

Budget Highlights for Rural and Regional New South Wales

2001-02



New South Wales

INFORMATION ON THE BUDGET HIGHLIGHTS FOR RURAL AND REGIONAL NEW SOUTH WALES 2001-02

Regional Budget Highlights 2001-02 provides information at a glance on key State Government spending outside metropolitan Sydney.

The capital works in this document are a selection only of the total commitment to regional and rural NSW.¹

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

Where capital works are funded over four years through forward estimates, both the 2001-02 spending figures and total project costs are included where available.

¹ For a complete details see Budget Paper 4

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FOREWORD – BY BOB CARR, PREMIER OF NEW SOUTH WALES

Country New South Wales will get its fair share from this year's State Budget.

The New South Wales Government is again delivering more jobs, better roads and facilities and improved education, health, transport and police services to people in rural areas and the regions.

We're also stimulating new business investments and development outside the major urban centres.

The Government's commitment to prosperous resource industries, by promoting sustainable land use and tackling salinity, is again a feature.

Comparisons of population and State capital works spending show that regional and country NSW again receives more than its per-capita share of public investment.

Forty-two per cent of the State's more than six million people live outside Sydney. This Budget provides them with more than \$3,000 million, or 48 per cent, of the State's record capital works and road maintenance budget of \$6,400 million.

And the 28 per cent of people living outside Sydney, Wollongong, Newcastle and the Central Coast will receive 34 per cent, or \$2,160 million of the State's expenditure including capital works acquisition and road repairs.

This spending will sustain 32,500 jobs in country communities.

More than \$1,900 million will be spent in the coming year providing health care to rural and regional communities, a 52 per cent increase in funding for rural and regional health services since 1995.

The record health capital works budget of \$529 million will pay for the completion of six major hospital building and redevelopment projects outside Sydney, including work at Tweed Heads, Coffs Harbour and Dubbo.

This Budget allocates money to plan and begin construction of the \$234 million Newcastle Strategy, which includes a new bone and joint ambulatory centre at Rankin Park and the upgrading of Belmont Hospital.

Other new projects include the \$15 million consolidation of a range of services at the Young District Hospital and rural health centres in 19 small communities including Coolah, Brewarrina, Boggabri, Blayney and Tullamore.

Schools and TAFE colleges outside Sydney will receive nearly \$3,500 million from the Budget. This includes more than \$40 million to improve the literacy and numeracy of rural children and \$55 million for an expanded maintenance program in rural schools.

Nearly \$70 million will be spent on distance education centres, grants for isolated schools and other measures to tackle educational challenges in rural communities.

The Government will invest \$1,120 million over the next four years in the largest school capital works program ever undertaken.

This year's allocation means better schools in Mullumbimby, Dubbo, Tuncurry, Lightning Ridge, Oberon and other country centres.

The Budget contains more than \$250 million to subsidise country rail freight services and a further \$73 million to support country passenger services.

Rural and regional roads will attract \$1,200 million, or 62 per cent, of the Roads and Traffic Authority's expenditure on road building and maintenance.

The Government will direct more money to protect families outside Sydney from fires and natural disasters.

The Rural Fire Service will receive \$115 million, a record budget and a 127 per cent increase in funding since 1995. Funding for the State Emergency Service rises to \$27.1 million, an increase of 88 per cent since the Government took office.

This Budget also increases concessions for pensioners on their electricity and gas bills. Around 190,000 pensioners in country areas will receive up to an extra \$29 a year.

The Government is also acting to make public services conveniently available to people in remote areas. After a successful pilot program in 1997, we're setting up another 38 government access centres in rural towns, offering one-stop shopping for information, licence renewals and registrations. Seven centres are already running, three more will open this year and the others will be operating by June 2003.

This document highlights many more regional initiatives planned by the Carr Government in the coming year.



Bob Carr
Premier

PREMIER'S DEPARTMENT

The State Government is committed to making regional NSW a better place to live, work and do business.

It manages issues and projects of significance to the State, including major projects in regional NSW. It also co-ordinates other Government agencies to ensure a whole of Government approach to policy development and service delivery throughout NSW.

REGIONAL CO-ORDINATION PROGRAM

\$2.9 million is allocated in this year's Budget to improve service delivery and promote links between Government agencies and rural and regional communities.

Eight Regional Co-ordinators work in country centres to improve rural and regional services and promote collaborations between Government agencies and communities on issues of concern to people living outside Sydney.

Ongoing regional co-ordination projects include:

- ◆ Over \$100 million allocated to build water pipelines in the Hunter with an estimated 300 new jobs created in the region.
- ◆ The pipeline to Pokolbin is completed and operating and the pipeline to Broke/Fordwich is under construction.
- ◆ During the past two years there has been a significant drop in the crime rate in Moree.
- ◆ Workforce Planning Project. On the Central Coast, a Workforce planning project will map the needs of industry over the next 3-5 years and feed the information to training providers.
- ◆ Illawarra Advantage Fund. To date, 23 firms have accepted offers of assistance, which should yield more than 1,500 jobs over the first 3-5 years life of these businesses.
- ◆ Old Delegate Hospital. This initiative has bought 27 new jobs to Delegate and is a major growth component for plantations in the region.
- ◆ Staff Recruitment and Retention in Remote Communities. In Western NSW, the program is working with communities and Government agencies to improve recruiting and retention of staff in remote localities.

STAYING IN TOWN

- ◆ The Staying in Town program receives \$6.5 million over three years. Projects include:
 - land and water-based aquaculture manual for the Hunter and Central Coast;
 - the Regional Extended Family Service in Armidale; and
 - a place Management project in Wentworth Shire.

OFFICE OF REGIONAL COMMUNITIES

- ◆ The Office of Regional Communities in Orange receives \$779,000 to work on Statewide responses to issues common to many people in regional NSW.

REGIONAL COMMUNITIES CONSULTATIVE COUNCIL

- ◆ \$150,000 to support the Regional Communities Consultative Council, which:
 - advises on rural and regional policies and services;
 - recommends initiatives to advance social, economic and environmental development; and
 - consults with rural and regional communities regarding community issues, solutions and opportunities.

GOVERNMENT ACCESS PROGRAM

- ◆ \$1.8 million to establish 38 shops in rural communities to improve access to government services and information.

Services provided at these one-stop-shops include vehicle registration renewal and applications for birth, death and marriage certificates and recreational fishing licences.

STRENGTHENING LOCAL COMMUNITIES STRATEGY

- ◆ A further \$530,000 to provide a better integrated, and higher quality response by State Government agencies to key issues in local communities.
- ◆ During 2001-02, funding assistance for new place projects has been committed to:
 - Coledale (South Tamworth);
 - Boggabilla;
 - Wentworth; and
 - Bourke.

COMMUNITY DRUG STRATEGIES

- ◆ The Government's commitment to the outcomes of the NSW Drug Summit includes an allocation of \$2.9 million in 2001-02 to fund the Drugs and Community Action Strategy and the Community Drug Information Strategy.

This includes funding for Drug Project Managers in Wagga Wagga, Dubbo, Armidale, the North Coast, Illawarra, the Hunter, Central Coast and South Coast.

The funding will also cover 37 Community Drug Action teams in regional NSW to lessen the impact of drugs in their communities. This includes Aboriginal teams in places such as Eurobodalla and the Central Coast.

INFRASTRUCTURE

- ◆ \$1.1 million to the Infrastructure Co-ordination Unit to continue coordinating major Government and private sector infrastructure initiatives, including the Broken Hill mineral sands separation plant (\$85 million), the transport terminal in Dubbo (\$3 million) and Moree Inland Port proposal (\$8 million).

YEAR OF THE OUTBACK

- ◆ \$2 million in the 2001-02 and 2002-03 for the Year of the Outback Program will promote tourism, economic development and cultural activities in Far Western NSW.

REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT

More than 25,000 full-time jobs have been created and \$5.37 billion of private investment secured for regional NSW as direct results of assistance from the State Government from April 1995 to March 2001.

There are 18 Regional Development Offices across regional NSW.

MAJOR PROGRAMS IN 2001-02

Various programs offer help to developing businesses and communities in all NSW regions. Next year's allocations include:

- ◆ \$5 million for the Regional Economic Transition Scheme (RETS) to attract new industry to regional communities hit by the economic shocks of business closures, industry restructuring and global economic change. Such setbacks inevitably lead to substantial job losses, falls of local income and expenditure and depressed local economies. Communities dependent on the agricultural, agri-processing, mining and forestry industries that are particularly exposed to adverse trends in the globalisation of these industries.

RETS will continue to assist communities like Eden, Broken Hill, Lithgow, Gunnedah, Goulburn and the shires of Blayney, Bogan, Cootamundra, Cobar, Eurobodalla, Kempsey, Nambucca, Rylestone and Scone. Bellingen and Gloucester Shires were recently added to the scheme. Another \$724,000 of the \$5 million annual RETS budget is allocated to the Meat Processing Industry Restructuring program.

