

NEW SOUTH WALES

**SOCIAL JUSTICE
BUDGET STATEMENT**

1998-99

FOREWORD

The *New South Wales Social Justice Directions Statement* released in October 1996, outlined the Government's broad approach to social justice. It set out our commitment to ensuring there is fairness in the distribution of resources, and that people have access to the economic resources and services essential to meet their basic needs and to improve their quality of life. The Government remains committed to these objectives.

We have a strong belief in the relationship between a prosperous economy and social well being; just as a strong economy ultimately relies on quality public and social infrastructure. That is why we will continue to meet the challenge for our social justice agenda posed by significant reductions in funding and cost shifting by the Commonwealth Government. The Commonwealth's actions have impacted particularly on those most vulnerable in our society - the aged, the sick, the unemployed, the disadvantaged, those needing affordable child care and those needing legal aid.

The 1998-99 Budget reaffirms and demonstrates our commitment to social justice and a fairer community.

The Government has again given high priority to the protection of children and helping families with the announcement of the *Families First* initiative. Child abuse and neglect too often occur because parents and families lack support as they raise their children. The *Families First* initiative is based on a strong belief that prevention and early intervention is the best way to protect children and assist families. The program will better coordinate and link existing family services, with the collaboration of both government and non-government agencies.

We have also reaffirmed our commitment to lead Australia towards justice and equality for Aboriginal people by the establishment of the *Aboriginal Communities Development Program*. The commitment of \$200 million over seven years will provide necessary housing and infrastructure to priority Aboriginal communities, in a coordinated manner and on a sustainable basis.

Continuing to provide quality health care to New South Wales residents remains a priority for the Government and we have increased health funding by nearly \$1.3 billion since coming to office. New South Wales continues to face significant funding pressures, however, due to the Commonwealth Government's cuts of nearly \$200 million from the NSW Health system.

Notwithstanding this difficult environment, New South Wales has made inroads in improving waiting times for emergency patients. This Budget provides continued support to all Area Health Services, particularly those in the population growth areas of South Western Sydney, outer Western Sydney and the Central Coast.

The Government's goal in education is to give young people the best possible chance for their future by providing equitable access to high quality education and training. We are proud of the fact that every student in a New South Wales Government school now has access to a computer. The Statewide Literacy Strategy has concentrated on improving the literacy levels of disadvantaged young people in 455 schools. Significant funding is again allocated to these important initiatives in 1998-99.

The Government has committed to fully match the Commonwealth's offer to provide for a five percent expansion of the Home and Community Care program. This funding will expand the provision of basic maintenance and support services for frail aged people and younger people with disabilities to enable them to stay in their own homes. The 1998-99 Budget also provides additional recurrent funding for crisis accommodation and support needs for people with a disability.

As in previous Statements, the 1998-99 Social Justice Budget Statement reports on the outcomes from last year's Budget. The significant number of initiatives on which satisfactory outcomes are reported is testament to the Government's concentration of effort on social justice during the last three years. Underlying these outcomes is our core commitment to assist those who are most in need.

The 1998-99 Social Justice Budget Statement demonstrates that New South Wales places a very high priority on social justice policy obligations. We commend the Statement to you.

Bob Carr
Premier

Andrew Refshauge
Deputy Premier

CONTENTS

1	INTRODUCTION	
	Social Justice in New South Wales	2
	Purpose of the Social Justice Budget Statement	2
2	FUNDING SOCIAL JUSTICE FOR 1998-99	
	Promoting Health	3
	Supporting children, youth and families	6
	Strengthening Education and Training	11
	Providing access to justice and a safe community	13
	Supporting rural and regional communities	16
	Enhancing social housing	18
	Meeting the needs and aspirations of Aboriginal people	20
	Caring for older people and people with disabilities	24
	Promoting diversity	26
	Meeting the needs of women	27
3	OUTCOMES OF 1997-98 BUDGET INITIATIVES	29

1 INTRODUCTION

Social Justice in New South Wales

Social justice is one of the New South Wales Labor Government's four key themes, along with its commitment to economic development, environmental protection and financial responsibility. The Government aims to enhance the well being of the whole community through developing and implementing policies which recognise the inter-dependent relationship of these four themes.

The fundamental objective is to achieve a sustained enhancement of the community's standard of living while ensuring that the people of New South Wales get a fair go at the opportunities of life that should be open to all and a fair share of the resources which the Government manages on their behalf.

Based on the four interrelated principles of equity, access, participation and rights, the Government has identified key objectives for its social justice strategy. These objectives are: promotion of a more inclusive community; caring for families and communities; educating for the future; improving the justice system; and creating an environment where everyone can take an active role.

In October 1996, the Government released the *New South Wales Social Justice Directions Statement*. The coordination, development and implementation of the Government's social justice policies and strategies is overseen by the Cabinet Committee on Social Justice, chaired by the Deputy Premier. The Cabinet Committee is one way of building coordinated social policy across government and monitoring its effectiveness.

The Government's main source of community advice on major and strategic social justice issues is the Social Justice Reference Group. The Reference Group reports to the Premier through the Deputy Premier on matters referred to it by the Government.

Purpose of the Social Justice Budget Statement

The Social Justice Budget Statement was first instituted by the current New South Wales Labor Government in 1995. It is published annually with the general budget papers. The programs and priorities listed reflect the principles and objectives of the Government's social justice strategy as outlined above. The Statement is not an exhaustive list of every Government program related to social justice. Rather, it outlines the major social justice programs and priorities of the Budget.

The Social Justice Budget Statement also reports on the outcomes of the previous year's social justice undertakings. This provides an important tool for the Government and the community to assess budgetary priorities and determine progress in achieving the Government's social justice objectives.

2 FUNDING SOCIAL JUSTICE FOR 1998-99

The New South Wales Government's social justice initiatives for 1998-99 are presented in sections focusing on key social justice priority areas. The initiatives do not provide an exhaustive list of the Government's social justice activities and programs. They reflect the key priorities for expenditure in 1998-99.

PROMOTING HEALTH

The NSW Government is striving to improve the health of the residents of NSW by improving peoples' access to appropriate, high quality health services. We are making sure our acute care services are "state of the art" and delivering better integrated health services in the community.

In 1998-99 the budgeted recurrent expenditure for Health is \$6.633 billion. The Government has increased recurrent spending for health by nearly \$1.3 billion since its election, an unprecedented increase of 34 per cent in nominal terms.

The NSW Health system delivers a wide range of essential services to assist in improving the health of the community. These services are provided through:

- 210 general hospitals
- 7 multi purpose centres
- 260 community health centres
- 27 nursing homes

On an average day the NSW Health system provides care for 80,000 people. Every minute two people are seen in one of our emergency departments with 20,000 undergoing non-inpatient treatment each day. A further 53,000 people receive outpatient treatment such as community health services with ambulance services sent out 2,000 times every day. Waiting times for elective surgery remain a priority with this Government. New South Wales has the lowest waiting lists per capita compared to other States. Better practice initiatives will ensure that we constantly improve.

Expenditure on health **capital works** in 1998-99 will be **\$457 million**. Major new projects include:

- the **Central Coast Area Health Service Strategy (\$11.6 million)**: to provide Community Health Centres at Erina and Tuggerah and a Day Surgery Centre at Wyong Hospital;
- **Illawarra Area Strategy Stage 2 (\$62.5 million)**: to enable the refurbishment of the existing Services Building at the Illawarra Regional Hospital, including Hickman House;
- **Hunter Strategy Stage 1 (\$17.9 million)**: includes rebuilding the John Hunter Hospital Emergency Department and extension/relocation of the Intensive Care Unit and development of the Cancer Research Institute at the Newcastle Mater Misericordiae Hospital;

- **Northern Sydney Strategy Stage 1 (\$18.5 million):** includes upgrading of Emergency, ICU and Theatres at Royal North Shore Hospital, and a maternity and child protection unit at Ryde Community Health Centre;
- **Mental Health Strategy Stage 2 (\$23 million):** will contribute towards realignment of infrastructure assets to support the delivery of mental health programs;
- **Ambulance Strategy Stage 2 (\$18.3 million):** will contribute towards fleet replacement and upgrade of facilities.

Funding has also been provided in 1998-99 for **ongoing projects** as follows:

- the **Macarthur Sector Strategy (\$6.8 million):** upgrading Campbelltown Hospital, redeveloping Camden Hospital, building two new community health centres, and other community health facilities;
- major redevelopment of **Nepean Hospital (\$27 million):** including a new Women's and Children's Health Building;
- improvements in the efficiency and functionality of **Tweed Heads Hospital (\$4 million);**
- capital upgrading of **State nursing homes** to meet contemporary standards **(\$11.5 million);**
- redevelopment of the hospitals in the **Central Sydney Area (\$56.6 million);**
- redevelopment of **Blacktown Hospital** to provide 364 beds, and refurbishment works at **Mt DrUITT Hospital (\$40 million);**
- **\$4 million** for the upgrade of **Blue Mountains Hospital;**
- **\$3.1 million** allocated to the **NSW Breast Cancer Institute** at Westmead.

The major priorities for **mental health services** in 1998-99 are:

- to improve the balance of services between inpatient and community based mental health services;
- to continue to deliver the Government's commitment to improving mental health services for children/adolescents, including suicide prevention, and also for older people;
- improving mental health services in rural and remote areas.

Since coming to office, the Government has increased funding for mental health services by **\$36 million** and this funding will be maintained annually, to address the Government's mental health policy goals. The \$36 million additional funding includes:

- **\$14 million** per annum to **suicide prevention programs;**
- **\$1.3 million** per annum to support the development of **mental health services for Aboriginal people**, including the launch of a new Aboriginal Mental Health Policy;
- **\$10 million** allocated to improve **services in rural areas** and to provide a fairer distribution of resources across all parts of NSW;
- the provision of **160 additional health workers** to provide specialist mental health services to **children and adolescents**, including those from culturally diverse backgrounds.

The **\$2 million Rural Health Workforce Strategy** has been designed to encourage doctors and health professionals to practise in rural New South Wales. Over the next two years (1998-2000) the following key initiatives will be funded under the scheme:

- **\$1 million** for **Pilot Locum Services for Rural Obstetricians and Gynaecologists**;
- **\$600,000** for a pilot program to provide **rural training positions for medical specialists**;
- the establishment of a pilot project for a **toll free telephone link** between rural GPs and specialists in major centres;
- allied health scholarships for students from both rural and metropolitan backgrounds.

\$25 million has been provided by the Government to the Ambulance Service to develop a **Computer Aided Dispatch system** and other communication upgrades. This will have a significant effect on the coordination of ambulance resources and service provision to the public, reducing response times to calls. The Government will also fund a **\$5.4 million upgrade** of the **NSW Ambulance Fleet**. 110 new ambulances will be purchased including 40 four wheel drive ambulances designed to drive in rough terrain.

Thirteen telemedicine pilot projects are now being trialed in New South Wales. The projects use a high speed digital telecommunication network to transmit audio and visual images between health facilities. The projects will enhance the exchange of information, allow for the provision of advice and second opinions and enable rural facilities to access counselling and education programs. Trial projects covering 31 sites across rural and metropolitan New South Wales have been implemented. The projects encompass the clinical specialities of psychiatry, pathology, radiology, ophthalmology and paediatrics. A total of \$3.4 million has been allocated to this project since 1996, which includes **\$700,000** to support this initiative in 1998-99.

\$1 million will be provided on an annual basis to **pilot innovative service models** in community health. These innovative models of service delivery aim to increase access to community health services for those groups of people experiencing poorer health status.

\$3 million will be provided in 1998-99 as part of the program to achieve a **sustainable reduction in the concentration of lead** in current and future generations of children living in Broken Hill and Boolaroo.

A **\$300,000** annual budget has been allocated to the Environmental Health Branch of NSW Health to **expand and develop its role as the lead regulatory agency for drinking water in NSW.**

Other health priorities in 1998-99 will include:

- implementation of the Day Surgery Policy to improve access to day surgery procedures;
- the Diabetes Health Outcomes Initiative;
- improvements in stroke care through better organisation of stroke services;
- development and implementation of a Cancer Care Model for NSW to enhance the care provided to people with cancer.

SUPPORTING CHILDREN, YOUTH AND FAMILIES

The Government is committed to providing support and protection for children and young people in our community and to provide responsive services to help families.

Key priorities in this area include:

- reshaping child protection services in response to the findings of the Wood Royal Commission;
- promoting community development and crisis prevention strategies; and
- distributing resources to achieve greater equity and access.

Total expenses for the Department of Community Services in 1998-99 are estimated at \$895 million (this includes \$245 million from the Ageing and Disability Department for the provision of disability services). In addition, \$20 million has been provided for the Department's Capital Acquisition Program. Since 1995-96, total expenditure for the Department has increased by almost \$184 million. This funding has included:

- a 52.6 per cent increase in the allocation to child protection and substitute care;
- a \$48.3 million increase in total expenditure for child and family support since 1996-97;
- a commitment of \$33 million for better child care services;
- \$3.2 million to increase payments for foster carers.

Following a series of cuts made by the previous Government, and in an effort to rebuild the Department of Community Services, since 1995 the Government has employed an extra 96 District Officers, 20 foster care support workers and 60 child protection specialists.

Consistent with the Government's commitment to preventative care and early intervention, the 1998-99 Budget has allocated funds to the **Families First Program**. This significant new initiative aims to strengthen and extend the parenting skills of parents in NSW who have a child under eight. The Program is based around four different types of service that will be used by different parents at different times: Health Visitors, Volunteer Home Visitors, Early Intervention Teams and Local Development programs.

The first year of the initiative will be devoted to consultation, planning, education, training and development of the program. **\$1.35 million** will be provided to the Department of Community Services and the Office of Children and Young People in 1998-99 for these purposes, to ensure the **Families First Program** has a sound foundation in consultation and planning, with well trained staff and effective evaluation and monitoring systems. New and changed services will commence during the 1999-2000 year. An additional \$2.4 million will be provided to the Department of Community Services in that year, and then \$5 million annually in future years. NSW Health will also provide \$1 million to employ additional staff for the strategy. \$700,000 will be provided annually to the Office of Children and Young People to maintain the training, development and evaluation functions.

\$8 million (double the 1997-98 figure) will be used to fund **care and support services** including enhancements to intensive services and individual care packages and the creation of District Officer (Fostering) positions.

The **\$33 million child care package** includes important initiatives such as: **\$5.5 million** to create **700 places for children under three**; **\$9.5 million** to create over **1,500 new pre-school and occasional care places**; **\$3 million** to establish **innovative service responses in rural NSW**; over **\$2 million** to enable access to **childcare for children at risk** and to improve access to services for children with a disability, children from a non-English speaking background and Aboriginal children .

\$5.4 million will be allocated over two years (1998-2000) to implement the recommendations of the Wood Royal Commission including the introduction of additional supervisory positions, training and development, professional support and Area Practice Review Committees.

As part of this funding, **\$2.1 million** will be allocated to employ an additional **21 Assistant Managers** to provide supervision, advice and support for District Officers. The new positions will be assigned to Department of Community Services offices with the highest ratio of staff to supervisor.

