto the Department's website. This will allow greater access to the 4,000 services for women and their families in rural New South Wales.

Premier's Council for Women

- ◆ In 2000-01, the Premier's Council for Women is planning to undertake a number of strategic consultation projects, covering issues of concern to women in regional New South Wales. The consultations will cover a range of topics including transport, health and safety, access to information resources, employment and education, and women participating in local decision making. This follows successful consultations held in Grafton in 1998, Broken Hill in 1999 and Albury in early 2000.
- ◆ Planned locations for consultations during 2000-01 include the Central Coast, the Southern Highlands and nine communities in Western New South Wales.