- ◆ The Meat Processing Industry Restructuring program (MPIR) has been introduced to help meat processing firms form a competitive, sustainable industry and to ease the burdens of continuing economic rationalisation on companies, employees and communities. Over five years, \$12 million will be provided by four government agencies. The Department of State and Regional Development is contributing \$9.989 million, including \$724,000 per annum allocated from RETS. The MPIR program will fund independent diagnostic examinations of company operations, new projects for value-adding and initiatives for occupational health and safety. In cases of plant closures, the program allows assistance for workers (relocation allowances, retraining costs and expenses for setting up a jobs network) and for towns and communities affected by shutdowns.
- ◆ The Dairy Regional Economic Transition Scheme helps communities affected by dairy industry deregulation; giving assistance to develop new markets and alternative industries.
- ◆ In 2001-02, \$1 million is provided for continuing the Country Lifestyles program to promote the benefits of regional centres. This venture is intended to attract investment and key skills to regional centres to ensure that business growth prospects can be fully tapped.

- ◆ One strand of the Country Lifestyles program is Regional Business and Investment Tours; travelling showcases of opportunities for business investment in regional areas. The aim is to alter uncertain perceptions about the potential of regional investments.

Since November 1998, these exhibits have visited Nowra, Tamworth, Armidale, Griffith, Tweed Heads, Lismore, Mudgee, Bathurst, Dubbo, Orange, Grafton, Yamba, Narrandera, Leeton, Albury, Upper Hunter and Murray. More centres will be visited in 2001-02.

- ◆ The Regional Business Development Scheme is intended to boost regional employment and investment by encouraging companies to expand or relocate to country locations. Assistance available towards the costs of location feasibility analyses, payroll tax, plant and equipment removal and skills training. About 100 companies are likely to be helped in 2001-02 through this scheme and the department's facilitation services.
- ◆ The Hunter and Illawarra Advantage Funds will continue in 2001-02. Both funds are designed to attract new industry and commerce into both regions, leading to new jobs.
- ◆ The Main Street and the Small Towns program. The programs help communities take strategic and proactive approaches to their economic development with strategic plans. Some 45 projects are expected to be assisted in 2001-02.
- ◆ The Business Retention and Expansion program provides regional communities with a mechanism for collecting information on the structure of their local economy. The program provides an audit and is a starting point for developing community economic development plans and actions.

Since June 1998, 37 communities have been offered assistance to undertake a survey. These towns include Ballina, Bellingen, Tenterfield, Gilgandra, Dungog, Rylstone Shire, Central Darling Shire, Milton-Ulladulla, Leeton and Deniliquin. Twelve more communities are likely to prepare government-assisted surveys this financial year.

- ◆ The Agribusiness Alternatives program gains \$800,000 in 2001-02, to continue exploring opportunities for developing sustainable, value-adding agribusinesses. The program supports 10 Agribusiness Development Managers across NSW.
- ◆ Regional Development Boards now have access to \$2 million each year to develop projects of regional significance with other organisations. The Boards also receive grants for administration costs.
- ◆ Another \$600,000 goes to the New Market Expansion program in 2001-02. It will help targeted firms develop confidence, networks and skills to develop new markets and reduce dependence on traditional markets or local economies.

As part of the NME program, several travelling experts tours will visit approximately 20 regional centres. Experts will brief small and medium firms on current business issues and trends so they are better prepared for business expansion.

- ◆ The Townlife Development program helps towns with populations of less than 2,500, which are vulnerable to the effects of globalisation and industry rationalisations. This year, support will be provided to 20 community projects intended to generate economic benefits.

- ◆ The Developing Regional Resources program gives financial assistance to regional development agencies and organisations, partly to cover the costs of employing short-term contractors dealing with business development benefits.
- ◆ The Country Centres Growth Strategy is intended to overcome obstacles to economic growth and give support to development initiatives for specific regions. Partnerships and consultations with communities, businesses and other government bodies produce initiatives tailored to improve each centre's growth.
- ◆ As part of the Government's Salinity Strategy, the Salinity Business Development program has been introduced to encourage commercial enterprises to develop opportunities arising from the salinity problem and from productive uses of salinity-affected land and water and extracted salts.

HEALTH

This year NSW Health's operating expenditure in rural and regional areas will be more than \$1.9 billion.

This budget includes a funding increase of \$126 million, following the \$95 million increase provided in 2000-01.

NEW INITIATIVES

CAPITAL WORKS

- ◆ \$234 million for the Newcastle strategy¹ which includes:
 - a new Bone and Joint Ambulatory Care Centre at Rankin Park;
 - upgrading and enhancement of Belmont Hospital;
 - improving John Hunter Hospital with construction of a second access road and better car parking;
 - redevelopment of Newcastle Mater Misericordiae Hospital; and
 - a new Polyclinic in central Newcastle.
- ◆ \$7 million for the Rural IT infrastructure funding to support cabling and telecommunications in major hospitals and centres.
- ◆ Finance to develop 19 rural health centres at Collarenebri, Holbrook, Coolah, Rylstone, Nimbin, Lightning Ridge, Coolamon, Gilgandra, Emmaville (Vegetable Creek), Brewarrina, Denman, Jerilderie, Blayney, Boggabri, Lord Howe Island, Barraba, Tullamore, Murrumbarrah/Harden and Gulargambone.
- ◆ \$15 million to consolidate Young District Hospital (acute services) and the Young Community Health Service and Mercy Health Service (sub-acute and rehabilitation services) at the Young District Hospital site.²

¹ Cost and construction timeframes are consistent with the Hunter Better Health Plan and will be updated as part of ongoing clinical and community consultation.

² Cost and construction timeframes will be updated as part of ongoing clinical and community consultation.

CONTINUING INITIATIVES

CAPITAL WORKS

- ◆ Complete these hospital capital works:
 - Tweed Heads Hospital redevelopment Stage 3, \$36.2 million;
 - Coffs Harbour Hospital and Ambulance Station, \$80.9 million;
 - Dubbo Hospital redevelopment, \$19.7 million;
 - Lower North Coast Strategy, Taree, \$32.5 million;
 - Illawarra Strategy Stage 2, \$101.5 million; and
 - John Hunter Pathology Building, \$17.3 million.

GROWTH INITIATIVE

- ◆ New funding for mental health services in rural and regional areas will have reached \$20.6 million by 2001/02 with major enhancement funding applied to the following health services to date:
 - Hunter, \$4 million.
 - Illawarra, \$2 million.
 - Macquarie, \$4.3 million.
 - Greater Murray, \$2.4 million.
 - Northern Rivers, \$2.2 million.
 - Mid North Coast, \$1.9 million.
 - New England, \$800,000.
 - Mid Western, \$1.5 million.
 - Far West, \$900,000.
 - Southern, \$600,000.

Growth funding, now contained in rural and regional health services budgets, will be used to release pressure on local emergency departments, improve the care of patients with chronic cardiovascular, respiratory or cancer related illnesses and improve general health services.

KEY INITIATIVES

- ◆ Hunter: \$4 million to John Hunter, Royal Newcastle, Belmont and Maitland Hospitals, increasing surgery facilities.
- ◆ Illawarra: \$2 million towards meeting increased demand for medical admissions and surgical emergency admissions, with additional orthopaedic services at Shoalhaven and restoration of obstetrics services at Shellharbour.
- ◆ Northern Rivers: \$1 million to begin establishing a 25 patient mental health unit at Tweed Heads, plus \$4.5 million as part of a major Tweed Valley redevelopment involving another 36 beds, more surgical ward and theatre staff, and increased community services.
- ◆ Mid North Coast: \$2 million to increase elective surgery procedures in Manning, Coffs Harbour, Port Macquarie and Kempsey.
- ◆ Telemedicine: \$4 million to expand telecommunications deliveries of medical services. Area Health Services are reporting on the potential of more than 20 possible telehealth sites across NSW.

EDUCATION AND TRAINING

The State Government is committed to delivering high quality education and training for country NSW. In 2001-02, nearly \$7.6 billion will be available in recurrent and capital funding for government schools and TAFE colleges across the State.

Major capital works valued at more than \$157 million for schools and \$68 million for TAFE NSW will be undertaken to improve facilities and buildings across the State.

NEW INITIATIVES

New capital works initiatives for rural NSW total almost \$25 million and include:

- ◆ \$257,000 to begin Stage 1 upgrading of Mullumbimby High School. Total cost: \$4.8 million.
- ◆ \$2 million to upgrade Dubbo South campus (Stage 4) of the Dubbo Multi Campus College. Total: \$5.6 million.
- ◆ \$10.3 million for Stage 2 of the Great Lakes College at Tuncurry. Total: \$21.1 million.
- ◆ \$122,000 to begin work on the Stage 2 accommodation upgrade at Hill Top Public School. Total: \$2.1 million.
- ◆ \$1.9 million to begin Stage 2 facilities at Lightning Ridge Central School. Total: \$4 million.
- ◆ \$228,000 to begin upgrading accommodation at Merimbula Public School. Total: \$4.5 million.
- ◆ \$33,000 to provide access improvements at Murwillumbah High School. Total: \$633,000.
- ◆ \$141,000 to upgrade existing buildings and provide additional accommodation (Stage 1) at Muswellbrook South Public School. Total: \$3 million.
- ◆ \$75,000 to begin work on access improvements to Oberon High School. Total: \$1.6 million.
- ◆ \$460,000 to refurbish Blocks B, E and K for information technology, carpentry and joinery at Albury TAFE.
- ◆ \$446,000 to provide student amenities and general learning spaces at Bega TAFE.
- ◆ \$176,000 for an Aboriginal Development Centre at Dubbo TAFE. Total: \$1.4 million.
- ◆ \$455,000 to provide a Horse Industry Training Centre at Grafton TAFE.