\$86.6 million has been allocated under the Commonwealth and State funded **Supported Accommodation Assistance Program (SAAP)** in 1998-99 to provide over 400 services for homeless people throughout the State including 175 services for young people. The NSW Government will provide **\$41.6 million** of this allocation.

As part of the Department of Community Services' **Recovery and Change Management** program, it is proposed to implement a strategy designed to improve the quality and responsiveness of service delivery. **\$3 million** has been allocated to this program in 1998-99.

Middle managers will also be provided with intensive training in best practice in leading and managing change. Other strategies will be geared to raising professional standards among direct service delivery staff.

In 1997-98 the Government took steps to improve responses to the investigation of allegations of child sexual abuse by establishing **Joint Investigation Teams** of specially trained Police and Community Services staff working together in the same location. The teams also have close links with local health services. Coverage of the State is expected to be completed by mid 1998. **\$6.4 million** has been allocated to the program in 1998-99, with an additional **\$300,000** provided to establish **a team in Northern Sydney**.

\$500,000 will be allocated to the **Schools as Community Centres** program in 1998-99 representing a contribution of \$125,000 each from the Departments of Education and Training, Health, Community Services and Housing. The centres offer integrated early intervention services to prevent problems for children and their families in severely disadvantaged communities. The project presently involves four centres at Curran, Redfern, Chertsey (Central Coast) and Coonamble. An evaluation report has found that families are assisted by increased literacy, immunisation, greater readiness for school, reduced absenteeism, child abuse and neglect confirmations, and increased family and community involvement. This program will, over a period of years, be incorporated into the **Families First** initiative.

Ongoing initiatives, which will continue to be funded in 1998-99 include:

- **\$300,000** to assist the **State-wide Network for Young People in Care** to advocate for children in care;
- **\$300,000** to provide **stronger peer support and improved information for foster carers** in New South Wales;
- **\$2 million** annually for **family support initiatives**, which include the continuation of Intensive Family Based Services in two Areas and the Family Initiative Fund which is used to purchase goods or services, and to provide financial assistance, to families in need; and
- **\$780,000** per annum for the development of a system of **service standards, accreditation of substitute care services and for monitoring children in care**.

\$5.9 million will be provided in 1998-99 for ongoing **Youth Justice Initiatives**. This funding will consolidate recently introduced post release support schemes, the Aboriginal Mentor Scheme, a mentor scheme for juveniles of non-English speaking background (NESB) including Chinese, Indo-Chinese and Arabic, and the statewide expansion of the Safehaven alternative placement program for young offenders who cannot live with their parents or families.

The NSW Government provides an extensive range of social program funding to improve the quality of life for recipients in terms of participation in the life of the community, mobility and physical and emotional health maintenance. The NSW Government offers the most generous concessions of any state in Australia in many areas. These include concessions for water, electricity and local council rates, travel, drivers licences and dental care. Major expenditure programs in 1998-99 are detailed below.

- **\$60 million** is expected to be expended on the delivery of **gas and electricity concessions** including pensioner concessions, the Energy Accounts Assistance Program which is provided to financially disadvantaged people in crisis situations to avoid disconnection, and Medical (Life Support System) rebates.
- **\$50.7 million** has been allocated to fund payments to private operators and other community groups for **transport assistance programs** in 1998-99, an increase of \$3 million from 1997-98. These payments include funding for concessions such as half-fare concessions for pensioners, transport subsidies provided under the Community Transport Program, Home and Community Care program and subsidies for half-fare taxi transport for persons unable to utilise public transport because of severe and/or permanent disabilities.
- Funding for the **Community Transport Program** has increased in 1998-99 with a further **\$200,000** or 10 percent being added to the scheme. This will enable more community projects to be funded, increasing support for the disadvantaged.
- The Government is continuing to provide funding totalling **\$171.5 million** for both the **Pensioner Excursion Ticket** and the **Pensioner Half Fare Concession**. Approximately \$29.5 million will be allocated to private operators of buses and ferries for the provision of half fare concessions to pensioners.
- A total of **\$142 million** will be used to fund the **\$1 Pensioner Excursion Ticket** provided by State Rail and the State Transit Authority. Under this scheme pensioners are provided with unlimited travel on all CityRail services and most STA services on the day of purchase.
- Over **\$115 million** is expected to be provided in 1998-99 on concessions offered to pensioners on **licences and vehicle registrations**.

- Under the **School Student Transport Scheme**, the Government funds free travel for eligible school students to and from school. The scheme currently provides transport for around 60 per cent of all students in New South Wales and will be allocated **\$367.8 million** in 1998-99.

The Olympic Coordination Authority has established a Social Impacts Advisory Committee to advise on issues related to the social impacts of the Olympic Games. **\$250,000** has been allocated in 1998-99 for **specific consultancies** on issues such as housing, transport, training and access.

It is estimated that an amount of **\$11.5 million** will be paid into the **Casino Community Benefit Fund** in 1998-99, representing the proceeds of a levy on gaming revenue at the Sydney casino. Funds are provided for important research, educational, treatment and rehabilitation services relevant to problem gambling, as well as for other community benefit projects. Funded projects include gambling and family support counselling, a legal advice service and a study to examine the effectiveness of different treatments in the alleviation of problem gambling. **\$400,000** is expected to be expended on the 1800 633 635 **gambling help line** - known as G-line - which was established by the Government in the second half of 1997.

In 1998-99, **\$12.6 million** will be allocated to the **Fair Trading Strategy** program to enhance the performance of the marketplace and to develop a fair and equitable trading environment in New South Wales. This will include implementation of an overarching Access and Equity Strategy to ensure the Department of Fair Trading's services meet the needs of all community members. A priority for this year will be a comprehensive Action Plan to ensure the needs of Aboriginal consumers are met, including the employment of specialist staff, consumer education programs and a focus on tenancy issues.

The **Consumer and Trader Services Program** provides information and assistance to consumers, traders and the community on fair trading, home building and property services through a network of 23 Fair Trading Centres. This includes access to complaint resolution services, information on tenancy issues, and advice on access to tribunals. **\$56.8 million** will be spent on the Program in 1998-99.

\$14.9 million will be allocated in 1998-99 to the **Residential Tenancies Tribunal**, the **Consumer Claims and Building Disputes Tribunals** and the **Commercial Tribunal**. Each is a quasi-judicial body whose decisions are made independent of the Government. These tribunals provide impartial forums for the resolution of disputes. Part of this funding will be spent making the Residential Tenancies Tribunal more equitable and responsive to user needs, with initiatives including specialist panels, case management, shorter waiting times in rural areas, satellite registries and hearing rooms in regional centres and information sessions.

STRENGTHENING EDUCATION AND TRAINING

The Government recognises that by giving young people effective training and education opportunities, we are giving them the best possible chance for their future.

This recognition underpins the Government's commitment to equity in service provision and achievements for students and communities. The focus is on increasing access and opportunities, student and community participation and on improving educational outcomes. This includes socially and culturally appropriate curricula, education and training programs as well as equitable resource allocation and support structures.

The total Department of Education and Training expenditure for 1998-99 is \$6.698 billion. During the term of this Government, total funding for education and training has increased by over \$1 billion or 17.8 per cent.

The Government is on target to meet its earlier commitment to provide 1,405 additional teachers by 1999-2000.

The **Reading Recovery Program** provides intensive one-on-one instruction to students who are having difficulties with reading and writing in their first years at school. In 1998, Reading Recovery is being offered in 596 schools with 400 teaching positions and 28 specialist Reading Recovery tutors. 250 of those schools are in regional New South Wales. In 1997, 4725 year one students participated with a success rate of approximately 87 per cent. The cost of the Reading Recovery Program in 1998-99 is estimated at **\$18 million**.

Total expenses of some **\$54 million** will be spent in 1998-99 through the socio-economic disadvantage program. This includes \$24.1 million for the NSW **Disadvantaged Schools Program** (DSP) from the Commonwealth Literacy Program. These funds will be used to improve literacy levels for disadvantaged young people in 480 targeted schools. The DSP includes support for targeted projects in literacy, training and development for teachers and community members, the development of school community partnerships in educational efforts, and a reform of school and classroom organisation. **The Student Assistance Scheme** provides financial support to the students whose families are in greatest financial need. **\$3.6 million** has been allocated to this scheme.

Over \$6 million will be allocated in 1998-99 for a range of special programs to be conducted which assist disadvantaged young people by improving their literacy, numeracy and self-esteem. The programs include **the Helping Early Leavers Program, Circuit Breaker, Time Out and Koori Youth Programs**.

Over \$1 million will be provided to continue the **students at risk of harmful drug use program**, which includes a training course for School Counsellors on strategies to support students at risk of harmful drug use. Aboriginal initiatives, including the “Healing Time” comic and curriculum support materials, will be implemented in schools during 1998-1999. Teachers and supervisors will also be trained in the use of drug education curriculum materials for geographically isolated students. All Government secondary schools will hold drug information sessions to provide information to parents, students and the community about drug education and prevention strategies.

\$620,000 will be allocated to operate a **State Equity Centre** at Erskineville Public School. The Centre will provide access for schools across the state to quality resources and networks with a focus on equity and social justice issues, particularly in relation to literacy.

The Government’s **Computers in Schools program** will continue in 1998-99, with allocated funding of **over \$73 million**. Every student in New South Wales now has access to a computer and the Internet. 1998-99 funding will result in the Government meeting its commitment to provide 90,000 computers to schools across the State and will be used to improve student access to the Internet and other technology for enhanced learning. 2,200 computers will be allocated on a needs basis to new and developing schools, rural and remote schools and special education students.

The Government also recognises the importance of providing extra technology training for teachers. During 1998-99 nearly 7,000 teachers will be trained as part of the Technology in Learning and Teaching program. Other examples of anticipated spending in 1998-99 include: additional computer-based teaching and learning activities generated by teachers; an Early Childhood Computers in Schools Program; use of indigenous language to improve Aboriginal students’ literacy and technology skills by communicating with other Aboriginal students around Australia via the Internet.

\$3.8 million will be provided for programs which **promote and develop access to education and training** for groups in the community which are under-represented in vocational education and training. Programs include the **Mature Workers Program**, which provides education, training and employment assistance to older people, and the **New South Wales Apprenticeships for People with Disabilities**.

In excess of **\$8 million** is to be spent on **improved student services and amenities** at TAFE campuses at Wollongong, Hornsby, Baulkham Hills, Nowra, Shoalhaven and Thurgoona. The new facilities at Hornsby and Nowra will expand course options for Adult Basic Education and Literacy and Numeracy programs.

PROVIDING ACCESS TO JUSTICE AND A SAFE COMMUNITY

The Government continues to demonstrate its commitment to improving the administration of justice and improving community access to the justice system.

The Government's priorities in the justice system are to:

- reduce delays across the court system by creating a Case Management Fund to provide a more flexible system of resourcing special needs;
- to improve the personal safety of all participants in the judicial process, and in particular, victims of crime and other vulnerable community members;
- to promote access to justice by providing better standards of court accommodation which cater for the full range of support services provided to the clients of the courts, particularly in rural communities.

The Government will establish a **\$3 million Case Management Fund** which will provide a more strategic approach to resourcing the courts. The fund is aimed at ensuring better resource coordination between courts and will also provide additional District Court Judges to address serious delays and a rising caseload.

\$700,000 will be provided for a **Court Room Technology Pilot** to trial the application of information technology with the aim of improving the overall timeliness of court proceedings.

In 1998-99 the Government will provide funding to improve the standard of court accommodation in a number of locations:

- **\$2 million** for the construction of a new purpose-built **Children's Court in Campbelltown**, to be co-located with the existing Court House to improve the juvenile justice and child protection systems in south-western Sydney;
- **\$3.2 million** to construct a new Court House for the **Local Court at Toronto**;
- **\$2.8 million** for refurbishing and extending the **Orange Court House**;
- **\$1.2 million** for the refurbishment and extension of **Bega Court House**.

The **Administrative Decisions Tribunal** has been established to ensure greater transparency, equity and consistency in the making of administrative decisions which effect the lives of people in New South Wales. The ADT will progressively bring together a number of existing tribunals, as well as providing new appeal rights in areas which were previously without redress. The ADT is expected to be up and running later this year. **\$1 million**, in addition to funds already allocated to the relevant tribunals, has been provided for ADT in 1998-99.

During 1998-99 the Department of Corrective Services will continue with major correctional reforms including continuing implementation of the sex offender program, commencement of the alcohol and other drug residential programs and the acute crisis management centre at Long Bay correctional complex. Programs for indigenous offenders will be expanded to address the disproportionate incarceration of indigenous people, which is consistent with the recommendations of the Royal Commission into Aboriginal Deaths in Custody.

An additional **\$2.25 million** has been allocated in 1998-99 for the implementation of the **Sex Offender Program** with the introduction of the community based post-release program. The Program seeks to address offending behaviour by managing such inmates from their reception into the correctional system throughout their sentence right through to post-release programs. This program addresses the recommendations of the Wood Royal Commission Report into Paedophilia.

During 1998-99, **\$2.1 million** will be provided to establish a **Drug and Alcohol residential unit at Long Bay** for inmates requiring intensive drug and alcohol intervention. This unit will provide an intensive program which has been shown to reduce recidivism and enable an effective transition to the community upon release.

Additional funding of **\$2.8 million** has been provided to further expand the programs available to indigenous offenders under the **Action Plan for the Management of Indigenous Offenders**. Projects to be funded include the **Second Chance Program** which is to operate in western New South Wales and which will allow inmates from the State's west and north-west to better maintain their family and community links. It will address the employment and training needs of these young, predominantly Aboriginal offenders and will incorporate Aboriginal cultural and heritage components. Another program will involve the establishment of a base for a mobile work camp at Ivanhoe. Between 30 and 40 selected inmates will undertake projects, within an established radius of the base camp, to benefit the community.

The following major capital programs to enhance the standards of correctional facilities will continue in 1998-99:

- redevelopment of **Long Bay Correctional Complex** with an allocation of **\$3.6 million** for the construction of facilities for inmates with special needs;
- the redevelopment of **Mulawa Correctional Centre** with an allocation of **\$1 million** to improve the general conditions under which women inmates are accommodated.

Funding of **\$1.5 million** has been provided in 1998-99 for the **crisis management units at Bathurst and Cessnock** which will provide a therapeutic regime for inmates who exhibit behaviour of a potentially suicidal or self-harming nature.

\$1 million will be provided to meet ongoing costs of **periodic detention centres at Bathurst and Broken Hill**. These facilities were completed in 1997-

98 and will increase the range of sentencing options available in country areas, particularly for female and Aboriginal offenders.

\$19.6 million has been provided for the construction of **three juvenile detention centres** and the renovation of existing facilities. This program involves: construction of two new juvenile detention facilities in regional New South Wales (Dubbo and Grafton); a new facility to replace the antiquated Mt Penang Centre; and the renovation of existing custodial facilities as part of a four year plan to eliminate substandard accommodation and redistribute accommodation capacity more equitably across the State.