- ◆ \$126,000 to upgrade the Tourism and Hospitality section of Orange TAFE. Total: \$345,000.
- ◆ \$1.1 million to provide a building and construction industry work area at Tamworth TAFE.
- ◆ \$1.9 million to replace demountable classrooms at Hanwood, Wauchope, Wyndham and Yenda Public Schools.
- ◆ \$2.2 million to replace demountable libraries at Crescent Head, Jindabyne, Tregeagle and Wauchope Public Schools.
- ◆ \$3 million to replace demountable administration and library buildings at Bermagui, Corindi, Glenreagh, Gulmarrad and The Pocket Public Schools, and Collarenebri Central School.

CONTINUING INITIATIVES

Continuing capital works initiatives total almost \$50 million and include:

- ◆ \$1.2 million for the Stage 1 upgrade of Bega High School. Total: \$3.5 million.
- ◆ \$2.1 million for a new primary school at Bogangar. Total: \$4.5 million.
- ◆ \$2 million to improve facilities at Cudgegong Valley Public School. Total: \$2.9 million.
- ◆ \$342,000 to complete permanent library facilities at Cudgen Public School. Total: \$515,000.
- ◆ \$1.4 million to upgrade accommodation at Dorrigo High School. Total: \$2 million.
- ◆ \$172,000 to upgrade and provide new facilities (Stage 1) at Dubbo Multi Campus. Total: \$21.5 million.
- ◆ \$415,000 to upgrade existing campuses (Stage 3) at Dubbo Multi Campus. Total: \$2.2 million.
- ◆ \$4.6 million for Stage 1 of the Great Lakes College at Taree. Total: \$6.7 million.
- ◆ \$1 million for a new multi-purpose centre at Hay War Memorial High School. Total: \$1.6 million.
- ◆ \$2.3 million for Stage 1 of a new primary school at Jerrabomberra. Total: \$2.9 million.
- ◆ \$10.3 million for Stage 1 of the Tweed area – secondary accommodation. Total: \$12.8 million.
- ◆ \$2.6 million for the redevelopment of Woodburn Central School. Total: \$3 million.
- ◆ \$4.6 million to consolidate Bathurst TAFE on one site. Total: \$6.4 million.
- ◆ \$1.6 million to complete additions to the Dubbo Rural Skills Centre. Total: \$2 million.
- ◆ \$3.6 million to build a new TAFE college on the Great Lakes Education Precinct at Tuncurry. Total: \$5.6 million.

- ◆ \$1.6 million to complete the Moree Adult Study Centre and support services. Total: \$2.1 million.
- ◆ \$230,000 to complete the flexible/open access area at Orange TAFE. Total: \$490,000.
- ◆ \$3.4 million to provide rural and child studies classrooms at Taree TAFE. Total: \$4.8 million.
- ◆ \$400,000 to complete painting and decorating facilities at Wagga Wagga TAFE. Total: \$450,000.
- ◆ \$6.1 million to provide hospitality and trade course facilities at the Wollongbar TAFE campus. Total: \$10 million.

SCHOOLS

- ◆ The Department's 2001-2002 budget will include some \$1.484 billion in core recurrent funding to approximately 261,000 rural students in government pre-schools, primary and secondary schools.
- ◆ Some \$55 million for rural schools under an expanded school maintenance program.
- ◆ Over \$40 million to rural students for literacy and numeracy.
- ◆ In addition, \$69.2 million is being provided in targeted equity funding to rural students in government schools. This includes:
 - funding to support 11 primary and 8 secondary Distance Education Centres (DEC's), the majority of which are integrated into local schools. Within the DEC's, there are a variety of media support student learning modes assisted by communications technologies including VHF and HF radio, facsimile, teleconferencing and networked personal computers;
 - staffing improvements in smaller and central schools. Principals have been appointed to the smallest primary schools so as to provide a greater measure of experience and leadership for these generally isolated schools;
 - \$836,000 to rural students in government and non-government schools for the Living Away From Home Allowance. The Allowance for 2001 is \$1,000 per annum; and
 - \$1.1 million for Isolated Schools Grants. This program increases the level of discretionary funding available to the most geographically isolated schools.

TAFE

- ◆ Recurrent budget allocations to rural NSW will exceed \$218 millions in the 2001/2002 financial year.
- ◆ Capital funds exceeding \$32 million have been allocated to rural NSW projects.
- ◆ Additional funds amounting to \$1.257 million have been issued to rural NSW Institutes to assist in the maintenance of colleges and their grounds.

- ◆ Rural NSW colleges will enrol approximately 148,000 students in 2001-02 financial year and deliver some 18.537 million annual student contact hours of training.
- ◆ Additional training opportunities for rural students are provided through the distance education facilities.
- ◆ Special funds are directed towards youth at risk and Aboriginal education programs.
- ◆ TAFE NSW Scholarships will be available to rural students providing them with opportunities to study in TAFE. Benefits include:
 - exemption from the TAFE NSW administration charge;
 - study assistance of \$200; and
 - a special allowance of \$200 for students in rural and lower socio-economic areas to help meet travel and other costs associated with study.
- ◆ Extensive ranges of courses are offered to increase opportunities for mobility in employment.
- ◆ Training aimed to improve the performance and productivity of industry.
- ◆ Special attention is given to students disadvantaged through social, geographical and economical circumstances.
- ◆ Payroll tax concessions to assist employers and increase first year apprentice intakes.

TRANSPORT

BUS AND RAIL

- ◆ More than \$250 million to subsidise country rail freight.
- ◆ \$73 million to support country rail passenger services.
- ◆ \$1.5 million to fund interchange facilities in rural centres including Singleton, Maitland, Cessnock, Moruya, Grafton and Albury.
- ◆ The Rail Infrastructure Corporation (RIC) to spend \$2 million for safety improvements at level crossings in 2001-02.
- ◆ \$2 million of an estimated \$120 million to provide new intercity rail cars.
- ◆ RIC to spend \$15 million to complete the Newcastle ship loading facility.
- ◆ \$1.5 million of a total program of \$61 million to provide new rail cars for the Hunter.
- ◆ \$4 million of a total \$22 million to upgrade the Countrylink XPT fleet to improve travel times and reliability.
- ◆ \$2 million for Broken Hill rail cars.
- ◆ \$71.7 million in rail freight subsidies to assist regional primary producers and businesses.
- ◆ \$4.4 million in 2001-02 to extend a 'train stops' braking system to the Hunter, Central Coast, Blue Mountains and Illawarra regions to improve safety of intercity services. Total cost \$17.9 million.
- ◆ \$12.6 million in 2001-02 to continue the easy access program for upgrades at Katoomba, Beresfield, Wollongong, Kiama, Maitland and Thornton stations.
- ◆ \$6 million of a total \$42 million to finish electrifying rail services between Kiama and Dapto.

PORTS AND WATERWAYS

- ◆ Waterways Authority to spend \$1.8 million to continue developing a multi-purpose commercial berth at Eden.
- ◆ Port Kembla Port Corporation to spend \$5.8 million on upgrading berths, and associated road and other infrastructure.
- ◆ Newcastle Port Corporation to spend \$1.7 million to continue delivering a new vessel traffic system and planning for other port improvements.

PACIFIC HIGHWAY PROJECTS

\$160 million will be spent in 2001-02 as part of the State Government's \$1.6 billion, 10-year Pacific Highway Upgrade program, including:

- ◆ \$6 million to progress the \$145 million Karuah bypass dual carriageway.*
- ◆ \$6.2 million to complete the \$49 million Coolongolook to Wang Wauk upgrade.*
- ◆ \$5.1 million to continue the \$59 million Taree to Cooperook upgrade.*
- ◆ \$7.7 million to continue the \$66 million Cooperook Deviation dual carriageway.
- ◆ \$5.2 million to complete the \$73 million Lyons Road to Englands Road dual carriageway at Coffs Harbour.*
- ◆ \$22.4 million to complete the Tandys Lane Deviation dual carriageway.
- ◆ \$111.4 million to continue the \$348 million Yelgun to Chinderah dual carriageway.*

ROADS

- ◆ More than \$1.2 billion, or 62 per cent, of the road building and maintenance program will be spent on rural and regional roads.
- ◆ More than \$100 million for the Rebuilding Country Roads program, including the country timber bridges program.
- ◆ \$23.2 million for the \$100 million West Charlestown by-pass from Pacific Highway, Windale, to Kotara Heights.
- ◆ \$3.6 million to complete the \$6.3 million Renwick Street to Brook Avenue dual carriageways on the Pacific Highway at Wyoming.

* Please note that these are Commonwealth/State funded projects

- ◆ \$3 million to complete the \$28.2 million Oak Flats interchange on the Princes Highway at New Lake Entrance Road.
- ◆ \$7.5 million to complete the \$10 million reconstruction of the Princes Highway between Yellowpinch and Millingandi at Merimbula.
- ◆ \$7.4 million for the \$14 million realignment of the Mid-Western Highway at King Plains.
- ◆ \$3.5 million for the \$4 million realignment at Devil’s Elbow on the Golden Highway at Denman.
- ◆ \$4.1 million to complete the \$7.5 million realignment of the MR54 north of Goulburn.
- ◆ \$4.1 million for the \$15 million Avoca Drive route development at Kincumber.