The Government has provided **\$6.6 million** over three years (1997-2000) to fund the innovative **Youth Justice Conferencing Scheme**. Juvenile offenders admitting certain offences will be brought face to face with their victim through the conferencing process so that the offender will understand the impact of their crime on the victim and be able to take responsibility for that crime. The conference will aim at developing negotiated outcome plans, including the offender making reparation to the victim.

To assist in the implementation of the Young Offenders Act, the Police Service is providing **\$5 million** to fund **80 Youth Liaison Officers** and promote programs under the Act to divert young people from entering the juvenile justice system.

The Government is committed to making the people of New South Wales feel safer on public transport and increasing patronage levels. In 1998-99, a **\$64 million upgrade of CityRail stations** will commence and be completed in 1999-2000. This will involve the installation of closed circuit television, high intensity security lighting, long line announcement facilities and emergency help points at every CityRail station. The upgrade will also include the provision of security facilities in commuter carparks and interchanges.

As part of the Government's overall security package, from 1 July 1998 **security guards** will be posted on every CityRail train from 7pm until the service closes each night. This initiative will result in over 200 guards moving through every train, every night checking the safety of passengers.

\$90,000 is being provided for the continued trialling of **Video surveillance systems** on 200 State Transit buses, designed to act as a deterrent to crime and anti-social behaviour.

\$4.25 million has been allocated to the **Safer Communities Action Plan** initiative, which will give local residents a role in making their communities more secure. The Action Plan involves the appointment of 80 Community Safety Officers, the development of Local Community Safety Plans and local community consultation mechanisms.

\$300,000 has been allocated to develop a **Youth in Sport Program** jointly coordinated by the Police and Community Youth Clubs (PCYCs) and the Department of Sport and Recreation. The program has a strong focus on crime prevention through the development of self esteem and reducing the levels of boredom experienced by young people.

The Department of Gaming and Racing will continue the **No More. It's the Law** responsible serving and drinking program in 1998-99. It is expected that **\$100,000** will be expended on this program.

SUPPORTING RURAL AND REGIONAL COMMUNITIES

The Government acknowledges that rural and regional New South Wales faces different challenges and has different strengths to the urbanised areas of the State. Since the Government came to office, 54 per cent of total business assistance has been allocated to country businesses. At the New South Wales Country Summit in March this year, the Government reaffirmed its commitment to assist rural and regional communities over the next five years by identifying regional and local strengths and opportunities.

The **Drought Regional Initiatives Program** will continue to be funded in 1998. The Program supports land management practices that reduce drought impacts by providing special grants, technical support and education for farmers. The 1998-99 funding includes an additional **\$1.5 million** as part of the Drought Assistance Package announced in April 1998.

\$5 million will be provided per annum over the next three years for the **Regional Economic Transition Fund**. The fund will assist the development of a more strategic response to structural adjustment pressures across the State. This will address structural adjustment affects faced by areas such as Lithgow, Cobar, Goulburn, Gunnedah, Newcastle and Wollongong.

In recognition of the need to assist regional development and growth, the Government has committed **\$1 million** per annum for the next three years to the **Country Lifestyles Program**. This program will promote the lifestyle advantages of individual regional centres and help attract skilled and trade professionals to meet the needs of industry development.

Rural Partnership Programs aim to give rural communities the opportunity to develop and implement strategies for addressing the economic development, structural adjustment, natural resource management and social issues in their region in an integrated way. In 1998-99, the Government will provide **\$250,000 to the Kickstart Sunraysia** program for horticultural redevelopment. The **West 2000** program is a joint State and Commonwealth program, which began in 1997 and involves funding of approximately \$9 million over 3 years. Funding will be provided through the Rural Assistance Authority and the Department of Land and Water Conservation to undertake rural adjustment projects to assist in achieving self reliant rural industries that can adapt to changing market and resource conditions. In 1998-99, the funding for **West 2000 is \$3.9 million.**

Under the **Government Access Program**, seven pilot Government Access Centres have been established for rural and remote communities in the North Coast and Western Regions of New South Wales. These Centres provide a range of information and referral services on behalf of State Government agencies. The program is mid-way through a two year pilot period. A review is currently underway to strengthen the existing arrangements. The budget for the program in 1998-99 is **\$647,000.**

The **Regional Coordination Program**, initially located in Dubbo and Lismore, now covers all of regional New South Wales, with offices in Armidale, Newcastle, Wagga Wagga and Goulburn. Given the program's success in regional New South Wales it has been expanded to cover Western Sydney. In 1998-99, **\$1.6 million** will be spent on the program which is currently managing over 120 projects across regional NSW and has achieved positive outcomes for regional communities by:

- better coordinating government services and activities; and
- the improved management of issues.

In 1998-99, the Government will assist rural businesses and communities through a number of different initiatives:

- the **Main Street/Small Towns program** assists small/medium sized regional communities in taking a strategic approach to their future by enabling communities to better utilise their human, physical and financial resources. **\$660,000** has been allocated to this program in 1998-99;
- **\$100,000** has been allocated for a **Business Retention and Expansion Program** which provides communities with a mechanism to collect and collate information on the needs and opportunities of local businesses;
- **\$700,000** will be used to assist local agencies to build economic development skills capacity and develop local leadership under the **Resources for Regional Development Program;**
- the **Agribusiness Alternatives Program** provides a broad range of business services to agricultural-based enterprises and communities and aims to ensure that these are able to maximise their profitability and sustainability. **\$800,000** has been allocated to this program in 1998-99.

Rural health initiatives have been noted in the Health section above.

\$66.5 million will be allocated in 1998-99 to the **Rural Fire Fighting Fund** to improve the firefighting capabilities of the Rural Fire Service. This allocation will allow for the provision of approximately 155 new tankers to local government and the 24 hour operation of the State Operations Centre at Rosehill.

Over **\$12 million** will be spent by the Government in 1998-99 on concessions for **motor vehicle registration charges** for selected primary producer vehicles.

The **Country On-Line pilot project**, launched in March this year, will give country people access to a variety of Government and private information and services using school-based computer and Internet facilities. Under the program country residents would be allowed to use school-based computer and Internet facilities after hours, one or two nights a week. In 1997-98, 22,000 new computers were distributed to all New South Wales Government schools and connected to the Internet.

During 1998-99, Workplace Change NSW will conduct a co-ordinated campaign throughout regional New South Wales. The focus of **Reforming Rural Workplaces** will be to assist employers and employees to co-operatively reform enterprises, with the aim of improving workplace productivity, equity and flexibility throughout regional centres, and particularly in rural industries. **\$50,000** will be provided for the campaign.

Over \$23 million will be provided in 1998-99 by both the New South Wales and Commonwealth Governments under the **Forestry Structural Adjustment Package** to retrain and relocate affected timber workers and restructure the industry. This includes \$9.3 million for worker assistance, \$7.8 million for business exit assistance and \$6.6 million in industry development assistance.

ENHANCING SOCIAL HOUSING

The current Commonwealth State Housing Agreement concludes in June 1999. During 1998-99 the Government will continue to negotiate with the Commonwealth over future funding arrangements and directions for social housing in New South Wales. In 1998-99 the Government will contribute \$583 million to social housing. Of this, the Commonwealth commitment will be \$309 million, \$35 million less than in 1996-97.

The Government will negotiate with the Commonwealth a 1998-99 **Supplement to the Housing Assistance Strategic Plan 1996-97 to 1998-99**, which will delineate the strategic framework for housing assistance in 1998-99. The Plan will be delivered through public and community housing and assistance to private renters and home purchasers, providing housing options for people with low incomes, including special needs groups such as Aboriginal people and people with a disability.

The Government will continue to pursue new and innovative supply options involving the private sector and non-government organisations. In the absence of Commonwealth support, the Government will continue to develop an internally funded long term build/lease program with an expected **450 dwellings commenced in 1998-99**.

The Government has recently introduced legislation to establish an **Aboriginal Housing Office** to consolidate and oversee Aboriginal housing services as part of its commitment to improved housing options for Aboriginal people. The legislation and associated reforms, when fully implemented will:

- enable duplication in the delivery of Aboriginal housing to be overcome by pooling Commonwealth, ATSIC and State funds for housing;
- enhance self determination through the establishment of a statutory authority governed by an Aboriginal Board supported by regional Aboriginal housing committees;
- enable more training and support for the Aboriginal housing sector and improve the standards and accountability of community based housing services; and
- increase the capacity of the Aboriginal community to meet outstanding needs using models and policies which they themselves recommend through ongoing consultation processes.

Older Aboriginal housing stock will also be upgraded at a cost of **\$10.5 million**. This represents an increase in the allocation of resources for the upgrading of Aboriginal housing stock from 1997-98 to 1998-99 of over \$5 million.

The Government is committed to a diversified social housing system. During 1998-99 **\$88.5 million** will be spent on **community housing works in progress and new works**, with 448 community housing commencements.

During 1998-99 the Department of Housing will spend **\$125.7 million on upgrading, and improvement on estates**. Supply will be increased through the commencement of **1,341 dwellings**, with **\$185 million** being spent on **works in progress and new works**. This represents an increase in funding for capital supply from 1997-98 to 1998-99 of \$17 million.

The Government sees as a priority the provision of supported accommodation for people with special needs, with **\$11 million** allocated for **new supported housing accommodation** in 1998-99, yielding 58 units of accommodation.

\$25.6 million in 1998-99 has been allocated for financial assistance to **low income renters in the private market**, including those with special needs such as people with a disability or HIV/AIDS, and to low income home purchasers.

As part of the Government's commitment to affordable housing, 40 per cent

(2,480) of Homefund borrowers will receive interest rate relief. In 1998-99, Homefund borrowers will be subsidised to ensure that no borrower is required to pay an interest rate greater than 9.75 per cent. This rate will be reviewed annually with regard to market forces.

In 1998-99 it is proposed to spend an additional **\$10 million** (sourced from Rental Bond Board accumulated funds) to **implement initiatives aimed at increasing the supply of affordable housing.**

The Government's commitment to improved service delivery is reflected in a range of service delivery enhancements to be continued by the Department of Housing in 1998-99. These include the development of a **24 hour maintenance call centre** providing simple telephone access to a guaranteed maintenance service. The call centre will be supported by **\$110 million** in maintenance expenditure during 1998-99.

Other improvements include improved client access to services provided by other agencies to assist in developing more sustainable communities, and a more proactive customer service supported by annual client visits, a regular customer satisfaction survey, and a comprehensive training program for new and existing client service staff.

The **Community Housing Energy Program (CHEP)** was introduced in 1997-98 and provides significant benefits to the residents of public and community housing dwellings by making their homes more energy and water efficient. CHEP aims to improve the comfort of dwellings and reduce household bills for energy and water. CHEP will continue during 1998-99 and it is anticipated that spending on the program will be slightly more than **\$500,000**. It is estimated that as a result of the program each household will save \$130 per annum on their energy and water bills.

MEETING THE NEEDS AND ASPIRATIONS OF ABORIGINAL PEOPLE

On 26 November 1997, the *NSW Government Statement of Commitment to Aboriginal People* was released. This is a blueprint document outlining ways in which the Government is committed to working in partnership with Aboriginal people to redress the social and economic disadvantages affecting their communities.

The Government's broader social justice strategy is built on fair access by the people of New South Wales to the resources managed on their behalf. However, there are still Aboriginal communities in New South Wales without adequate housing, water supply and sewerage systems. As a matter of priority, the Government has made a major commitment to close this gap in the provision of basic services and infrastructure in Aboriginal communities.

\$200 million has been allocated **over seven years**, commencing 1 July, 1998, to the **Aboriginal Communities Development Program**. This program, the

responsibility of the Department of Aboriginal Affairs, will provide necessary housing and infrastructure to priority Aboriginal communities. Community needs will be assessed through a consultative process involving Aboriginal people, their representatives, local government, ATSIC and responsible State and Federal agencies. A high level Interdepartmental Steering Committee will oversight the consultation and assessment processes and recommend projects for the approval of the Cabinet Committee on Aboriginal Affairs. The Steering Committee will also oversight implementation of the program and periodically report to the Cabinet Committee. This program, the first of its type in New South Wales, will be designed to deliver much needed housing and infrastructure, such as water and sewerage, roads, flood protection, community facilities and rubbish disposal, in a coordinated manner, on a sustainable basis and with Aboriginal involvement.

The **Aboriginal Environmental Infrastructure Project**, a pilot interagency program which addresses neglected infrastructure and basic services in three Aboriginal communities, has been allocated funds of \$3 million by New South Wales agencies over three years from 1996-7 of which **\$1 million** will be contributed for 1998-99. Other funds will be provided by ATSIC and the Commonwealth. This initiative has a strong emphasis on sustainable infrastructure and on training local Aboriginal people.

Budgeted expenses for **Aboriginal health services** will be **\$18.8 million** in 1998-99. The Government will continue its commitment to improving the health status of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples through the Partnership Agreement with the Aboriginal Health Resource Cooperative, which ensures greater community participation in the development of health services and programs. Particular issues to be addressed include: immunisation, renal disease, cardiovascular disease, perinatal mortality, diabetes, cancer, health promotion, misuse of alcohol, improved cultural awareness training and improved access to GP services.

In addition, **\$500,000** has been allocated to the **Otitis Media Strategy**, in recognition of middle ear disease as a vital health and education issue for Aboriginal children.

Other Aboriginal health strategies include:

- the **Family Health Strategy**, to be implemented over the next two years, with **\$1.2 million allocated** in 1998-99 to address family violence and sexual assault issues; and
- an **Aboriginal Mental Health Strategy**, released in October 1997 and to be implemented in 1998-99 with recurrent funding of **\$480,000**, will focus on Aboriginal youth suicide and the effect of the separation of families on Aboriginal mental health.

The **Aboriginal Education** total expenses budget for 1998-99 will be over **\$25 million**. This includes \$10.9 million from the Commonwealth's Indigenous Education Strategic Initiatives Plan. Under this program, the Aboriginal

Education Policy continues to be implemented with 2,200 schools to participate in a comprehensive training program over the next four years.

Other initiatives to be implemented by the Department of Education and Training are:

- ensuring an Aboriginal perspective is incorporated into the school curricula;
- the employment of 82 additional **Aboriginal Education Assistants** in the school system in 1998 with **\$2.6 million** allocated for 1998-99;
- establishment of a new pre-school in an Aboriginal community at Nowra East Primary School;
- the use of **indigenous language** on the **Internet** with **\$10,000** allocated for 1998-9;
- funding temporary **Student Support Officer positions in TAFE** to increase the level of service to Indigenous students (**\$672,000** in 1998-99).

In recognition of the acute needs of the Aboriginal community in its experience of the legal and custodial system, TAFE NSW has worked with the Department of Corrective Services to deliver **vocational courses to Aboriginal inmates** via a joint strategy. In 1998-99, **\$250,000** will be spent by the Government in delivering these courses.

The Government has responded to the over-representation of Aboriginal youth in the juvenile justice system by developing innovative strategies. **\$6.6 million** will be spent on the **Youth Justice Conferencing Scheme** over three years (commenced in 1997-98). While the Scheme is not specifically targeted at Aboriginal youth, it will offer opportunities to minimise their contact with the criminal justice and prison systems for less serious offences.