POLICE

NEW INITIATIVES

POLICE AND COMMUNITY PROGRAM (PACT)

The program receives \$485,000 in 2001-02. Key objectives:

- ◆ Reduce crime by bringing together police, youth and community groups in facilitated sessions to identify innovative strategies.
- ◆ Enhance local awareness of policing and related services, particularly among community groups of culturally diverse backgrounds.
- ◆ Provide reciprocal training opportunities for police, youth, community groups, non-Government and other Government agencies on public safety issues, police/community relations and the causes of crime and anti-social behaviour.

WORKPLACE TRAINING PROGRAM

Funding of \$224,000 has been allocated to the Workplace Training program to improve awareness of cultural and linguistic differences. This program will build an inventory of police and practitioner experiences, to help develop appropriate workplace training on policing in multi-cultural situations.

TECHNOLOGY

While not specific to country NSW, \$16 million will be spent on new works across the State. This will significantly improve communications, police investigations and management efficiency. Police in regional areas will directly benefit from this investment in technology, which includes:

- ◆ \$1.1 million to computerise criminal histories and court results.
- ◆ \$1.9 million for a database of enforcement notices.
- ◆ \$6 million for improved radio communications in country areas.
- ◆ \$800,000 for a scanning electronic microscope.
- ◆ \$6.2 million for the enhancement of the Computerised Operational Police (COPS) and Investigation Management (e@gle.i) Systems.

CONTINUING INITIATIVES

FRONTLINE POLICE

By the end of 2003, 2,110 new frontline police will be on active service across NSW. Regional NSW will be served by additional officers from this contingent.

CAPITAL WORKS

Regional capital works will total \$3.9 million in 2001-02 for new or improved police stations and accommodation, including these ongoing projects:

- ◆ Waratah Police Station.
- ◆ Police accommodation in remote areas, including Walgett and Bourke.

The Government will also continue to work with Wellington Council to provide a new police station and transfer the existing station to Council.

TECHNOLOGY

- ◆ \$150,000 for electronic recording of interviews.
- ◆ \$1.3 million to upgrade forensic services laboratories and systems.
- ◆ \$3 million for Live Scan fingerprint equipment.
- ◆ \$3.2 million for radio and telephone equipment.
- ◆ \$20,000 to upgrade the criminal suspect identification system.
- ◆ \$1.4 million for digital film processing equipment to support digital speed cameras.
- ◆ \$1.3 million for the informants management system.
- ◆ The completion of the \$7 million project to install Mobile Data Terminals (MDT's) in operational police vehicles, across the State including Hunter and Illawarra regions.

MINOR WORKS

- ◆ The Minor Works allocation of \$16.4 million will be used across the State for upgrading police accommodation and facilities, purchasing of smaller items of operational plant and equipment, replacing of road safety equipment and installing computer programs.

OTHER CONTINUING INITIATIVES

- ◆ \$8.1 million to upgrade Infringement Processing Bureau technology and facilitate the bureau's relocation to Maitland, creating up to 150 jobs.
- ◆ \$175,000 to upgrade technology for the Firearms Registry at Murwillumbah.
- ◆ \$315,000 to place bicycle patrols in Local Area Commands.
- ◆ \$2.5 million to upgrade police station holding cells across the State.

AGRICULTURE

In 2001-02, NSW Agriculture will spend \$224 million on developing practical solutions to today's agricultural and environmental problems. These initiatives will benefit farmers, rural communities and the entire NSW economy.

KEY INITIATIVES

- ◆ \$81 million for research, advisory and regulatory services to assist NSW food and fibre industries to be internationally competitive.
- ◆ \$66 million for resource information and land use, farm management and planning systems to improve management of agricultural resources, including water use efficiency, agrilimatology, farm forestry and minimising the impacts of natural disasters, drought, vertebrate pests and noxious insects.
- ◆ \$50 million for research, advisory, regulatory and diagnostic services to assist plant and animal product industries meet quality and safety standards required by consumers.
- ◆ \$27 million for education and other specialised training and support services, including measures to ensure compliance with animal welfare standards.

MAJOR INITIATIVES

- ◆ \$4 million over the next two years (\$2 million in 2001-02) to combat soil acidity problems.
 - \$701,000 million toward the second year of the government's four-year Salinity Strategy.
- ◆ \$2.6 million for the fourth year of the five-year Water Reform Program.
- ◆ \$6.887 million to help local government combat noxious weeds across NSW.
- ◆ \$2.28 million to help the NSW sheep industry combat Ovine Johnne's disease.
- ◆ A capital works program worth \$11.5 million, including:
 - Upgrading of information technology including E-commerce facilities;
 - Continued construction of a genetic plant research laboratory at Wagga Wagga;
 - Beginning work on a vocational education centre at Tamworth;
 - Soil pesticide redemption work on the North Coast; and
 - Various annual provisions for plant and equipment and minor works.

SYDNEY WATER AND HUNTER WATER CORPORATION

The Government's \$3 billion Waterways Package sets priorities for improving treatment of wastewater from homes and businesses.

Sydney Water forecasts a capital works program of \$456.5 million (an increase of about \$31.5 million on 2000-01) to deliver better services for its customers and improved protection of its customers and the environment. A significant share of this money goes outside Sydney.

Examples:

- ◆ Sydney Water will provide new sewerage services to Gerringong and Gerroa in the Illawarra, at an estimated cost of more than \$40 million.
- ◆ Sydney Water is investing more than \$140 million in the Illawarra through its wastewater strategy. This will deliver a complete upgrade to infrastructure in the region. The Wollongong treatment plant will be upgraded to tertiary levels to improve beach water quality in the Illawarra.
- ◆ Hunter Water's capital works projects in 2001-02 represent a \$49.3 million investment in the Lower Hunter through initiatives to clean up local waterways and provide better services.
- ◆ Work has begun to provide reticulated sewerage to Karuah for the first time. The \$14 million scheme includes an effluent reuse scheme which will irrigate trees and fodder crops.
- ◆ Existing sewerage infrastructure is also being upgraded for better reliability and improved environmental protection, including a \$13 million amplification to the Kurri Kurri wastewater treatment works and a \$22 million upgrade to the Shortland wastewater treatment works.
- ◆ Improving the security of the Hunter Water supplies by increasing the capacity of Grahamstown Dam by 50 per cent at an estimated total cost of \$22.5 million. A further \$4.3 million will go to augment the Tomago sandbeds.
- ◆ \$11 million to install new pipes and pumping stations between Stockton and Shortland to cater for growth at Fern Bay and Kooragang Island.
- ◆ The wastewater transportation system throughout the region is progressively being expanded. In the Maitland area, \$2 million is allocated in 2001-02, with another \$2.4 million going to Swansea.

ENERGY

SNOWY MOUNTAINS HYDRO

The Commonwealth-owned Snowy Mountains Hydro-electric Scheme is expected to be corporatised shortly. NSW will own 58 per cent of the new company; the rest being held by Victoria and the Commonwealth. The new company will pay approximately \$32 million to NSW over five years, to help remediate former Snowy Scheme construction sites.

The NSW, Victorian and Commonwealth governments will also spend \$375million (NSW contributing \$150 million) to achieve, over ten years:

- ◆ An average of 21per cent of the original flows in the Snowy River at the junction of the Snowy and Mowamba Rivers.
- ◆ An average of 70 gigalitres per annum of dedicated environmental flows in the River Murray.

This project largely involves improving water distribution and irrigation infrastructure in the Southern Murray-Darling Basin. Corporatisation will also increase the NSW asset base and improve the economic contribution of the Snowy Scheme.

GAS

Rural and regional NSW have benefited significantly from the NSW Government's gas market reforms. The Government has introduced extensive, long-term reforms to establish an attractive market to encourage the gas industry to invest in NSW, particularly regional NSW.

- ◆ Sixteen rural and regional centres have been connected to the gas grid since 1995: they are Forbes, Parkes, Narromine, Dubbo, Wellington, Culcairn, Henty, Holbrook, Walla Walla, Howlong, Moama, Barooga, Corowa, Mulwala, Tocumwal and Finley, as well as many towns in the Blue Mountains.
- ◆ Pipeline construction is underway, or planned, to bring gas to a further 27 centres, including Lockhart, Tumut, Gundagai, Batlow, Adelong, Gilgandra, Dunedoo, Coolah, Gulgong, Mudgee, Coonabarabran, Gunnedah, Werris Creek, Quirindi, Tamworth, Binnaway, Kootingal, Narrabri, Moree, Temora, Cooma, Bombala, Jindabyne, Berridale, Tweed Heads, Harden and Murrumburrah. Gas is expected to be available to most of these areas by 2002/03.
- ◆ A major new transmission pipeline, the \$450 million Eastern Gas Pipeline, has recently been constructed to bring a second source of natural gas to the State and also to supply a number of regional centres en route to Sydney.

UTILITIES INVESTMENT

NSW will embark on its largest-ever program of capital expenditure by State-owned utilities, with more than \$1,048 million worth of improvements for electricity, water and sewage networks.

This year a robust budget for construction, modernisation, augmentation and repairs will allow these businesses to cater for current demand and future growth.

The electricity sector's investment in the State will enhance capacity as well as improve the network of poles, wires and substations to help increase reliability of supply.