A pilot project for **Aboriginal Night Patrols** in Kempsey, Broken Hill, Forster and Narrandera will receive funding equivalent to **\$122,000** in 1998-99.

The creation of **four additional positions in the Office of the Registrar** within the Department of Aboriginal Affairs (recurrent funding of **\$280,000** over four years commencing 1998-99) will strengthen the Office's capacity to advise, monitor and improve the efficiency, effectiveness and accountability of the Aboriginal Land Council system. This staff will also help with the Office's new responsibilities, under *The National Parks and Wildlife (Aboriginal Ownership) Amendment Act 1996*, to identify and register traditional owners to facilitate negotiations for the Government's return of five nominated national parks to Aboriginal ownership. The first of these, Mootwingee National Park, is expected to be transferred in 1998. The National Parks and Wildlife Service has allocated **up to \$200,000** in 1998-99 for **community negotiations**.

On 27 February 1998, the Cultural Ministers Council endorsed a Commonwealth-State jointly funded strategy for **repatriating secret/sacred cultural indigenous property** from museum collections to Aboriginal communities. The NSW Government has made an allocation of **\$125,000**

recurrent (for four years) for the Strategy. By 2001, the Strategy aims to identify where possible the origins of all ancestral remains and objects held in museums, record these on a national database, notify all affected Indigenous communities and negotiate with museums and communities concerning repatriation.

The Aboriginal Women's Legal Resources Centre will continue to be funded with **\$200,000** allocated in 1998-99. The first of its type to be funded by a State Government, the centre provides legal advice, representation and information and referral services to Aboriginal women, and community education on legal issues relevant to Aboriginal women.

The **Department of Land and Water Conservation** will undertake a number of programs in 1998-99. Seventy six personnel of Aboriginal descent will be employed by the Department. Some of these persons will be involved in developing resources on Aboriginal culture, heritage and protocols, conducting Aboriginal network meetings, and facilitating Aboriginal land management issues including those dealing with sacred sites and local environmental concerns. The budget for these activities will be **\$950,000** in 1998-99.

The **Olympic Co-ordination Authority (OCA)** appointed a manager in mid-1997 to establish its Aboriginal Employment Strategy in order to maximise the involvement of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in the construction and development work of the OCA. **\$120,000** has been allocated to enable **research on Aboriginal heritage issues** and other matters related to promoting employment opportunities for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in development projects managed by the OCA.

In 1998-99 the Government will spend **\$200,000** on an **Aboriginal Business Development Program**. This funding will provide a co-ordinator to review and refine Aboriginal small business programs and services and to promote Aboriginal business development in New South Wales.

\$200,000 has been allocated in 1998-99 to the **Far West Regional Academy of Sport** to provide assistance to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander and other talented athletes, living in isolated and remote areas of the State.

NSW Fisheries, along with the Commonwealth, will be holding workshops to develop the **Indigenous Fisheries Strategy** in 1998-99, at a cost of **\$50,600**. The aim of the workshops is to improve equity for indigenous peoples in consultation and accessibility to social and economic opportunities in relation to the State's fisheries.

CARING FOR OLDER PEOPLE AND PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES

Total expenses for the Ageing and Disability Department in 1998-99 is \$705 million (this includes funding of \$245 million which will be passed on to the Department of Community Services for the provision of disability services). This represents an increase of \$136 million since 1995-96.

In recognition of the needs of our growing ageing population, the Government announced in March 1988 the establishment of a new **Ageing Issues Directorate** within the Ageing and Disability Department. The Directorate will be responsible for strategic policy and planning advice on ageing and aged care and co-ordination of Commonwealth-State relations on aged care issues. The Directorate will have a program budget of **\$2 million** in 1998-99.

The Government has committed to fully match the Commonwealth offer on the **Home and Community Care (HACC) Program**. This allocation (an additional **\$2.8 million** in 1998-99) will provide for a five per cent expansion in the provision of basic maintenance and support services for frail aged people and younger people with disabilities to enable them to stay in their own homes. The funds will be targeted to those areas which have been identified through the HACC Planning process as being most in need. They will also assist the continuation of existing HACC services.

\$500,000 in 1998-99 is being provided for the **International Year of Older Persons in 1999**. This allocation will assist the co-ordination of the International Year and will include funding for one-off grants to community organisations under the Healthy Ageing Grants Program and assisting a communications strategy with events and information materials.

Thirty three stations have been proposed as **Easy Access Stations** throughout the CityRail network and will be upgraded to make it easier for people with mobility problems to get around. Sixteen stations have been upgraded to date. In 1998-99, **\$18.6 million** will be allocated to this program. The Easy Access program is scheduled for completion in 2002, with total funding of \$86.5 million.

As detailed previously, the Government funds an extensive range of concessions for the aged including for those for water, electricity, local council rates, travel, drivers licences and dental care. Well in excess of **\$200 million** will be spent on these programs in 1998-99.

In March 1998, the Government announced a special **stamp duty exemption** for incapacitated war veterans when buying a new or second hand car. The concession will save around \$660 on the purchase of a \$20,000 or \$900 on a \$30,000 vehicle and can be claimed on a vehicle purchase every two years or 40,000 kilometres. It is estimated between 5000 and 6000 disabled veterans will be assisted by the new concession.

From 1998-99, an additional **\$350,000 per annum** will be provided to allow continuation of the **Seniors Information Service** which provides a telephone information service, for the price of a local call, about issues of relevance to older people, such as housing and health services.

\$14 million additional funding per annum will be provided from 1998-99 to meet **crisis accommodation and support needs** for people with a disability. This allocation will enable the Government to meet a significant part of the need for accommodation support arising from individual crisis and family breakdown, and will assist organisations wishing to improve the quality of their services in accordance with the requirements of the *Disability Services Act*.

\$5 million will be provided for the **maintenance and modification of large residential centres** to improve the dignity of life and reduce the risk of injury for disabled residents.

The Government will provide an additional **\$4.6 million per annum** on a recurrent basis from 1998-99 for **Post School Options**. This allocation will enable Post School Options places to be provided to eligible school leavers with a disability who will be finishing school in 1998.

The Attorney General's Department will continue implementing its **Disability Strategic Plan**. The plan will implement a strategic approach to disability service planning with the aim of allowing persons with a disability to fully participate in the justice system and have access to justice services.

The Olympic Co-ordination Authority (OCA) established in 1996 an **Access Advisory Committee** to provide advice on the management of access by people with disabilities to Olympic facilities. Detailed access strategies have been completed for the Olympic Park Railway Station, the Olympic Stadium, public transport and other facilities at Homebush and in Western Sydney. **\$120,000** has been included for the continued management of access issues during 1998-99.

\$10,000 will be provided in 1998-99 to the **People with disabilities small business management training program**.

The following initiatives will be funded in 1998-99 to promote the participation in sport of people with disabilities:

- **\$220,000** to enable elite athletes with disabilities to increase their participation in sporting activities through the provision of grants under the **High Performance Disabled Sport Support Program** and the **Disabled Talented Athlete Program**;
- **\$70,000** for a joint program with the Sydney Academy, the NSW Institute of Sport and the Australian Institute of Sport to enable elite athletes with disabilities to attend the Sydney Academy;
- approximately **\$150,000** to support the **Sports Council for the Disabled**.

PROMOTING DIVERSITY

Living in New South Wales means being part of a diverse community. The 1998-99 Budget continues the Government's commitment to promote the value of cultural diversity and the rights of individuals from non-English speaking backgrounds.

Carnivale is a significant occasion for the New South Wales community to celebrate its cultural diversity. **\$555,000** will be allocated for Carnivale in 1998-99, a \$255,000 increase from the 1997-98 allocation.

Community grants are one of the principal mechanisms by which the Government supports ethnic communities. In 1998-99, an additional **\$100,000** will be provided as part of a three year commitment to provide grants for special meritorious projects which emerge outside the cycle of existing grants programs.

Access to government services relies upon the ability of the service provider and the client to be able to communicate effectively. **\$4.6 million** will be provided in 1998-99 for **interpreter and translation services**. Included is a provision of \$600,000 as part of a three year commitment to provide for the 24-hour operation of the interpreter and translation service. This allows effective responses by agencies in their dealings with all their clients.

Total expenses of over **\$86 million** are included in the Department of Education and Training's 1998-99 budget under the **Non-English Speaking Background Program**. In addition, funding of over **\$3.3 million** will be provided in 1998-99 to implement the **Multicultural Education Plan 1998-2001**. These programs include support for non-English speaking background students in English language and literacy, assistance to schools in communicating with students' parents and communities, and support for teachers in their efforts to counter racism through training and development opportunities.

Eighteen community language teachers will be employed from the start of 1999 bringing the total to an additional 96 community language teachers funded by the Government during its term in office. The total cost of this initiative is around \$16 million.

\$200,000 has been allocated in 1998-99 to the **Business Migration** initiative. This initiative aims to boost business start-ups and increase investment and employment opportunities by providing information in seven community languages, a business counselling/interpreter service, referrals and advice.

MEETING THE NEEDS OF WOMEN

On International Women's Day 1998, the Premier affirmed the Government's agenda for women: to protect and enhance the rights of women in New South Wales, while encouraging their aspirations.

In 1998-99 the Department for Women will continue to oversee the implementation strategies contained in the NSW Action Plan for Women. These strategies focus on six key areas which are to be tackled across Government:

- reducing violence;
- promoting workplace equity;
- maximising the interests of women in micro-economic reform;
- promoting the position of women in all aspects of society;
- access to education and training; and
- improving the health and quality of life of women in New South Wales.

In 1998-99, **\$1 million** will be provided under the **NSW Women's Grants Program**. The program is targeted at women with limited access to social and economic resources. Previously funded projects include a directory of professional educational opportunities for Aboriginal women and the establishment of a Rural Women's Study Access and Support Centre at Byron Bay.

\$1.6 million will again be provided in 1998-99 under the **NSW Strategy to Reduce Violence Against Women**. The strategy includes the operation of a Violence Against Women Unit in the Attorney General's Department and a network of Regional Violence Prevention Specialists located throughout New South Wales.

An additional **\$300,000** has been provided to extend the services of the **Domestic Violence Court Assistance Program**. The program is an important initiative of this Government, ensuring that domestic violence is treated as a serious criminal offence and providing additional legal assistance to community legal centres. The additional funding will be used to extend the program to new locations and for additional assistant coordinators.

The NSW Government will provide over **\$26 million** in 1998-99 for **refuges for women escaping domestic violence** under the joint Commonwealth-State funded Supported Accommodation Assistance Program (SAAP). Of the 86 SAAP services for women in New South Wales, 84 are women's refuges.

\$432,000 has been provided under the NSW Action Plan for Women to **reduce violence against women at a regional level**.

The Government will commit **\$250,000** to support further implementation of the **Gender Equity Strategy** through a pilot program to integrate gender equity in mainstream school planning processes.

\$100,000 project funding has been provided to the Working Women's Centre to assist with **programs for disadvantaged women workers**, including rural and isolated women, Aboriginal and Non-English speaking background women workers.

The Department of Industrial Relations continues to fully fund the **Women's Equity Bureau**, at a cost of approximately **\$1.2 million**. The Bureau aims to improve the social and economic position of women workers by developing and implementing strategies to address pay and employment equity issues and by providing advice and assistance to advance the industrial interests of women.

The redevelopment of **Emu Plains Correctional Centre** is to continue at a cost of **\$3.2 million** to complete the construction of the planned domestic style accommodation for 70 minimum security women inmates. There will be seven 10-bed accommodation blocks, new reception and administration facilities and refurbishment of some existing buildings.

Initiatives in **cervical cancer and breast cancer screening** will be continued in 1998-99 to maximise the participation of under-screened and unscreened women. In total, the Government will spend over **\$14 million** in 1998-99 on cervical cancer and breast cancer screening.

\$250,000 has been provided to the **Women's Sport Unit** to enhance opportunities for women to participate in sport and recreation. **\$100,000** has also been allocated for a **Sports Administration and Travel Scholarship** to enable talented women to become senior sports administrators. Approximately 22 women will receive scholarships under the program.

\$100,000 has also been allocated to the **Women in Business** mentor program. The program creates links between experienced business women and women entrepreneurs to share knowledge and experiences. To date, 200 women have participated in the program.

3 OUTCOMES OF 1997-98 BUDGET INITIATIVES

Since 1995, the Social Justice Budget Statement has reported on the social justice outcomes of the Government's Budget commitments from the previous year. This has enabled the Government and the community to assess progress in the delivery of social justice priorities.

The following tables list initiatives which appeared in the 1997-98 Social Justice Budget Statement and outline the outcomes to date. In almost all cases the Government has implemented, or is well into the process of implementing, the initiatives listed.

In recognition of the critical importance of health concerns for the community, the 1997-98 Budget saw an increase to health funding of \$221 million bringing total funding increases to the health area since 1995 of close to \$1 billion. This contrasts with the Commonwealth Government's continued funding cuts to the public health system, with nearly \$130 million cut from the NSW health system over the 1996-97 and 1997-98 Budgets.

The Government has continued its policy of improving access to health services on the basis of need, with emphasis given to the population growth areas of Western Sydney, the Central Coast and the North Coast. \$471 million was allocated for major capital works to upgrade or redevelop hospitals and nursing homes in these areas.

Funding has been provided to increase child and adolescent mental health services with eighty additional specialist mental health staff being recruited for these programs. A Whole of Government Suicide Prevention Strategy is also underway.

In keeping with the Government's undertaking to improve the literacy standards of NSW students almost \$60 million was set aside in the 1997-98 Budget to secure higher literacy standards in all schools. An additional 250 teaching positions were funded in the areas of technology, reading recovery, small school support and community languages. This is the third step of a four year program to fulfil the Government's commitment to increase teacher numbers. The Government is well on target to meet this commitment.

Additional assistance was also allocated to the Disadvantaged Schools Program targeted to improve literacy outcomes for disadvantaged young people in 479 schools.

The Government's technology initiative continued and will provide more than 55,000 modern multimedia computers to schools, enhancing access to computers for all students.

Following the findings of the Wood Royal Commission into the Police Service, the Government has taken steps to protect vulnerable children in our community, including the establishment of the Crime Commission Paedophile Reference in November 1997 to investigate matters relating to paedophile activity.

Measures have also been taken to improve responses to allegations of child sexual abuse. The major emphasis in this area is preventative programs. In 1997-98 the Government established eight Joint Investigation Teams (JITs) of specially trained Police and Community Services staff working together in the same location. JITs also have close links with local Health services. These teams are located in Ashfield, Liverpool, Penrith, The Entrance, Wollongong, Newcastle, Kogarah and Parramatta.

In the 1997-98 Budget the Government allocated funding for the improvement of services for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people across a number of portfolio areas. This included the implementation of the NSW Aboriginal Health Policy and \$20 million allocated to support Aboriginal education services in schools with more than 500 schools participating in intensive training to address issues like literacy, numeracy, indigenous employment and culturally inclusive curricula.

Increases in funding for the Home and Community Care Program will enhance these services for frail older people and people with disabilities. Additional funding has also been provided to expand services focussing on children with a disability including respite care, early intervention, and other family support services. This should increase access to services for families who have children with high support needs, who live in rural remote areas, or who are from non-English speaking or Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander backgrounds.

Rural and regional communities have benefited from funding provided by the New South Wales Government for drought assistance and to institute land management practices to reduce drought impact. Seven Government Access Centres were also established in Western and Northern NSW to provide one-stop access to government services.

The following tables provide information on the progress and outcomes of specific initiatives outlined in the 1997-98 Social Justice Budget Statement.

1997-98 INITIATIVE	OUTCOME
<p><u>PROMOTING HEALTH</u></p> <p>Expenditure on capital works in 1997-98 will be \$453 million.</p>	<p>Capital works projects commenced include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Macarthur Sector Strategy: construction of Rosemeadow and Wollondilly community health centres underway, community consultation completed and options developed for remaining upgrade works. • Major redevelopment of Nepean hospital: new Women's and Children's Unit underway for completion by March 1999, upgrades of intensive care, pathology and rehabilitation commenced. • Improvements in the efficiency and functionality of Tweed Heads Hospital: services planning near completion - preliminary design of ward accommodation and buildings underway. • Capital upgrading of State Government nursing homes: project planning committees have been established for all sites: Allandale Nursing Home, Cessnock; Mount St Joseph's Nursing Home, Young; Garrawarra Nursing Home, Waterfall; St Joseph's Nursing Home, Sandgate; Bodington Red Cross Nursing Home, Wentworth Falls; Macquarie Care Centre Nursing Home, Bathurst; Governor Phillip Nursing Home, Penrith.

1997-98 INITIATIVE	OUTCOME
<p>Funding has also been provided in 1997-98 for ongoing projects.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Redevelopment of the Blacktown and Mt Druitt Hospitals. Preliminary work has begun at Blacktown and Mt Druitt refurbishment commenced. • New or replacement hospitals at Coffs Harbour, Dubbo, Lithgow and West Wyalong. Construction underway at Dubbo and Lithgow. Coffs Harbour - director and manager appointed. West Wyalong - tender documentation being completed. • Upgrading the Blue Mountains Hospital. Construction of emergency department in progress. • Redeveloping Broken Hill Hospital to provide a new 85 bed hospital on the existing site. Tenders called in January 1998. • Upgrading Calvary Hospital for new aged and rehabilitation services; St Vincent's Hospital redevelopment. Planning underway. • Redevelopment of the hospitals in the Central Sydney Area. Preliminary works and documentation for main work in progress.

1997-98 INITIATIVE	OUTCOME
<p>A Rural Health Support Unit has been established in Grafton Funding in 1997-98 will be \$215,000.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Funding has enabled the Unit to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ⇒ identify state-wide rural health issues and support rural health services in coordinating and developing policies; ⇒ provide information and support on community consultation; ⇒ establish health councils and a network for multi-purpose services; ⇒ oversee Rural Health Workforce Strategy projects. • Commencing in 1998, rural communities will have input into the work of the Unit through a new reference group with representatives from key rural and community groups.
<p>\$750,000 will be provided on an annual basis to pilot innovative service delivery models in community health and a further \$1.5 million annually for community health nurses in key priority areas.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Currently selecting the first innovative community health pilot projects. Allocations of \$1m (\$0.75m Innovative Community Health Pilot Projects, \$0.25m non-government organisations) will be made. • Funds for community health nurses will be allocated to growth areas of the State and targeted to employ additional community nurses for Aboriginal health, mental health and aged care.

1997-98 INITIATIVE	OUTCOME
<p>Twelve telemedicine pilot projects are being trialed in New South Wales. \$700,000 will be provided in 1997-98 to support this initiative.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • These projects are designed to assist delivery of health services to rural areas by transmitting images, voice and data between two or more health units via telecommunications channels (covers psychiatry, pathology, radiology, obstetrics, ultrasound, ophthalmology and paediatrics). • The trials (covering 31 sites across rural and metropolitan NSW) have been implemented. • Projects are being evaluated to formulate appropriate Telemedicine policies and standards, aligned with clinical practice and business objectives. Preliminary findings are positive. • Telemedicine services are also being trialed in two Aboriginal Medical Services and in three NSW Correctional Centres.
<p>\$1.8 million will be provided in 1997-98 as part of the five year program to achieve a sustainable reduction in the concentration of lead in current and future generations of children living in Broken Hill.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Average blood lead level in Broken Hill children has fallen from 18 micrograms per decilitre in 1991 to 10 micrograms per decilitre in 1997. • Percentage of children with blood lead levels above 15 micrograms per decilitre has also fallen from over 80% in 1991 to 20% in 1997. • Strategies used to achieve these gains include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ⇒ blood lead surveillance and follow up case management of children with elevated blood lead levels; ⇒ lead education program; ⇒ remediation of contaminated areas in Broken Hill; ⇒ development and evaluation of remediation strategies for householders.
<p>An additional \$1 million on an annual basis will be provided to relieve waiting times for dentures in areas of high need.</p>	<p>This has enabled an additional 1,537 dentures to be provided annually to patients in areas of high need.</p>

1997-98 INITIATIVE	OUTCOME
<p>Funding for mental health was increased by \$7 million in 1996-97 (\$10 million annually thereafter) and a further \$7 million annually will be provided in 1997-98.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Funding was principally applied to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ⇒ Development of specialist child and adolescent mental health services. 80 additional specialist child and adolescent mental health staff have been recruited. ⇒ Programs to enhance outcomes for adults in rural and growth areas whose mental illness has become chronic and disabling, and for suicide prevention in relation to older people's mental health. • In October 1997, the Premier announced a state-wide Suicide Prevention Strategy that will provide intervention programs to assist people at risk of suicide and training for health workers. • The following documents have been released: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ⇒ Suicide Prevention Statement - October 1997; ⇒ Suicide and Self Harm Prevention Initiatives in NSW - September 1997; ⇒ Preventing and Managing Reported Increases in Suicide in Local Communities - December 1997; ⇒ NSW Aboriginal Mental Health Strategy - October 1997; ⇒ Mental Health Promotion Conceptual Framework - December 1997.

1997-98 INITIATIVE	OUTCOME
<p><u>STRENGTHENING EDUCATION AND TRAINING</u></p> <p>The number of additional teachers to be funded in 1997-98 as part of the Government's initiatives will be 249.5 effective full time (EFT) teaching staff. This includes the technology initiative computer coordinators and computer training staff and brings the total number of additional teachers appointed since 1995 to 776.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Government is on target to meet its election commitment to provide 1,405 teaching positions by 1999-2000.
<p>Total recurrent payments of \$47.1 million will be spent in 1997-98 through the socio-economic disadvantaged program. This includes \$21.4 million from the Commonwealth Disadvantaged Schools Program which will be utilised to improve literacy levels for disadvantaged young people in 479 targeted schools.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Direct financial assistance plus consultancy support was provided to 479 Disadvantaged Schools Program (DSP) schools to improve literacy outcomes for students. Resulting rates of literacy, retention, participation and attendance rates will be tested externally. • Funding enabled: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ⇒ trialing of 3 major literacy projects across the state; ⇒ training for parents and teachers on improving students' literacy outcomes; ⇒ meetings between principals, teachers and parents to share achievements and best practice in literacy teaching, learning and assessment in the context of serving low socio-economic status communities. • About 280 primary and secondary teachers additional to school entitlements were provided to support students in DSP schools. This helped reduce class sizes, broaden curriculum and assisted literacy initiatives.

1997-98 INITIATIVE	OUTCOME
<p>Disadvantaged Schools Program cont.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • \$3.6 million was distributed to all government schools (particularly high schools) to provide support on an individual basis to students with financial difficulties under the Student Assistance Scheme. Principals comment positively on the value on the scheme for parents and their children.
<p>A total of \$7.022 million has been allocated in 1997-98 to fund a range of special programs which assist disadvantaged young people by improving their literacy, numeracy and self-esteem. The programs include the Helping Early Leavers, Circuit Breaker, Time Out and Koori Youth programs.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It is estimated that more than 6,500 disadvantaged young people will participate in literacy and numeracy programs, and most will move on to, or continue in, education and training pathways. • More than 46,000 young people participated in the ARTSTART Youth Arts and Skills Festival in 1997, designed to increase young people's further education, training and employment opportunities through involvement in arts and arts-related activities. • About 55,000 young people participated in local community activities in NSW Youth Week 1998.
<p>In 1997-98, over \$5.1 million is being provided for the Community Languages Initiative.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An additional 18 full time equivalent (FTE) community language teacher positions have been allocated to 30 primary schools across 12 districts to commence in Term 1, 1998. This brings the total number of community language positions to 226.0 FTE in 178 primary schools across 21 districts in NSW. The number of languages taught under this initiative has increased to 25. • In 1997-98, 32,500 students attended community languages schools conducted by 400 community organisations.

1997-98 INITIATIVE	OUTCOME
<p>\$1 million has been provided for drug and alcohol education programs.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Additional training for all teachers about drugs, drug education and the management of drug related incidents in schools. • Training for teachers about students at risk from harmful drug use. • Training for school counsellors to better identify the risks of drug use and ways to reduce risks. • Drug education curriculum materials developed for geographically isolated students. • Schools will provide appropriate activities for students caught smoking at school and more consistent information to their parents with the aim of reducing reoffending. • “Healing Time” initiative developed for Aboriginal students and their communities.
<p>Some \$4.6 million will be provided for programs which promote and develop access to education and training for groups in the community which are under-represented in vocational education and training.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • \$3 million allocated to 60 Mature Workers Projects managed by community organisations to provide employment and training assistance and support to 4,000 participants. • 12 additional apprentices with disabilities have been recruited by government agencies for full trade training.

1997-98 INITIATIVE	OUTCOME
<p>The Government's technology initiative in 1997-98 will total some \$64.3 million. Every school (2,222) in New South Wales was connected to the Internet by the end of 1996. This year's funding will make student access to the Internet and other technology for enhanced learning fairer.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work is progressing to enhance access to the Department's Internet service by providing the potential to increase the number of access points in schools. • The memorandum "Student Access to the Internet" (97/011) and the support document "Student Access: Developing a School Internet Policy", distributed to all schools in July 1997, required schools to consider equity issues in the development of a school Student Access to the Internet Policy by the end of term four 1997. • The Technology in Learning and Teaching (TILT) teacher development program provides training for teachers in the use of computer technologies in their classrooms. 6,826 teachers participated in 1997 and a further 2,205 teachers will participate in semester one 1998. • All teachers have received curriculum support materials to help them integrate computer technologies into their teaching and learning programs. • The computer allocation component of the Computers in Schools program will provide more than 55,000 modern multimedia computers to schools, thus enhancing access to computers for all students. <p>Phase one of the computer allocation, which distributed 25,000 computers to government schools, was completed in term 3, 1997.</p> <p>A second phase of the allocation, which will distribute 31,000 computers to schools, commenced in term four 1997. Of this second phase allocation 2,200 computers will be allocated on a needs basis to new and developing schools, for students in rural and remote locations, and special education students.</p>

1997-98 INITIATIVE	OUTCOME
<p><u>SUPPORTING CHILDREN, YOUTH AND FAMILIES</u></p> <p>\$450,000 has been allocated to the Child Protection Council to provide training, primarily for staff of non-government organisations, to implement the Interagency Guidelines for Child Protection Intervention.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Statewide information and training has been completed for senior managers, managers, supervisors and front-line child protection staff (approx 5,000 staff). Training evaluation will continue through 1998. • From mid 1998, a training package will be available for those whose work brings them into contact with children, but who do not undertake child protection work as their core business. This will help these workers recognise and respond to signs of child abuse and neglect.
<p>The Government has allocated \$6.4 million in 1997-98 to the Department of Community Services and the New South Wales Police Service to establish and operate eight Joint Investigation Teams. Services for physically and emotionally abused or neglected children will also be established in all Area Health Services.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Eight Joint Investigation Teams (six metropolitan, plus Wollongong and Newcastle) have been established. • A further four positions have been established to facilitate a rural response to notifications of child abuse and neglect where a crime may have been committed. • These teams work together to investigate notifications of criminal child abuse, providing a more effective investigative response and a more sensitive process for clients.

1997-98 INITIATIVE	OUTCOME
<p>Additional funding of \$20 million over three years from 1997-98 is being provided to improve the quality and level of support to children living in substitute care arrangements. The \$4 million allocated for 1997-98 includes \$1.5 million to provide innovative services for children with high support needs by maintaining them in their own communities and \$1 million for further development of new service models for children with high support needs throughout the State.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Funding allocated to purchase individualised services for children where no existing service is able to meet their needs (eg. specialised family support for a foster carer, extra youth worker in a residential service). • These funds will enable the Department of Community Services to enhance funding to existing contracted high support services, to enable these children to be supported within the community and extend service types into areas not currently serviced (education, health and recreation).
<p>An additional \$103,000 per year will be provided from 1997-98 to establish a Reunion and Information Register for people separated by adoption action. A further \$123,000 will be spent in 1997-98 to research and produce an index of care records held by government and non-government agencies in New South Wales, preserve substitute care records and provide access to records for people affected by adoption.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Register has been established and is integrated with the Adoption Reunion and Information Register. To be operating by mid-1998. • The Advisory Committee for the Connecting Kin Project has contacted agencies with potentially relevant holdings or which may be able to help locate records. Identification of agencies' records commenced in January 1998. The research phase of child removal is nearly completed.
<p>\$250,000 per annum will be provided to fund additional staff in the Community Services Commission.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Additional positions were created in the complaints, policy and administration areas of the Community Visitors scheme to better undertake complaints and reviews. • There was an additional 130 visiting days undertaken by Community Visitors, an increase of 11% on previous year.

1997-98 INITIATIVE	OUTCOME
<p>The Government is enhancing rural child protection services. An additional \$300,000 per annum will be allocated for the appointment of four Senior Casework Specialists to work in western New South Wales. The caseworkers, to be located in the Bourke, Broken Hill, Parkes and Griffith regions, will provide professional supervision and casework leadership to front line staff working with high need families and children at risk.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Two officers have been appointed in Parkes and Broken Hill. Recruitment is in progress for the remaining positions.
<p>In 1997-98, \$4.75 million in capital expenditure will be provided to increase a number of child care places for children under three and to establish new child care places in rural New South Wales. An additional \$660,000 has also been allocated to the Family Initiative Fund.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An additional 706 child care places for children under 3 years are being created. • Proposals for the rural child care initiative are being finalised. • Additional funding has enhanced the capacity of the Family Initiative Fund to provide early intervention support to families, child care and preschool services for young children at risk.