SOME HIGHLIGHTS INCLUDE:

- ◆ \$67 million ocean plant upgrades including Illawarra sewage plants.
- ◆ \$26.9 million to improve the reliability of the Kempsey, Nambucca and Coffs Harbour transmission lines.
- ◆ \$4.2 million for Australian Inland Energy Water's system augmentation in the Broken Hill, Balranald and Wentworth regions.
- ◆ \$5.5 million on line and substation development in the Tamworth and Gunnedah region.
- ◆ \$4.6 million to upgrade the Liddell Power Station's infrastructure.
- ◆ \$5 million towards Eraring Energy's Burrinjuck Hydro Turbine
- ◆ \$8 million for Great Southern Energy's gas infrastructure projects.
- ◆ \$2.3 million for Advance Energy's network development at Dubbo.
- ◆ Delta Electricity's \$11 million investment in a generator refurbishment for a Wallerawang generator unit.
- ◆ Energy Australia's network augmentation of \$44 million in the Hunter and \$26 million on the Central Coast.
- ◆ \$8 million for a remediation program for North Power's electricity feeders.

LAND AND WATER CONSERVATION

Regional communities will receive significant benefits from the Department of Land and Water Conservation's \$562.3 million budget.

State Government spending on land and water conservation is regionally focused and provides strong socio-economic boosts to rural NSW, as well as directly delivering services in natural resource management.

NEW INITIATIVES

- ◆ An extra \$11 million to meet costs of implementing the Water Management Act 2000, part of a \$64.7 million program over four years.
- ◆ An additional \$15 million over each of the next four years to deliver water and sewerage schemes to country towns.
- ◆ \$4 million additional funding for periodic maintenance programs at major storages.

CONTINUING INITIATIVES

Grant programs amount to \$158 million and include allocations for the Country Towns Water Supply and Sewerage program, flood mitigation works, coastal management, river entrance works and estuary management initiatives.

This includes:

- ◆ \$66.8 million for Country Towns Water Supply and Sewerage including:
 - safety upgrading of Sooley Dam in Goulburn and Spring Creek Dam in Orange;
 - new water treatment facilities for Brungle and Lake Cargelligo; improved water supplies to Boggabri, Quandialla, Tibooburra, Tullibigeal, and Warialda;
 - major augmentation of regional sewerage schemes in Coffs Harbour and Tamworth;
 - new sewerage services for Brungle, Hat Head, Millthorpe, New Brighton, North Karuah and five villages in Bega Shire, design and construction of the Lower Clarence regional water supply; and
 - continuation of more than 300 investigations, designs and constructions including Shoalhaven regional reclaimed water management scheme and new water treatment facilities for Corowa, Gulgong, Mudgee, Oberon, the Port Macquarie area and villages such as Comboyne, Long Flat, Telegraph Point, Gravesend, North Star and Sunset Strip.
- ◆ \$20 million over five years to bring forward projects in the Sydney Catchment area.

FLOODPLAIN MANAGEMENT

- ◆ \$13.9 million for floodplain management, including \$2 million (as half of a two-year, \$4 million commitment) for building a levee bank at Lismore.

NATIVE VEGETATION REFORMS

- ◆ \$5 million towards incentive-based conservation payments to landholders under the Native Vegetation Management Fund.
- ◆ \$2 million this year (part of \$8 million over four years), to map native vegetation. Data recorded through this project will be vital in developing reliable and successful regional vegetation management plans across the State.

OTHER KEY PROGRAMS

- ◆ \$10 million towards implementing the NSW Salinity Strategy, as part of a \$52 million program over four years, spread across several agencies. These funds will be used for salinity hazard mapping, pilot projects and further research and extension support.
- ◆ \$1 million towards further development of the multi-agency Community Access to Natural Resource Information program (CANRI).
- ◆ \$21.3 million towards the Murray-Darling Basin Commission.
- ◆ \$15.8 million for works undertaken by the privatised irrigation areas.
- ◆ \$17.7 million to implement land and water management plans.
- ◆ \$36.2 million for maintaining dams and water storages, buildings and systems across the State, including flood security and upgrade works at Chaffey, Glenbawn, Burrendong, Copeton and Keepit Dams; as well as ongoing works at Wellington, Bethungra and Wyangala Dams.
- ◆ \$2.5 million towards the Cap and Pipe the Bores Program.
 - \$17.9 million contribution to local government programs on estuary, coastal and waterways management;
 - \$38.2 million for Natural Heritage Trust programs administered by the Department of Land and Water Conservation; and
 - \$2.2 million for remediating Lake Macquarie and employing a Lake Co-ordinator.

SPORT AND RECREATION

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

MAJOR INITIATIVES

- ◆ \$3.5 million has been allocated to water safety, supporting a range of initiatives across the State. These include:
 - A \$1.2 million to Swimsafe, a program designed to teach children and adults to swim;
 - \$1.1 million for water safety and rescue services grants for Surf Life Saving NSW, The Royal Life Saving Society NSW and Austswim NSW. Surf Life NSW conducts ‘Beach to Bush’ tours to promote beach and water safety to rural communities – approximately 9,000 school children and teachers from 90 schools have participated in these tours over the last year;
 - \$165,000 for water safety programs across NSW;
 - \$500,000 for the Safe Waters public education campaign, including commercials on regional television networks; and
 - \$500,000 to support delivery of the NSW Water Safety Framework.
- ◆ \$748,000 of the NSW Institute of Sport towards the High Performance/Development Centre program, which brings the Institutes support and services to clubs, athletes and coaches in country areas. Scholarships currently support 140 athletes living in regional NSW.
- ◆ Approximately 55 per cent of a \$4 million capital assistance program will be spent in rural and regional areas to provide better sporting and recreational facilities.
- ◆ \$500,000 for the Shooting Club Development program to improve facilities for responsible shooters.
- ◆ \$1.5 million for the Regional Sports Facility Program. This builds on \$1 million provided for the program in 2000-01 for 17 major projects outside the Sydney Area including a multipurpose indoor sports facility, upgrading of swimming pool facilities and a surf life saving centre.
- ◆ \$560,000 for independent Regional Academies of Sport in the Illawarra, Western Region, Riverina, Hunter, North Coast, Northern Inland and South East. They provide essential services for rural and regional athletes, delivered close to their local communities.
- ◆ \$200,000 for the Far West Academy of Sport, based at Cobar, to provide services for isolated communities in the west of the State.
- ◆ \$2.7 million for the Sports Development program of grants to help sporting organisations.

- ◆ \$200,000 for the Country Athletes scheme to provide much needed assistance to rural athletes aged under 19 years. This program can help budding champions with travel, accommodation and other expenses associated with training and competition.
- ◆ \$100,000 for the Remote Area Travel Assistance scheme, which provides travel grants to country organisations and individuals helping them to compete in distant sporting competitions.
- ◆ \$300,000 for the Youth in Sport program, in conjunction with Police and Community Youth Clubs. More than 3,000 young people participate in this program, which helps prevent crime by providing recreational opportunities and positive role models for young people.
- ◆ \$100,000 for the Active Kids Communities Grant scheme to support initiatives encouraging greater participation in physical activity, particularly by children from diverse backgrounds.
- ◆ \$100,000 for the Women's Sports Administration and Travel Scholarship scheme to enable women to gain the skills and experience needed to succeed as sports managers and administrators.
- ◆ \$200,000 for the Aboriginal Community Grants scheme, which provides funding to Aboriginal organisations to develop skills and sustainable sport and recreational programs.
- ◆ \$200,000 for the Rural and Remote Grant scheme for specific projects that help athletes, coaches, and officials from rural NSW to improve their qualifications and experience.
- ◆ \$50,000 for the North West Strategy, which provides a variety of sporting activities in selected communities in North-Western NSW.
- ◆ \$70,000 for the eighth Australian Masters Games in the Hunter region in October 2001.
- ◆ \$30,000 for NSW Wheelchair Sport.

FAIR TRADING

The Department of Fair Trading provides a wide range of services to consumers and traders in NSW. Regional and rural communities will benefit from many programs and initiatives to be funded in 2001-02.

NEW INITIATIVES

- ◆ Capital Expenditure of \$4 million on information technology and telecommunications projects will improve access to fair trading services and information for people in rural NSW. Consumers will especially benefit in the areas of licensing, registration of encumbered vehicles and the rental bonds services. Online service delivery is being implemented for the particular benefit of country people.

CONTINUING INITIATIVES

- ◆ \$6.2 million to run 14 of the Department's 23 Fair Trading Centres in regional NSW.
- ◆ Over 50 newspapers, reaching some 350,000 people in country NSW, now carry the department's regular consumer columns. In addition, departmental officers conduct regular broadcasts on local radio stations.
- ◆ The Registry of Co-operatives moved to Bathurst in February 2000, creating 38 new jobs. In 2001-02, \$3.7 million has been allocated to fund the registry and the Australian Centre for Co-operative Research and Development. This centre is a joint venture between Charles Sturt University, Bathurst, the University of Technology, Sydney and the Department of Fair Trading.
- ◆ Approximately \$1.2 million to fund 10 community-based tenancy advisory services in regional areas to provide better assistance for rural and regional tenants.
- ◆ \$415,000 is allocated to provide financial counselling in country areas. Twenty three advisory services will be funded.
- ◆ \$924,000 a year to run the Aboriginal Action plan, providing specialist advice to Aboriginal communities and employing eight Aboriginal Service Officers in Fair Trading Centres outside Sydney.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT

New State Government initiatives will strengthen local government and create partnerships to boost job creation and economic growth, particularly in regional NSW.

As part of its commitment to create jobs in regional NSW, the Department of Local Government (DLG) is moving to Nowra. Construction of a new multiple occupancy building is scheduled to commence in 2001-02. This project is included in the Crown Property Portfolio managed by the Department of Public Works and Services. The DLG's budget includes \$120,000 in 2001-02 towards preliminary costs of relocation.

The department has been allocated \$300,000 in 2001-02 to investigate and assist councils that are poorly managed or in financial difficulties.

CONTINUING INITIATIVES

- ◆ \$72 million in 2001-02 to provide the State's 416,000 pensioner households, about one-third in country areas, with rebates on council rates.
- ◆ \$1.1 million in 2001-02 as part of the \$4.5 million Septic Safe program to help councils, particularly those in sensitive catchment regions, monitor septic systems in their local areas.

ATTORNEY-GENERAL

NEW INITIATIVES

- ◆ \$300,000 in 2001-02 (\$6.5 million over four years) to construct new Children's Court at Worimi to improve responsiveness and efficiency in managing children's cases in the Hunter.
- ◆ \$1 million each year to implement Indigenous Justice strategy, seeking to improve the safety and well being of indigenous communities through:
 - effective crime prevention and conflict management;
 - reduced rates of offending; and
 - improved access to justice services for indigenous people.
- ◆ \$150,000 in 2001-02 for a pilot Domestic Violence Intervention Education program to:
 - reduce levels of domestic violence;
 - provide women with support necessary to proceed with charges;
 - provide information; and
 - increase networks and partnerships between agencies involved in the program.
- ◆ Approximately \$4.8 million in 2001-02 for electronic service delivery systems, to reduce costs and enhance access to justice for people from rural and regional areas.

CONTINUING INITIATIVES

- ◆ \$1.5 million for the Legal Helpline, with the Law Society, for telephone access of to reliable and accurate legal information, advice and referral.
- ◆ \$1.5 million each year from the Safer Communities Development Fund to financially support activities to prevent crime. The fund supports projects to help Aboriginal communities, young people and other communities.

ONGOING CAPITAL WORKS

- ◆ \$4 million in 2001-02 for backlog maintenance of court premises, including major structural repairs at Cooma Court House.
- ◆ \$1.4 million in 2001-02 to complete a major extension of the Orange Court House to meet growing demands in the Central West. Expected completion is September/October 2001.
- ◆ \$7.5 million in 2001-02 for minor works to upgrade courts at Moree, East Maitland, Wagga and Woy Woy; to improve rental accommodation and provide office and recording equipment.

FORESTRY

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

Between 1995 and 2004, the State's hardwood plantations will increase by almost 35,000 hectares. Softwood plantations will have increased by more than 20,000 hectares during that period.

Twenty-year wood supply agreements have provided a sustainable future for the State's native timber industry. The Forest Industry Structural Adjustment package is providing a further catalyst for more industry investment in value-adding than ever before.

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

ONGOING INITIATIVES

- ◆ Between 1994-95 and 2000-01, the State Government spent over \$80 million in grants to expand and manage NSW hardwood plantations to ensure long-term timber supplies to old and new industries, creating carbon sinks and supporting regional jobs and communities. This investment has established over 27,000 hectares of new hardwood plantations.
- ◆ In 1998, following the signing of the Forest Agreement for the North East Region, the Government announced funding of \$30 million over five years to expand hardwood plantations by at least 2,000 hectares each year. To date, \$15 million has been spent and a further \$15 million is committed over the next three years.
- ◆ Since 1995, the Government has invested \$43.6 million to establish 14,700 hectares of new softwood plantations. State Forests is planning to spend \$7.1 million to establish or replant 6,100 hectares of softwood plantations this year. Another 600 hectares will be established under joint ventures with landholders.
- ◆ It is estimated that for every 50 hectares of new plantation, one new long-term job is created for the life of the plantation.
- ◆ Since 1995, the Government has contributed \$80 million to support timber workers and help the native timber industry manage changes.
- ◆ In this time, \$16 million has been approved for 34 industry development initiatives, leading to more than \$52.5 million in private sector investment. This has produced more than 174 new jobs in rural NSW.

- ◆ Additionally, \$31.7 million has been approved in worker assistance, including \$4.5 million in training initiatives under the Forest Industry Training Strategy to help workers manage changes in the native timber industry. \$10.6 million has been allocated to implement the Southern Forest Agreement and increase timber yields from the South Coast. This funding is also available for improving the management of Aboriginal cultural heritage, State Forest conservation reserves and additional pest and weed control. This funding includes \$2.5 million from the joint Commonwealth/State Forestry Industry Structural Adjustment package to create 16 new jobs for new plantation establishment and to improve forest growth rates on the South Coast.
- ◆ More than 80 percent of State Forests workforce is employed in rural NSW.

NEW MARKETS

- ◆ The Government is developing new markets and investment in forestry to address greenhouse issues, salinity control, land repair and mine site rehabilitation issues. This will involve local councils, the private sector (including international investors), and landholders.
- ◆ The Government will work with the private sector to establish the world's first environmental services exchange in Sydney. It will operate like a green stock exchange and reinforce Sydney's strong financial standing in the Asia-Pacific region. Farmers and other landholders will be able to buy and sell salinity credits to meet salinity reduction targets in the Murray Darling Basin. Electricity generators will be able to trade in carbon credits to offset emissions of greenhouse gases.
- ◆ The Government will offer for sale 250,000 tonnes of carbon credits, carbon dioxide equivalent stored in existing plantation forests. This trade will test the potential of a NSW carbon trading market and tap into the estimated \$US100 billion international market for environmental services. Proceeds from sales will be used to plant more plantations on the North Coast and the South West Slopes.
- ◆ As part of the NSW Salinity Strategy, 400 hectares of new hardwood plantation will be established in the Gunnedah region to demonstrate the potential for commercial and environmental returns including salinity, carbon sequestration and biomass for charcoal, liquid fuels and the generation of energy.
- ◆ This builds on the 50 trial plantings established between Narrandera and Wagga Wagga in the south and Inverell and Moree in the north to determine the most suitable tree species to be grown in lower rainfall areas to address dryland salinity.
- ◆ 1,500 hectares of new plantations have already been established under an agreement with the Tokyo Electric Power Company to establish carbon sinks in NSW. This is the first of two tranches of up to 40,000 hectares of new plantations which will continue to be planted over the next eight years, resulting in further jobs and investment in rural NSW.

ENVIRONMENT

NATIONAL PARKS AND WILDLIFE SERVICE

The National Parks and Wildlife Service makes a significant contribution to regional economies in NSW. Through direct employment and capital works programs, the NPWS is an important contributor to local economies. It also helps to create many jobs in the private sector through the development of major tourism infrastructure.

In 2001-02 the Service will receive a record allocation totalling \$225.5 million, which represents a 138 per cent increase since the 1994-95 Budget.

It will spend \$27.5 million on continuing and new capital works programs in regional areas.

NEW INITIATIVES

- ◆ An initial \$300,000 of a \$4 million program to convert Vacant Crown Lands into national parks under the Upper and Lower North-East Regional Forest Agreement.
- ◆ \$1 million for Crown Lease purchases in the North-East of the State.
- ◆ \$1.2 million to relocate a wader bird habitat on Koorangang Island in Newcastle.
- ◆ An initial \$1.3 million of a \$5 million program to upgrade roads and bridges in Kosciuszko National Park.

ONGOING INITIATIVES

- ◆ \$4.3 million for Alpine Way remediation works relating to the aftermath of the Thredbo landslip;
- ◆ \$4 million for developments in the former State forests under the Upper and Lower North-East Regional Forest Agreement.
- ◆ \$3 million for sewerage upgrades in regional national parks (\$1.2 million new and \$1.8 million ongoing).
- ◆ \$0.9 million for fire and pest species management.
- ◆ \$6.3 million for land acquisition, with particular emphasis on the Western regions.
- ◆ \$1 million for the Southern Comprehensive Regional Assessment and the associated Regional Forest Agreement.

As well as the private sector jobs created by these capital works projects, the National Parks and Wildlife Service will employ around 45 new staff for the Southern region during this financial year. They represent the second instalment of 91 jobs being created from the Government's decision to add 100 new national parks and reserves, amounting to over 300,000 hectares, to the State's reserve system. \$10 million in recurrent funding has been provided in the budget of the National Parks and Wildlife Service to implement this decision.

FISHERIES

AQUACULTURE

The State Government will continue its \$3 million Aquaculture Initiative to reduce pressure on fisheries' wild stock and develop an important new regional industry. Aquaculture has potential to grow from a \$40 million-a-year industry to more than \$100 million annually within the next five to ten years.

- ◆ \$1 million for the Aquaculture Initiative in 2001-02:
 - to enable extension officers to work directly with fish farmers to improve production;
 - to assist fish farmers better manage the health of farmed stocks;
 - to assist investors locate suitable sites for aquaculture investments; and
 - to support a 'whole of government' approach to sustainable aquaculture strategies.
- ◆ \$300,000 to upgrade the aquaculture research facilities at Port Stephens.