1997-98 INITIATIVE	OUTCOME
<p>Ongoing initiatives, in the 1996-97 Budget, with continuing funding in 1997-98 include:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. provision of \$300,000 per annum to assist the State-wide Network for Young People in Care (SNYPIC); 2. \$300,000 per annum to expand health services to respond to physical and/or emotional abuse and neglect of children; 3. \$60,000 to fund for a second year a Youth Officer in the Ombudsman's Office; 4. \$300,000 annually to provide stronger peer support and improved information services for foster carers in New South Wales; 5. \$2 million annually for family support initiatives, which include the piloting of Intensive Family Based Services in two Areas and a Family Initiative Fund which is used to purchase goods or services, or provide financial assistance, to families in need; 6. Increase in the Standard Age Related Fostering Allowance for children aged 12 to 17 years (\$3.2 million pa); 7. \$750,000 for the development of a system of service standards, monitoring and accreditation of substitute care services. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. SNYPIC has established an office at Parramatta with three staff. Support groups also established statewide. 2. Expanded services have been established in every Health Area. 3. The Youth Officer has continued to distribute resource material to key organisations and implement the Access Plan. 4. \$240,000 provided to the Foster Care Association which has established an office, a telephone support line/service, and system of representatives in each Department of Community Services operational area. Support groups have been set up in 80% of Community Services Centre areas. \$60,000 reserved for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander services. 5. Funds for the Intensive Family-Based Services have been transferred to the agencies concerned on a recurrent basis. The Family Initiative Fund is being reviewed to better meet the needs of clients. 6. This has brought the Department into parity with other States for this age-group and reduced the demand on carers' incomes to provide for children. This will facilitate recruitment of foster carers. 7. \$250,000 will fund an accreditation system for substitute care. \$500,000 has been transferred to operational areas for a review of services provided to individual children under the Case Planning and Management Strategy.

1997-98 INITIATIVE	OUTCOME
<p><u>PROVIDING ACCESS TO A SAFE AND JUST COMMUNITY</u></p> <p>Through the \$1.156 million Safer Communities Development Program, the New South Wales Government and local governments will cooperate in developing local crime prevention strategies.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Safer Communities Development Fund (previously known as the Juvenile Crime Prevention Grants Program) is a community grants program which supports innovative crime prevention initiatives and funding for local councils that have local crime prevention plans endorsed as Safer Community Compacts. • The three major categories of grants are Innovative Project Grants, Specific Project Grants and Safer Community Compacts Grants. • Two Specific Project Grants were awarded to local government in the 1996/97 financial year: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ⇒ Orange City Council - Prevention of Alcohol & other Drug Related Youth Crime Project (\$60,363 first year, \$54,032 second year); ⇒ Bega Valley Shire Council - Rural Local Government Youth Anti-Violence Project (\$69,297 first year, \$64,966 second year). • Two Innovative Project Grants were awarded to local government last financial year: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ⇒ Ashfield Municipal Council - Deterring Youth Crime Through Policy Development (\$65,000). This will produce a manual to help councils develop and implement “best practice” youth crime prevention policies. ⇒ Byron Bay Community Safety Committee - Providing Community Based Solutions to Prevent Harm to Young People at Special Events (\$56,000). A video has been produced highlighting strategies successfully used in Byron Bay to minimise harm associated with young people at special events (eg. anti-social behaviour, violence).

1997-98 INITIATIVE	OUTCOME
<p>Safer Communities Development Program cont.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • As a result of the <i>Children (Protection and Parental Responsibility) Act 1997</i>, all local councils in NSW were issued with three guides: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ⇒ How to Develop Local Crime Prevention Plans; ⇒ Applying for Safer Community Compacts; ⇒ Applying for Operational Areas. • Safer Community Compact Grants under the Safer Communities Development Fund are available to local councils that have had local crime prevention plans endorsed as Safer Community Compacts.
<p>\$1 million has been provided in 1997-98 to transfer part of the Supreme Court's backlog of personal injury matters to the District Court, which will allow these matters to be dealt with expeditiously and at a lower unit cost to the New South Wales taxpayer.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • As at 31 December 1997, 2,683 matters had been transferred from the Supreme Court (including 5 special fixtures involving 6 weeks of sittings). • The Chief Judge has committed the Court to having 7 Judges devoted to the Supreme Court Transfer List which will provide the equivalent of 155.4 Judge weeks.
<p>\$934,000 has been allocated in 1997-98 to continue the use of acting judges during vacations in the District Court (Civil Jurisdiction) to reduce the backlog of cases.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • As at 31 December 1997, the civil backlog (i.e. cases commenced prior to 1996) has been reduced from 23,311 to 1,952 matters.

1997-98 INITIATIVE	OUTCOME
<p>\$1.288 million has been provided to maintain the appointment of three judges and support staff to run a special program to reduce backlog matter in the Common Law Division of the Supreme Court.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In 1997-98, the Acting Judge program is targeting backlog reduction in the Common Law Division. By June 1998, it is intended to reduce the current delay of 5-6 years as at July 1997 to 18 months. • As at 31 December 1997 there were only 50 cases (recent entries) in the Active Case Management General List. These matters will undergo Differential Case Management to ensure a hearing within 18 months. • There are still 237 cases from the backlog existing before the introduction of Differential Case Management in 1994. These cases are expected to be finalised this financial year.
<p>An additional \$600,000 per annum has been provided for the employment of nine extra staff (including a specialist domestic violence witness assistance coordinator) to expand the Witness Assistance Service (WAS) to all regional offices of the Director of Public Prosecutions.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Eight additional positions of WAS officer have been created in the Office of the Director of Public Prosecutions (ODPP) regional offices. This considerably increases the support and counselling services to victims of criminal offences prosecuted by the DPP across the state. • An Aboriginal Liaison Project Officer has also been appointed to develop relevant approaches to meet the special needs of Aboriginal victims of crime and witnesses. • In line with the Wood Royal Commission recommendations, child sexual assault victims are receiving priority assistance.

1997-98 INITIATIVE	OUTCOME
<p>The Government will also provide \$6.6 million over three years (1997-2000) to fund the innovative Youth Justice Conferencing Scheme. Non-serious juvenile offenders will be brought face to face with their victim through the conferencing process so that the offender will understand the impact of their crime on the victim and be able to take responsibility for that crime.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The <i>Young Offenders Act</i> was passed in June 1997 and proclaimed on 6 May 1998. The Act formalises police warnings and cautions and carefully circumscribes the discretionary decisions of police in responding to children's criminal behaviour. <p>The Act also introduces a scheme of youth justice conferencing for summary offences and for defined indictable offences which can be tried summarily.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conferences will operate from mid-1998. A Youth Justice Conferencing Directorate was established in the Department of Juvenile Justice to work with government agencies to establish the scheme in NSW. Agencies include: Attorney-General's Department, Police Service, Director of Public Prosecutions, Legal Aid Commission, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Commission (ATSIC), Aboriginal Legal Service. • 16 conference administrators will operate in areas identified as having high rates of youth offending. Rural conference administrators will be based at Armidale, Kempsey, Dubbo (identified Aboriginal positions), Lismore, Newcastle, Wollongong, Queanbeyan, Orange and Wagga Wagga.

1997-98 INITIATIVE	OUTCOME
<p>\$5.912 million will be provided for reforms to juvenile justice community based support services. The funding will consolidate recently introduced post release support schemes, the Aboriginal Mentor Scheme, a mentor scheme for juveniles of non-English speaking background including Chinese, Indo-chinese and Arabic, and the statewide expansion of the Safehaven alternative placement program for young offenders who cannot live with their parents or families.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Post release support schemes were continued in five of the six original locations outside metropolitan Sydney. An additional service was established in Campbelltown in 1997. The budget for these schemes in 1997-98 is \$398,000. \$218,000 was also allocated for NESB post release support services in Western and South Western Sydney. • The Aboriginal, NESB and generalist Mentor schemes were successfully implemented, and continue to operate, with a budget of \$750,000 in 1997-98. • Following successful trials in Wagga Wagga, Queanbeyan, Yass and Goulburn, the Safehaven program is being expanded to Deniliquin, Bega, Cooma, and Dubbo. The program provides supported accommodation to young people who would otherwise be refused bail because of their lifestyle, their inability to live at home, or their inability to live independently. • Additional funding was allocated for bail services, established for young people who would otherwise be refused bail for welfare reasons. One bail service is Nardoola Farm in northern NSW and the other is Mundarra, in Western Sydney. Many clients are Aboriginal young people. • On-going family worker residential adolescent alcohol and other drug treatment programs are continuing.

1997-98 INITIATIVE	OUTCOME
<p>In 1997-98 an additional \$1 million will be spent by the Department of Corrective Services on programs for indigenous inmates.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Additional funding has enabled projects under the Action Plan for the Management of Indigenous Offenders to be expanded and better coordinated. <p>⇒ The Cultural Link Program (mobile outreach) based at Broken Hill Correctional Centre commenced in October 1997. Selected minimum security inmates are supervised on projects such as construction of walking trails, barbecue areas and other amenities in Mootwingee and Kinchega National Parks, in close co-operation with traditional owners.</p> <p>⇒ In keeping with the Action Plan, the Aboriginal Pre and Post Release Program has been improved. The program is designed to reduce the recidivism and imprisonment rates of indigenous people by addressing some of the social disadvantages which they experience. The program is run by indigenous Departmental employees and operates at Grafton, Parramatta, Bathurst, Dubbo, and Morisset.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The new Googar Creative Work Centre for indigenous inmates at Bathurst Correctional Centre has been completed, to open September 1998. This will provide culturally sensitive vocational, technical, and business management skills to selected indigenous inmates to improve post-release employment prospects and potential for economic independence. Local Aboriginal community and elders are being consulted about the type of programs to be offered.

1997-98 INITIATIVE	OUTCOME
<p>\$1.5 million over three years has been provided for 10 additional Probation and Parole officers to handle increases in pre-sentence, parole, probation and community service work.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Seventeen additional probation and parole officer positions have been created. Ten were funded from the \$1.5 million allocation. The other seven were funded by Corrective Services at a cost of \$350,000 pa, resulting in an extra \$1 million being spent on this initiative over three years.
<p>\$1.25 million will be provided in 1997-98 to continue the installation of Closed Circuit Television facilities.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Closed Circuit Television facilities are being installed in 36 court rooms at 26 courthouses across the State, including the Children's Court at Campbelltown currently under construction.
<p>The Judicial Commission will receive an additional \$70,000 per annum over three years (1997-2000).</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Complaints have increased from 45 in 1994-1995 to 138 in 1996-97. • Additional funding has enabled the Commission to enhance its capacity to maintain the integrity and professionalism of the complaint handling function; continue to investigate complaints in a timely manner; and to meet statutory obligations.
<p>\$1 million will be spent in 1997-98 on a capital works program at Mulawa Correctional Centre for Women.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Refurbishment of the Induction Unit (including a discrete detoxification unit) commenced in March 1998.

1997-98 INITIATIVE	OUTCOME
<p>The Government has allocated approximately \$21 million in 1997-98 for the development of two new juvenile detention facilities and the renovation of existing facilities.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Department of Juvenile Justice has commenced a capital works program to eliminate substandard detention centre accommodation. • Four new juvenile detention facilities are being developed and 30 new beds added to the existing Cobham Juvenile Centre (to be completed September 1998). • Construction has commenced at Dubbo and Grafton for 30 bed centres (to open March 1999) and at Mount Penang for a 120 bed centre (to open January 2000). A new centre is being planned for the Hunter region (to open October 2000).
<p>Periodic Detention Centres (PDCs) at Bathurst and Broken Hill will be completed and operational in 1997-98. These PDCs will provide alternatives to full-time incarceration for minor offenders, especially for the large indigenous communities of western New South Wales.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bathurst Periodic Detention Centre is completed and expected to commence operation later this year. The Centre will accommodate up to 30 male detainees and up to 10 female detainees. • Broken Hill Periodic Detention Centre is also expected to commence operation later this year. The Centre will accommodate up to 18 male detainees and up to 8 female detainees.

1997-98 INITIATIVE	OUTCOME
<p>The redevelopment of Long Bay Correctional Complex will commence in 1997-98 and a series of specially designed intensive rehabilitation programs will commence.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Redevelopment of Long Bay Correctional Complex has commenced (for completion by 2003). • The redeveloped complex will provide residential programs for inmates with special needs and address specific offending behaviours (sexual and violent behaviour, chronic drug and alcohol problems, chronic self destructive behaviour, intellectual disability, offenders in crisis or in need of outpatient care). • The intended \$2.7 million for 1997-98 has been increased to \$4 million so that parts of the redevelopment can be brought forward (upgrade of area for an acute management unit for inmates in crisis and at high risk of suicide). • Rehabilitation programs for inmates with severe behavioural problems and tendencies to violence and aggression commenced in 1997-98.

1997-98 INITIATIVE	OUTCOME
<p>Redevelopment of Long Bay Correctional Complex cont.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Planning and development of the alcohol and other drug residential rehabilitation centre (therapeutic community) has commenced, and the program is expected to be operational in 1998-99.
<p>Special crisis management centres at Bathurst, Mulawa and Cessnock Correctional Centres will provide special care, intensive supervision and behaviour modification programs for indigenous inmates, inmates with mental illness and women inmates. In 1997-98, \$2.164 million will be spent on capital works and \$1.745 million on operating costs.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “Mum Shirl Unit” at Mulawa Correctional Centre, a therapeutic residential unit for women with identified mental health issues and behavioural problems, was completed in 1996-97. The Unit accommodates up to 12 women inmates and will cost approximately \$500,000 to operate in 1997-98. • \$2.4 million allocated for Crisis Management Units at Cessnock and Bathurst, to manage and settle episodes of inmate crisis. Units should operate in 1998-99 and each accommodate up to 13 inmates.
<p><u>SUPPORTING RURAL AND REGIONAL COMMUNITIES</u></p> <p>The Regional Coordination Program encourages better use of government services by reducing overlap and duplication, and so enhancing outcomes people in rural and regional areas. Annual funding of \$1.65 million has been allocated for the Program from 1997-98.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Program has now been expanded to cover all regional and rural NSW with networks established between Government agencies and regional communities. Over 120 projects of significance to rural and regional NSW are being managed under the program.

1997-98 INITIATIVE	OUTCOME
<p>The Government Access Program is a two year program to pilot the implementation of an integrated approach to service delivery in rural and remote areas. The total cost of the two year pilot (1997-1999) is estimated to be \$ 1.67 million.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Seven Government Access Centres (GAC) have been established in Western and Northern NSW at Grenfell, Kyogle, Oberon, Maclean, Gilgandra, Nambucca Heads and Dorrigo. • GACs are providing one-stop access to government services including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ⇒ information on all government services and referrals to appropriate agencies; ⇒ organising appointments and providing facilities for visiting agency staff; ⇒ undertaking agreed transactions on behalf of various agencies.
<p>The existing Commonwealth program of agriculture business advisers is due to end in June 1997. The New South Wales Government will extend and expand the program to assist New South Wales farmers diversify into new areas of production. Six new export adviser positions will also be funded to help rural businesses gain access to overseas markets. The total funding for these initiatives in 1997/ 98 is \$500,000.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Agribusiness Alternatives Program has been established to help develop new products and services. • 12 officers have been appointed in regional NSW to help agricultural based enterprises and grower groups diversify, value add and expand their activities. • 6 export advisers have been appointed to help regional businesses export their products. They will provide advice on export practices, procedures and markets, and work with agencies such as Austrade to locate suitable customers.