COMMERCIAL FISHERY

- ◆ Fishery management strategies, and environmental assessments of those strategies, will be prepared for the State's major commercial fisheries and exhibited for public consultation.
- ◆ Progressive implementation of category two share management fisheries.

RECREATIONAL FISHERY

- ◆ Continued production of freshwater fish for stocking fishways in the South-Eastern region, costing \$565,000; the New England region, costing \$725,000 and the Riverina region, costing \$655,000.
- ◆ Expansion of the successful Fishcare Volunteers program to coastal areas.
- ◆ Improving recreational fishing opportunities through progressive implementation of those recreational fishing areas identified in the community selection process.

CONSERVATION

- ◆ An additional \$178,000 of recurrent funding for marine parks, bringing total marine park funding to \$1.87 million in 2001-02. Community consultation on marine parks issues will continue to be an important priority.

- ◆ An additional capital allocation of \$1.9 million for marine parks, including \$1.5 million for a joint office facility at Huskisson to accommodate staff from the Jervis Bay Marine Park, NSW Fisheries and the National Parks and Wildlife Service.
- ◆ An additional \$500,000 of recurrent funding for threatened species to bring the 2001-02 total to \$1 million for identifying critical habitats and developing recovery plans for threatened species populations and ecological communities.
- ◆ An additional \$800,000 in recurrent funding for water reform, to bring the 2001-02 total to \$1.1 million to help implement the Government's program.

MINERAL RESOURCES

MINE SAFETY

- ◆ In the fourth year of the five-year \$13.9 million Mine Safety Initiative, \$3.2 million will be allocated to deliver the recommendations of the Mine Safety Review and the Gretley Inquiry.
- ◆ \$500,000 has been allocated this year to prosecute individuals and companies which commit serious breaches of mining occupational health and safety laws.

ENVIRONMENT

- ◆ The Government will spend about \$1.7 million during 2001-02 to make sure that mining and exploration meet contemporary best practice standards of environment management.
- ◆ The Derelict Mined Lands Rehabilitation program reclaims mine sites where no-one can be held responsible for environmental damage from past mining. Current Government funding of \$1.6 million will be enhanced in 2001-02 by another \$2.8 million from the Environmental Trust. This grant will fund rehabilitation work at the Conrad mine near Inverell, the CSA excised areas at Cobar, the Yerranderie silver mines in the Blue Mountains and the Woodsreef asbestos mine near Barraba.

EXPLORATION NSW

- ◆ Exploration NSW is a \$30 million, seven-year program to encourage mineral and petroleum exploration and investment. This initiative continues the Government's Discovery 2000 project, which generated more than \$150 million in additional exploration expenditure.
- ◆ In 2001-02, \$5 million will be spent on projects in support of minerals and petroleum exploration.
- ◆ \$200,000 will be spent on searching for new opal fields at Lightning Ridge, using geophysical surveying and drilling.
- ◆ Projects continue to be focused in the State's Far West, around Broken Hill and Cobar. Petroleum-related projects will be focused to the south of Broken Hill, in the Menindee/Wentworth region.
- ◆ The Government is leading the search for new mineral deposits around Broken Hill. The Broken Hill Exploration Initiative is jointly funded by the NSW, South Australia and Commonwealth Governments.

WORK SAFETY

- ◆ \$7 million over two years for the fit-out and occupancy of WorkCover's head office relocation from Sydney to Gosford.
- ◆ \$1.7 million to the WorkCover team dedicated to providing occupational health and safety services to rural areas.
- ◆ Some \$2.4 million has been allocated over two years to the Roll-over Protective Structures scheme, to provide rebates for the purchase of tractor roll-over protection systems.
 - \$1 million was allocated for rebates from 1 July 2000 to 30 June 2001. A further \$1 million is available from 1 July 2001 to 30 June 2002 (or until funds are spent); and
 - \$400,000 was allocated for managing and promoting the scheme.
- ◆ The method of calculating workers' compensation premiums for country taxis operators was relaxed in March 2001.
- ◆ The Rural Safety hotline (ph 1800 300 377) provides call access to workplace safety information for rural workers and employers.
- ◆ The Overhead Electrical Safety campaign is a joint initiative between WorkCover and the Electricity Association of NSW to promote electrical hazard awareness for operators of high-level machinery. Measures include a television commercial shown in regional NSW, a 20-minute video and a brochure.
- ◆ A safety management plan for NSW commercial fishermen is being funded by WorkCover. It will include a resource manual with a sample policy for occupation health and safety, practical checklists and other material to guide owners, operators and masters of commercial fishing vessels.
- ◆ An easy checklist for farm safety has been developed to help farmers assess hazards on their properties. Approximately 800,000 of these documents have been distributed, with another 200,000 to be published.
- ◆ In 2000-01, a 16-page supplement on farm safety was placed in *The Land* newspaper during Farm Safety Week. This brochure was a joint initiative of the Rural Industry Reference Group and WorkCover NSW. After positive reactions, an updated supplement will be published this year.

INDUSTRIAL RELATIONS

The Workers Compensation Resolution Service will continue to hold conciliation conferences across regional NSW.

The State Government will continue to support initiatives to provide better access to departmental services for regional NSW. Some of these include:

- ◆ NSW Awards Online and a new Department of Industrial Relations web site have improved access to industrial information for people everywhere in NSW.
- ◆ A network of six contact centres, including three in Coffs Harbour, Newcastle and Wollongong, are helping employees and employers obtain information and advice about NSW industrial relations laws and employment practices.
- ◆ Industrial inspectors have been posted in key regional centres, including Ballina, Dubbo, Gosford, Orange and Wagga Wagga.
- ◆ A hotline for the Award Inquiry Service (ph 131 628) provides a central point of access to industrial awards information for the cost of a local call from anywhere in the State.
- ◆ Another phone number (132 005) connects to industrial inspectors for the cost of a local call.
- ◆ Regional information sessions and workshops are being conducted to inform employers of their industrial responsibilities and opportunities.

HERITAGE OFFICE

The Heritage Office has a major ongoing support program to help communities identify, conserve and promote their historic structures.

- ◆ The Heritage Office program is designed to meet community rural and regional expectations about heritage preservation. A great deal of local pride is created to underpin rural and regional life.
- ◆ Through its grant funding program, the Heritage Office makes significant contributions to rural and regional economies and to jobs in the private sector.
- ◆ The Office has established, and will continue to fund in 2001-02, 80 local government heritage advisory positions and 60 local heritage funds in rural areas, assisting councils and their communities to care for their heritage items.
- ◆ Through its work on Main Street programs, the Heritage Office has encouraged local councils, communities and private owners to improve the appearance of rural towns and cities. Projects include a current \$160,000 grant to Gulgong and Mudgee and \$200,000 to Broken Hill. These programs are labour-intensive and therefore create jobs.
- ◆ Heritage tourism across NSW is growing rapidly and many communities derive their significant income and job supply from this source. Examples include Bellingen and Stroud in the north, Morpeth and Paterson in the Hunter, Broken Hill, Gulgong, Millthorpe and Carcoar in the west and Berrima, Berry and Jamberoo in the south.
- ◆ Major heritage tourism projects are now being planned in Lithgow and Gundagai, using whole-of-town approach. These will supplement major work already undertaken on the Cobb and Co project from Bathurst to Bourke.

PLANNING

The Department of Urban Affairs and Planning will continue to support key initiatives for sustainable growth, community renewal and long-term environmental management in regional and rural NSW. Programs include:

- ◆ Through the Living Centres strategy the department is working with councils and communities to rejuvenate local areas across the State. Some \$2.6 million is set aside for projects in the far South-East, Western Riverina, Illawarra and Northern Rivers regions, including \$650,000 in 2001-02 for community partnership grants as part of a \$1.9 million program over three years.
- ◆ Leading the Northern Rivers Regional Strategy, a joint planning exercise with the Northern Development Task Force and 11 local councils. This initiative encourages sustainable resource management and new types of agriculture including coffee, viticulture and indigenous food. A regional plan for the Northern Rivers region will be based on the strategy.
- ◆ A new regional plan for Lord Howe Island, with particular emphasis on settlement to ensure that future development and the population are sustainable.
- ◆ A Regional Environmental Plan for the ski resort area in the Kosciuszko National Park. The allocation of \$700,000 for this year reflects DUAP's new planning responsibility for the park.
- ◆ A settlement strategy for the Kosciuszko National Park and five surrounding Local Government areas. This will guide the permanent population, new workforce and tourist population.
- ◆ Continuing work on a regional plan for New England and the North West of NSW. The Government intends to build on regional assets and community knowledge to create an innovative plan for balanced development and to promote the quality of life for people in those areas.
- ◆ A plan for the Upper Hunter region, covering the Merriwa, Scone, Singleton, Muswellbrook and Murrurundi local government areas. It will draw on significant knowledge gained in the 1997 Upper Hunter Cumulative Impact study and subsequent community consultation.
- ◆ DUAP will be helping six councils in regional NSW to prepare Rural Residential Strategies.
- ◆ The department is facilitating development of a State Riverine Corridor policy. It is working with key agencies and local government to develop an improved co-operative mechanism for defining and conserving the values of Riverine Corridors. This policy should be operating before the end of the year.