1997-98 INITIATIVE	OUTCOME
<p>\$1.217 million will be provided in 1997-98 in special grants, technical support, research and education to support land management practices that reduce drought impacts.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This has enabled improved drought management practices and reduced drought impacts in 6 key areas: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ⇒ increase in amount of bore piping and reduction in the number of open bore drains in Great Artesian basin; ⇒ water storage component will increase and improve the supply of farm water; ⇒ fodder storage component is increasing the amount of fodder stored on farms; ⇒ conservation tillage equipment component is encouraging increased use of conservation technology equipment; ⇒ training being developed in the use of climate information in whole-farm management planning to help farmers better understand weather patterns and influence of weather on drought and risk management; ⇒ information on alternative feed sources and management strategies will be provided to farmers to ensure economic viability in droughts. • Drought Assistance Package, announced in April 1998, included an additional \$2 million for the drought regional initiatives program to be split over 1997-98 and 1998-99. • A further \$1 million for emergency cash relief for farm families was also in the package.

1997-98 INITIATIVE	OUTCOME
<p>Forestry policy remains a major challenge for the Government. Through the Resource and Conservation Assessment Council process, the Government has set out a detailed plan to balance conservation and industry needs. Under the Structural Adjustment Package, an estimated \$32 million will be provided in 1997-98 to retrain and relocate affected timber workers and restructure the industry.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Up to December 1997, funding has been provided to assist: ⇒ 21 businesses with a total investment exceeding \$18 million; ⇒ 64 businesses electing to leave the industry; ⇒ 472 retrenched workers.
<p>\$21.4 million will also be provided in 1997-98 to increase the rate of expansion of native timber hardwood plantations.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Nearly 7,000 ha has been prepared for establishment of Native Hardwood Plantation Program. Storm damage to seedling nurseries prevented reaching target of 10,000 ha. • Program has shown significant environmental and social (employment) benefits and, as resource matures, will provide a good return on the Government's investment as well as sustaining forestry employment in the long term. • 400 jobs have been created in rural areas.

1997-98 INITIATIVE	OUTCOME
<p><u>ENHANCING SOCIAL HOUSING</u></p> <p>Housing assistance is principally funded through the Commonwealth-State Housing Agreement. Under the current 1996-97 Agreement, New South Wales will contribute an estimated \$136.7 million for 1997-98.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Commonwealth 1997-98 funding was cut a further \$17.7 million beyond what was planned for the NSW 1997-98 budget, leaving Commonwealth 1997/98 funding \$31.4 million less than in 1996/97. • Despite this cut, the New South Wales Government maintained its effort in funding for housing assistance, continuing to provide for growth in social housing, upgrading and capital improvements, while reducing the burden of State housing debt.
<p>The 1997-98 Capital Works Program for social housing will include \$122.8 million to be spent through the Office on Community Housing on commencement of 806 new dwellings.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Due to Commonwealth cuts, capital works expenditure will be lower than forecasted. • By 30 June 1998, it is planned to have spent \$83 million on the community housing capital works program to commence 494 new dwellings.
<p>The Government will spend \$27.7 million on works in progress and new works for Aboriginal housing, involving commencements of 149 dwellings, many through community organisations.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • By 30 June 1998, it is planned to have spent \$23.3 million on works in progress and new works for Aboriginal housing, with 154 dwellings commenced and 145 completions.
<p>Aboriginal housing stock will also be upgraded at a cost of \$3 million.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • \$5.65 million is forecast to be spent to reduce the backlog of maintenance and upgrading of older Aboriginal Housing stock.

1997-98 INITIATIVE	OUTCOME
<p>Despite the difficulties imposed by the Commonwealth Government, New South Wales remains firmly committed to a strong and viable social housing system. In 1997-98, \$180.2 million will be spent by the Department of Housing on 1,294 units of accommodation.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • By 30 June 1998, it is planned that \$170 million will be spent on 1,476 commencements and 2,009 completions, including 62 units of supported accommodation.
<p>\$141 million will be spent on upgrading of stock and improvements to large housing estates.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • By 30 June 1998, it is forecast that the following will be spent on upgrading of stock and improvements to large housing estates: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ⇒ \$35 million on the Neighbourhood Improvement Program; ⇒ \$90 million on upgrading of public housing stock. • Because of Commonwealth cuts in CSHA funding, additional funding to Department of Housing internal revenues will be spent on maintenance.
<p>The Supported Housing Program provides supported housing for people with high needs. In 1997-98 the Program will be allocated \$12.9 million. In addition, the Mental Health Supported Housing Program will be allocated \$3 million.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • By 30 June 1998, the following expenditure is forecast: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ⇒ \$12.9 million for the Supported Housing Initiatives Program for 37 commencements and 102 completions; ⇒ \$3 million on the Mental Health Supported Housing Program for 25 commencements and 24 completions.

1997-98 INITIATIVE	OUTCOME
<p>The size and nature of the social housing stock will be expanded through headleasing from the private sector. A target of 1,000 new rental properties has been set for 1997-98, subject to continuing Commonwealth funds. The Government will provide \$8.5 million to the Department of Housing and \$19.7 million to community housing organisations to obtain leased properties to meet this target.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Because the Commonwealth has been unable to commit to longer term funding for leasing, the headleasing strategy has been revised. <p>The Department of Housing is proposing a build/lease program to be funded internally. Expressions of interest from private developers for long term build/lease projects will be called in mid 1998.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • During 1997/98, it is forecast that community housing will obtain 892 new leases at a cost of \$2.9 million. Anticipated total cost of all leasing, including new leasing, will be \$6.95 million for the Department of Housing and \$13.7 million for Community Housing.
<p>In addition to capital works programs, a total of \$22.1 million is allocated to provide financial assistance to allow eligible low income renters, including those with special needs such as disabilities and HIV/AIDS, to secure affordable housing in the private rental market.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • By 30 June 1998, \$22.1 million is planned to be spent on providing financial assistance to low income/special need private renters.

1997-98 INITIATIVE	OUTCOME
<p><u>MEETING THE NEEDS AND ASPIRATIONS OF ABORIGINAL PEOPLE</u></p> <p>Expenditure on Aboriginal health services will increase by \$6.2 million.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Expenditure on Aboriginal health was increased by \$6.2M to a total projected \$18.1M in 1997-98. • The NSW Government continues its commitment to improve Aboriginal health in partnership with the Aboriginal community. • A revised Partnership Agreement with the Aboriginal Health Resource Cooperative (AHRC) was signed in 1997. Implementation of the agreement is ongoing in the development and implementation of initiatives to improve Aboriginal health and services provided to Aboriginal people. • Implementation of the National Aboriginal Health Strategy is proceeding.
<p>The Aboriginal Environmental Health Infrastructure project coordinates funds for relevant communities under programs such as the Tripartite Housing and Infrastructure (TRIP) Program. TRIP is a tripartite initiative over three years between the NSW Government, ATSIC and the NSW Aboriginal Land Council designed to respond to the housing needs of 45 former reserves in NSW, as well as providing training and employment opportunities for Aboriginal people.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Capital works upgrade in Muli Muli is now complete. • The second survey has now been completed and a significant improvement in the proportion of functioning houses has already been achieved. • Further upgrades of the sewerage system are ongoing.

1997-98 INITIATIVE	OUTCOME
<p>The Aboriginal Women's Legal Resource Centre Inc. has been established 1997-98 funding for the Centre is \$200,000.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Aboriginal Women's Legal Resource Centre Inc. now has a permanent full-time solicitor, co-ordinator and part-time administrator. • The Centre provides legal advice, representation and information/referral service, and provides community education about Aboriginal women who are victims of violence and sexual abuse. • In 1998, the Centre will be providing community education and training sessions, including two metropolitan and one rural community legal education sessions.
<p>The Aboriginal education budget for 1997-98 will total almost \$20 million in recurrent payments. Included within the Aboriginal education budget is the Indigenous Educational Strategic Initiatives Plan amounting to \$10.3 million.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Teachers and community members in 600 government schools have received training and resource materials to support the Aboriginal Education Policy. • Schools have included Aboriginal education in their management plans for 1998. • All government schools with more than 10 Aboriginal students (over 700 schools) received direct financial assistance to support programs to improve literacy and numeracy outcomes and Aboriginal studies. More than \$2.5 million was distributed. • 115 government schools have been targeted in 1998 to receive direct financial assistance to support four different literacy and numeracy programs. \$2.3 million was distributed for these projects.

1997-98 INITIATIVE	OUTCOME
<p>Aboriginal Education programs cont.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Performance of Aboriginal students in the Basic Skills Tests improved markedly and at a greater rate than the improvement for all students. • Additional teachers and financial support were maintained for 23 schools in the Aboriginal Early Language Development Program (AELDP). Improved literacy levels and Aboriginal community participation shown in these schools. • Continued support for eight preschools serving communities with high percentages of Aboriginal students. Primary school teachers report positively on benefits to Aboriginal students of access to preschool. • Direct financial assistance provided to targeted schools to support transition from preschool to kindergarten. Kindergarten enrolments of Aboriginal students increased eight per cent from 1996 to 1997. • In 1998 a new pre-school in an Aboriginal community will be established at Nowra East Primary School. • Resource materials developed and distributed to schools to support Reconciliation and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Week 1997. • Number of schools teaching Aboriginal languages with the assistance of the local Aboriginal communities was increased from 11 to 16. • Specialist programs to support the specific needs and to encourage re-entry to school of non-attending Aboriginal students were maintained, such as the SKIDS program linked to the Koori Youth Program.

1997-98 INITIATIVE	OUTCOME
<p>A total of \$3.15 million will be spent by the Department of Education and Training in 1997-98 to improve access of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people to education and training through employment.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Department of Education and Training provides funding for the following programs: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ⇒ <i>New Careers for Aboriginal People.</i> \$1 million has been allocated to 13 organisations to provide employment and training assistance and support for 730 Aboriginal people. ⇒ <i>Aboriginal Employment Development Officers.</i> \$420,000 has been allocated to six organisations to fund these positions which assist Aboriginal people with support and advice related to employment and business development. ⇒ <i>Public Sector Aboriginal Employment Strategies (Local and State Government).</i> (Total funding \$1.5 million) Following withdrawal of the Commonwealth's 50 per cent contribution to these programs, new guidelines have been developed which recommend significant fund contributions from participating agencies. ⇒ <i>Aboriginal Registered Training Providers</i> \$200,000 has been provided for skills development. Organisations funded include Tranby and the Aboriginal Dance Theatre.

1997-98 INITIATIVE	OUTCOME
<p>To expedite the clearance of land claims under the <i>Aboriginal Land Rights Act 1983</i>, the Government has been endeavouring to finalise all new claims within a maximum of twelve months from the date of lodgment.</p> <p>A program directed specifically towards clearing older claims has been implemented. In order to further accelerate the clearance of older claims and claims generally, the Government has allocated an additional \$250,000 per annum over three years from 1997-98.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Since this Government came to office, 1,188 additional claims have been finalised. 710 of these relate to 8,455 hectares of Crown land. • As at April 1998, the 1,500 older claims have been reduced to 1,218. • Funding has been used to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ⇒ replace and upgrade computer equipment; ⇒ achieve the early survey of granted lands and finalise the transfer of titles to claimant Aboriginal Land Councils; ⇒ employ four additional land claim investigation officers. • The additional staff resources will enable claim investigations to be finalised more quickly and in greater numbers, including finalisation of most of the older claims well within program targets.
<p>\$400,000 per annum in recurrent funding has been allocated for additional staff in the Department of Land and Water Conservation's Native Titles Branch to deal with Aboriginal land claims lodged under the Commonwealth Native Title Act.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Additional staff to be appointed by mid 1998 to new legal and case management positions in the Native Title Branch.

1997-98 INITIATIVE	OUTCOME
<p>Native Title claims cont.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Additional recurrent funding has also enabled the Branch to be fully computerised with a native title claim database established. • Other operational equipment and library and research material has been acquired to assist staff in the native title process. • Improved tenure searching and evidence presentation methods have been instituted with substantial training of staff throughout 1997.
<p>In 1997-98, the Department of Land and Water Conservation (DLWC) will develop protocols to facilitate effective participation of the Aboriginal community in natural resource management. The protocols are to be completed by 30 June 1998. Total funding for the project is \$125,000.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Progress has been made in introducing new arrangements for involving Aboriginal people in natural resource management. Regional consultation workshops have been held to facilitate this.

1997-98 INITIATIVE	OUTCOME
<p>The introduction of the Youth Justice Conferencing Scheme will divert Aboriginal juvenile offenders accused of less serious offences from court contact and juvenile detention and allow for the handling of their cases to take place in a more culturally sensitive manner.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Youth Justice Conference Scheme will be ready to commence on 25 May 1998. • Training packages are being developed for conference administrators and convenors (including education on the <i>Young Offenders Act</i>, principles of restorative justice, and supporting and mentoring community based workers). • Police specialist youth officers and conference administrators received a week of joint training at Goulburn Police Academy in late March 1998. Training for conference convenors was also provided. • Presentations on the Act and scheme have been made to youth advocacy groups, Ombudsman's Office, Young Lawyers, Department of Juvenile Justice Senior Managers, rural Department of Juvenile Justice staff, police, local solicitors, school principals and teachers. Sessions were conducted at Armidale, Tathra, Port Macquarie, Parkes, Lismore and Newcastle. • A pamphlet "Healing the Hurt" has been prepared and distributed to young people, juvenile justice personnel, courts, schools, local councils and other relevant agencies across the State. • Data system is being developed to monitor and evaluate scheme's operation. • Youth Justice Advisory Committee was established and is responsible for evaluating the Act after three years of operation.

1997-98 INITIATIVE	OUTCOME
<p><u>CARING FOR OLDER PEOPLE AND PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES</u></p> <p>The Home and Community Care (HACC) Program provides a range of home and community care services to frail older people, people with disabilities and their carers. In 1997-98, an additional \$10.647 million per annum has been provided for maintenance and growth in the HACC program.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Of the \$10.647 million allocated, some \$5.871 million was allocated as growth funding across NSW as follows: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ⇒ Aboriginal Services - \$1,550,714 ⇒ Respite- \$1,044,815 ⇒ Coordination - \$ 572,990 ⇒ Transport - \$ 560,781 ⇒ Home Help - \$ 375,149 ⇒ Dementia Monitoring - \$ 271,120 ⇒ Personal Care- \$ 108,248 ⇒ NESB Access - \$ 100,000 ⇒ Dementia Counselling - \$ 89,560 ⇒ Food Services - \$ 79,000 ⇒ Community Nursing - \$ 71,000 ⇒ Multi Service Outlets - \$ 60,000 ⇒ Podiatry - \$ 53,346 ⇒ Home Maintenance & Modification - \$ 52,500 ⇒ Aged Services Worker - \$ 22,000 ⇒ Information and Referral- \$ 20,000 ⇒ Service Viability Issues - \$ 738,282 ⇒ Retained for central projects (including the Client Information & Referral Record) - \$ 102,000
<p>In 1997-98, \$215,000 will be provided to the Centre for Developmental Disability Studies, which provides leadership in research, teaching and practice that will inform and improve the provision of services to people who have a developmental disability and their families and carers.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Centre has conducted major activities for the Ageing and Disability Department including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ⇒ the evaluation of the Watagan Integration Project; ⇒ the Therapy Review (a joint project); ⇒ development of the evaluation tool for large residential services; ⇒ follow up study on the Health Promotion Project to ensure Community Services Appeals Tribunal requirements are met and to identify models for meeting the health needs of people who have developmental disabilities.

1997-98 INITIATIVE	OUTCOME
<p>Recurrent funding of \$4.5 million over two years (1996-98) has been provided to expand services focusing on children with a disability.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The following funding has been allocated: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ⇒ \$1.15 million recurrent to assist 320 children/families in respite care services; ⇒ \$1 million recurrent to assist 1,322 children in therapy services; ⇒ \$850,000 recurrent to assist 804 children/families in Early Intervention services; ⇒ \$660,000 recurrent to assist seven children/families in crisis with accommodation support packages; ⇒ \$400,000 recurrent to assist 124 children/families in outside school hours support services; ⇒ \$200,000 recurrent to provide intensive family support to 30 ATSI families with children with disabilities who are in crisis; ⇒ \$140,000 recurrent to assist five Early Intervention services with financial viability problems. • There were also capital grants to support the enhancements in respite care and intensive family support services. • Outcomes from this expansion of services include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ⇒ increased access to services for families who have children with high support needs; who are isolated and/or live in rural remote areas; and from non-English speaking backgrounds and of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander origin; ⇒ promotion of collaborative, coordinated approaches to meeting families' needs; ⇒ new and enhanced approaches to supporting families in crises.

1997-98 INITIATIVE	OUTCOME
<p>The following initiatives will be funded in 1997-98 to promote the participation in sport for people with disabilities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • \$200,000 will be provided in 1997-98 under the High Performance Disabled Sport Support Program and Disabled Talented Athlete Program; • 17 scholarships will be funded for athletes with disabilities (\$70,000); and • \$150,000 will be provided to support the Sports Council for the Disabled. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Elite athletes with disabilities increased their participation in sporting activities through the provision of grants under the High Performance Disabled Sport Support Program and Disabled Talented Athlete Program. • 17 scholarships were funded for athletes with disabilities to attend the Sydney Institute of Sport to access high profile coaches. • \$150 000 was provided to support the Sports Council for the Disabled. The Council has 15 member associations providing the opportunity for over 3500 individuals to participate in sport and recreation.
<p>Funding of \$40,000 has been allocated for NSW Fisheries to run fishing clinics for people with disabilities in 1997-98.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increased participation in fishing activities and increased education and awareness of stewardship of fisheries resources for targeted groups.

1997-98 INITIATIVE	OUTCOME
<p>\$4 million was allocated over three years (1996-1999) to fund a range of aged care initiatives, including demonstration projects providing improved access for older people to public transport (and hence to health, recreational and other services) and community care demonstration projects which operate to improve the links between health and community services.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 62 of the 116 strategies in the New South Wales Action Plan on Dementia are being implemented in 1997-98. • 20 transport demonstration projects have been launched in regional and rural New South Wales (project evaluation has commenced). • Community care demonstration projects are implementing their funding agreements to improve co-ordination of local services for people with complex care needs. • A training program for workers on abuse of people in their homes and their carers is being implemented and will result in the development of local interagency protocols.
<p><u>PROMOTING DIVERSITY</u></p> <p>Carnivale is a significant occasion for the New South Wales community to celebrate its cultural diversity. In 1997-98, the Government has allocated an additional \$600,000 over three years for Carnivale.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • \$200,000 in funding was allocated in 1997-98 to assist with the staging of the events of Carnivale, for example, publicity, event management and artist fees.
<p>Community grants are one of the principal mechanisms by which the Government supports ethnic communities. From 1997-98, \$300,000 in additional funding over three years will provide a boost to these community grants.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • \$100,000 was allocated in 1997-98 and was used by the Commission to provide grants for special meritorious projects which emerge outside the cycle of existing grants programs.

1997-98 INITIATIVE	OUTCOME
<p>Access to services relies upon the ability to communicate effectively. \$4.6 million will be provided in 1997-98 for interpreter and translation services. In addition, the Government has specifically provided \$1.8 million over three years for the 24 hour emergency interpreter and translation service.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Introduction of the 24-hour interpreter and translation service has enabled agencies (such as the Police Service) to offer critical services and respond effectively. It also ensures that people from non-English speaking backgrounds have access to services and are participants in fair and just processes.
<p>Total current payments of \$70.2 million will be included in the Department of School Education's 1997-98 budget under the Non English Speaking Background program.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • During 1997, 3,864 newly arrived primary school aged students and 2,644 newly arrived high school aged students received on-arrival assistance. Of the high school students, 2,060 attended one of the Department's 17 Intensive English Centres. • English as a second language (ESL) programs for first, second and third phase ESL students were conducted in 681 primary schools, 234 high schools and 27 schools for specific purposes. A total of 1,442 ESL teachers was employed providing specialist ESL support to 79,374 NESB students. <p>In 1998 it is anticipated that a similar number of students will benefit from ESL literacy programs in NSW government schools.</p>

1997-98 INITIATIVE	OUTCOME
<p>In addition, funding of \$3.3 million will be provided in 1997-98 to implement the Multicultural Education Plan 1998-2001.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Certificate of Spoken and Written English was conducted in 15 high schools and 11 Intensive English Centres with 200 non-English speaking background students undertaking the courses. Over 300 Level 1, 2 and 3 Certificates and 170 Statements of Attainment were awarded. • Outcomes in the area of school and community relations include; the appointment of 20 Community Information Officers (NESB) located in 14 district offices; the launch of an ethnic communication strategy <i>Make Links - Use Interpreters</i>; provision of professional interpreter service when dealing with non-English speaking parents on a range of student progress, achievement, welfare and behavioural issues; development and the distribution of a range of Departmental publications translated in up to 35 languages other than English; and the placement of translated documents onto the Department's website. • The ethnic communication strategy has resulted in a 350 per cent increase in the monthly usage of interpreters by Departmental personnel for 1997 compared to 1996. • Funds were provided to support the Multicultural Public Speaking Award competition for primary school students. This competition received almost 1,000 entrants from 508 primary schools across the state. • Anti-racism training has been provided to teams of up to four representatives from each of the Department's 40 districts. Team members have received two days of Anti-racism, Grievance Procedures and Whole School Anti-racism Project training. Funds have been provided to some 495 schools to facilitate Anti-racism Policy Statement and Grievance Procedures training and 382 received funding to conduct Whole School Anti-racism Project Training.

1997-98 INITIATIVE	OUTCOME
<p>The Multicultural Education Plan cont.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In 1997, Multicultural Education Plan funds were distributed to 581 schools to support school based anti-racism projects (110), multicultural curriculum development (154), NESB student initiatives (48), NESB parent participation (98), and whole school multicultural activities (171). These schools reported that more than 113,000 students parents, teachers and community members participated in these school based initiatives. • Community Languages teaching was offered in 24 different community languages in NSW primary schools. In addition community languages were offered through 16 Saturday School of Community Languages sites. • Circuit Breaker funding of \$52,089 was provided to 53 high schools and Intensive English Centres to support 755 NESB students identified as being at risk of leaving school or performing at a low academic level and likely to experience difficulties in finding employment or continuing studies following high school.

1997-98 INITIATIVE	OUTCOME
<p><u>MEETING THE NEEDS OF WOMEN</u></p> <p>The Department for Women has focussed on a whole of Government approach to women's issues and has developed a New South Wales Government Action Plan for Women which focuses on six major areas which are to be tackled across Government. These are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • reducing violence against women; • promoting workplaces that are equitable, safe and responsive to all aspects of women's lives; • maximising the interests of women in micro-economic reform; • promoting the position of women in all aspects of society; • promoting access to and successful outcomes for women in all parts of the education and training system; and • improving the health and quality of life of women in New South Wales. 	<p>Examples of programs initiated under the action plan include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The NSW Council on Violence Against Women has been established under the auspices of the Attorney General's Department. A decentralised team of Regional Violence Prevention Specialists are located throughout the State. • The Pay Equity Task Force released <i>Pay Equity and the Undervaluation of Women's Skills in NSW</i> in March 1997. The report recommended the Industrial Relations Commission undertake an inquiry into work value. The inquiry commenced hearing evidence in the Industrial Commission in March 1998. It is the first inquiry of its kind in Australia and will constitute a significant step in developing an equitable and practical methodology for valuing work in female dominated occupations and industries. Final submissions are expected to finish in June 1998. • The Department for Women has developed a Gender Equity Checklist to improve the way Government agencies assess the costs and benefits for women of micro-economic reform. • The Premier has requested that agencies develop strategies to meet the Government's pre-election commitment that 50% of all new appointments to boards and committees will be women. During the last quarter of 1997, 45% of appointments to NSW Government boards/committees were women.

1997-98 INITIATIVE	OUTCOME
<p>The Council on Violence Against Women will be supported by the Violence Against Women Unit, established in the Attorney General's Department, and a network of 17 Regional Coordinators located across the State. In 1997-98, \$1.658 million in funding will be provided for this initiative.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The key role of the Unit is to facilitate the implementation of the Strategy to Reduce Violence Against Women. The Unit also develops strategic policy responses to issues of violence against women, supports strategies and programs to reduce violence against women, manages the Regional Violence Prevention Specialists, and provides executive support to the NSW Council on Violence Against Women. • Seventeen Regional Violence Prevention Specialists are employed by the Attorney General's Department, and located throughout NSW in regional offices of the Department of Community Services, NSW Health or the NSW Police Service. <p>The role of the Specialists is to enhance linkages within and between Government and non-Government agencies, conduct community education and training, and develop prevention programs to reduce violence against women. Each Regional Specialist is currently developing a Regional Action Plan to reduce violence against women in local and regional communities.</p>
<p>The Women's Domestic Violence Court Assistance Program provides support, legal representation, information and referrals to women subjected to domestic violence. \$4.2 million was provided in 1996-97 over three years (1996-1999) to expand and improve the program, with \$1.44 million to be provided in 1997-98. \$550,000 will be allocated to improve the planning, management and delivery of services which address violence against women.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 26 Women's Domestic Violence Court Assistance Schemes have been established across the state. A training and resource unit provides training for all the coordinators, support workers and solicitors who work with the schemes. Training has also been provided for schemes which are not funded under the program. • "One off" projects which have been undertaken include: production of a video "taking orders" on how to get an AVO, the development of a resource kit aimed at increasing access to the schemes for women with intellectual disabilities, and the production and distribution of a poster and pamphlets advertising the schemes. A campaign to raise the awareness of women from non-English speaking backgrounds will commence shortly.

1997-98 INITIATIVE	OUTCOME
<p>In 1997-98 additional funding of \$250,000 per annum has been provided to the Women's Sports Unit.</p> <p>\$100,000 has also been allocated for a Sports Administration and Travel Scholarship to enable talented women to become senior sports administrators.</p> <p>The Role Model Program for the Girls in Schools program will receive \$75,000 per annum from 1997-98.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Additional funding to the Women's Sport Unit has enhanced opportunities for women to participate in sport and recreation. • The 1997-98 Scholarship was promoted in February/ March 1998. Approximately 22 women received scholarships under the \$100 000 program. • The Role Model Program for the Girls in Schools program will encourage young women to participate in sport and recreation activities.
<p>Nearly \$5 million will be spent on capital works at Emu Plains Correctional Centre in 1997-98. A budget of \$4 million has been allocated to construct facilities to cater for mothers with babies and other inmates who require such accommodation. In addition, \$831,000 will be spent on construction of a women's Periodic Detention Centre at Emu Plains which will provide alternatives to full-time incarceration for minor offenders.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Stage 2 redevelopment of Emu Plains Correctional Centre is a three-year project which commenced in 1997. The cost of the redevelopment is expected to be approximately \$5.5 million, of which \$1.7 million will be spent on capital works in 1997-98. • Construction of the new domestic style accommodation blocks for 70 female inmates commenced in February 1998. There will be seven 10-bed accommodation pods, with six single "buddy" cells to cater for mothers and babies, and other inmates who require such accommodation. • Redevelopment of the Emu Plains Periodic Detention Centre has been completed. Of the estimated total cost of approximately \$1.8 million, approximately \$725,000 will be spent in 1997-98.

1997-98 INITIATIVE	OUTCOME
<p>The Government has provided \$100,000 in 1997-98 for grants to the Working Women's Centre to fund advisory and advocacy services.</p>	<p>Outcomes from this program include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase in calls from Chinese speaking women from 3 per cent of all callers in 1996/97 to some 11 per cent in the first months of this financial year. • Commencement of a pilot 8 week column in the Australia/China Daily on work issues for women, explaining rights and entitlements of workers in NSW and strategies for pursuing those rights. • An ethnic community open day and forum run by the Working Women's Centre which produced recommendations for agencies such as trade unions and the NSW Department of Industrial Relations. • Consultation with a range of non-metropolitan service providers resulting in the development of partnerships with rural and regional community legal centres to deliver improved industrial services to women across the State. • Development of a close working relationship with the Department of Industrial Relations which will, for example, include the piloting for the Department of a new training course that targets women's workplace issues.

1997-98 INITIATIVE	OUTCOME
<p>Enhanced programs will be provided in 1997-98 for cervical cancer screening (\$1.7 million) and breast cancer screening (\$12.4 million).</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An opt off Pap Test Register was established in July 1996 and to date 727,880 women are registered. Cervical Screening Coordinators have been appointed in all Health Services and mechanisms established to monitor screening rates by Health Services. Screening targets are included in all Health Service Performance Agreements with the Department (1997-98 to 1998/99). • The Cervical Screening Program is developing strategies to target under-screened and unscreened women: Aboriginal and Non- English Speaking Background women, women living in rural and remote areas, and recruitment and communication strategies with GPs and Women's Health Nurses to maximise the participation of women. • There are 10 Breast Screening and Assessment Services with 50 screening locations (36 fixed and 14 mobile). Statewide targets for participation have been developed and screening targets have been included in all Health Service Performance Agreements with the Department (1997-98 to 1998/99). A capital management plan has been developed and coordinators for Non- English Speaking Background and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander recruitment appointed. 9 out of 10 Screening and Assessment Service Agreements have been signed - the one remaining is currently being negotiated. A new funding model will be implemented when all 10 Agreements are signed. • NSW screens to date total 895,746.

1997-98 INITIATIVE	OUTCOME
<p>The Government will commit \$250,000 to support further implementation of the Department of School Education Gender Equity Strategy through a pilot program to integrate gender equity in mainstream school planning processes.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 13 schools from one metropolitan and one country district have participated in the project to examine links between issues of gender and other equity factors, the school's curriculum, practices and policies and student learning and social outcomes. <p>This pilot project will assist the Department to support schools to integrate gender and other equity issues into mainstream planning processes.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support for the implementation of the Gender Equity strategy was provided through the various equity programs amounting to some additional \$260, 000. • Professional development was provided for the teachers and district office staff in all 40 district literacy teams to assist them to explore gender and literacy issues as part of the State Literacy Strategy. • The resource <i>Boys and Literacy</i> was provided to all government schools for use with students K-12. A parent package is being developed to assist parents and teachers explore issues of gender education. Teachers and key district staff were provided with support materials dealing with issues of sex-based harassment, body image and gender issues in early childhood education.