- ◆ Work will begin to prepare a model Local Environmental Plan for the NSW Salinity Strategy. This will link with salinity hazard-mapping by the Department of Land and Water Conservation. Councils will be able to apply the model to ensure that developments take account of dry land salinity with appropriate siting, design, drainage and choice of building materials.
- ◆ A Regional Environmental Plan for the Sydney and regional centres drinking water catchments will be finalised. It will protect the environmental values underpinning water quality through a whole-of-Government and community approach, with consequent benefits for aquatic ecosystems, livestock and native flora and fauna.

AREA ASSISTANCE SCHEME

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

EMERGENCY SERVICES

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

Next year, the State Government will spend a record \$510 million on emergency services. For regional NSW, this means better services and better equipment.

NEW INITIATIVES

The NSW Fire Brigades' budget includes allocations for:

- ◆ New fire stations at Kincumber, Tingira Heights, Wallsend, West Wallsend, Kotara and Stockton.
- ◆ New training facilities at Penrith, Newcastle and Lismore.

The NSW Rural Fire Service budget includes:

- ◆ \$114.9 million for rural firefighting in 2001-2002.
- ◆ \$19.2 million to transfer fire control staff from local governments to the Rural Fire Service.

The State Emergency Service budget includes:

- ◆ \$1.495 million for new tactical radio systems.
- ◆ \$400,000 for rescue equipment and flood boats.

CONTINUING INITIATIVES

The NSW Fire Brigades' budget includes allocations to:

- ◆ Complete new fire stations at Shellharbour, Doyalson, East Maitland, Wangi Wangi and Toronto.
- ◆ Purchase land for a new fire station at Warnervale.
- ◆ Replace fire engines, including up to 47 vehicles in country locations (\$13 million).
- ◆ Purchase aerial and specialist fire appliances (\$5 million).

The NSW Rural Fire Service budget includes:

- ◆ \$27 million for tankers, including approximately 180 new tankers.
- ◆ \$6.2 million for good quality second hand tankers.
- ◆ \$5 million for safety enhancements to the existing tanker fleet.

The State Emergency Service budget includes:

- ◆ \$500,000 for vehicle subsidies.
- ◆ \$416,000 for building subsidies.
- ◆ \$156,000 to employ two part-time division controllers.
- ◆ \$150,000 for computers for SES units.
- ◆ \$100,000 for five sandbag filling machines.

DEPARTMENT OF CORRECTIVE SERVICES

Corrective Services continues to make a significant contribution to regional economies through its capital works program, which creates jobs in both the construction of new facilities and in managing correctional centres.

In the coming year the Department will spend \$192.8 million in regional communities. This is in addition to capital works expenditure.

MAJOR PROJECTS

In 2001-02, the following major projects will be undertaken in regional centres:

- ◆ \$20 million of a total \$70 million for the new mid-North Coast Correctional Centre at Kempsey, which will house 350 inmates. More than 800 jobs will be created during the construction phase and on completion, the new gaol will sustain more than 130 jobs.
- ◆ \$8.7 million to continue developing and refurbishing the Goulburn Correctional Centre. This includes completing a high-security facility to house 75 inmates and a new centre housing an upgraded gatehouse, visitor processing area, administration offices and a new control room. An estimated 250 workers will be employed on these construction works over the year.

JUVENILE JUSTICE

- ◆ The Department of Juvenile Justice will continue work arising from the drug summit. Initiatives in NSW include:
 - Continued funding for 10 Alcohol and Other Drugs Counsellor positions in Wagga Wagga, Dubbo, Broken Hill, Orange, Lismore, Kempsey, Tamworth, Gosford, Grafton and Bateman's Bay/Queanbeyan; and
 - \$800,000 to commence drug and alcohol centres at Dubbo and Coffs Harbour.
- ◆ Continued funding of \$290,000 for the Pre-Employment Skills Training and Mentor Support program to provide relevant training and employment and to establish positive links with the community. Supported regional organisations are:
 - Western College of Adult Education, Dubbo;
 - Kempsey Advisory Training Enterprises, Kempsey;
 - Aboriginal Education Consultative Group, Koori Youth Network, Taree;
 - Scientific Management Assoc, Wagga Wagga; and
 - Hunter Star Foundation, Newcastle.
- ◆ More than \$400,000 to provide accommodation and support services in the following areas:
 - Mayfield West;
 - Erina;
 - Wollongong; and
 - Albury.

TOURISM

The State Government's Regional Action plan includes support for tourism initiatives throughout the State. Regional Tourism Organisations provide umbrellas for co-operative tourism marketing and development programs.

CONTINUING INITIATIVES

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

- ◆ More than \$2.4 million to Regional Tourism Organisations to support marketing and development plans, including the Regional Flagship Events program.
- ◆ More than \$4 million to run Touring by Car, Short Breaks and other innovative advertising and promotional campaigns which highlights the holiday experiences available in regional NSW.
- ◆ \$1.2 million to fund international marketing and advertising campaigns to promote regional NSW to overseas markets.
- ◆ Over \$200,000 for developing regional visitor centres, including the new 'I' signs for accredited visitor information centres.
- ◆ \$150,000 to the Sydney Convention and Visitors Bureau to continue the Regional Conferencing Strategy to promote meetings and conventions in regional areas.
- ◆ \$150,000 as part of a \$600,000 four year commitment to support regional tourism attraction projects.

OTHER INITIATIVES

- ◆ Almost \$500,000 towards ongoing development of Gateway Centre sites and key entry points to regional NSW to establish centres at Tweed Heads, Eden, Bulli, Tenterfield, Gosford and Lithgow.
- ◆ \$100,000 to support the Australian Masters Games to be held in the Hunter in October 2001.
- ◆ \$110,000 for marketing and development initiatives to promote Central Coast tourism.
- ◆ \$110,000 for marketing and development initiatives to promote Illawarra tourism. The next phase of the Gateway Information Centre will also begin in 2001-02.
- ◆ \$130,000 for marketing and development initiatives to promote Hunter tourism

SMALL BUSINESS

NEW INITIATIVES

- ◆ The network of Innovation Advisory Centres will be expanded. Two new regional locations will be chosen in addition to Wollongong and Newcastle. The Innovation Website (www.itc-online.com.au) will receive continued financial support. Total expenditure will be \$80,000.
- ◆ Cleaner Production project assistance and 10 technology planning and demonstration projects will be delivered in regional NSW at a cost of up to \$125,000.
- ◆ Six Technology Awareness Groups (TAGs) will be set up in regional NSW at a total cost of about \$90,000. These include four new regional tourism TAGs and an information technology TAG on the Central Coast.
- ◆ The e-commerce program will be expanded into three new regional locations, including Newcastle, with a total expenditure of \$150,000.

CONTINUING PROJECTS

- ◆ \$1 million for the New Export Opportunities program to encourage new and existing regional exporters into new markets.
- ◆ Up to \$250,000 to financially support 50 regional small and medium firms to undertake business and export development projects.
- ◆ Up to \$60,000 for nine regional small firm networks on information technology and wastewater management, developed under the High Growth Business program.
- ◆ \$2.9 million for business advice to start-up and newly established small businesses, provided by an outsourced network of 39 regional Small Business Advisory Centres.
- ◆ Up to \$150,000 for Women in Business mentoring projects and growth strategies workshops to be delivered in regional NSW, and a project supporting networking and the group needs of regional businesswomen.
- ◆ Small regional businesses will benefit from an expansion of the NSW Small Business web site (www.smallbiz.nsw.gov.au) to offer additional resources.
- ◆ \$200,000 for the Regional Aboriginal Business program to continue to support Aboriginal businesses to market and promote their products and services in new domestic and international circumstances. The Aboriginal Business and Employment Awards will also be held in December 2001.

INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY

The State Government recognises the important role that information technology plays in the lives of the people of NSW and the contribution it makes to the State's economy.

The Government will continue to improve delivery of information technology to regional and rural areas.

NEW INITIATIVES

- ◆ Almost \$5 million over three years to establish up to 62 Community Technology Centres to provide access to technology, training and online services for rural and regional communities.
- ◆ \$8 million for online integrated business licensing, removing the need for rural and regional businesses to travel to major centres to access government licensing services.
- ◆ More than \$17 million over the next four years for the information and communications technology skills action plan, including initiatives for developing regional online communities.
- ◆ \$3.8 million to provide Internet access to 90 communities through the State Library's Rural.Link initiative.
- ◆ \$340,000 to set up partnerships with the Government Network Service to trial innovative telecommunications services for rural and regional NSW.

CONTINUING INITIATIVES

- ◆ \$12 million for the connect.nsw program to fund government electronic service delivery projects. This builds on \$10 million provided in 2000-2001.
- ◆ \$4 million for the Australian Centre for Advanced Computing and Communications, including regional nodes at Bathurst, Newcastle, Wollongong and Western Sydney.
- ◆ \$1.3 million to continue to upgrade the capacity and coverage of the Government Radio Network.

CITIZENSHIP

The Community Relations Commission provides \$1.5 million for grants and subsidies. Rural and regional NSW will share this funding, to foster community harmony.

- ◆ \$1.725 million over the next three years for the Migration Heritage Centre. Set up by the Premier in 1998, this centre co-ordinates the recording, preservation and display of the State's fixed and living migration heritage. Continuing projects in rural and regional NSW by the Migration Heritage Centre include:
 - Around \$50,000 for the Regional and Rural Migration Heritage Identification program in Orange, Albury and Broken Hill. This requires increasing local government involvement in preserving migration-related heritage items.
- ◆ \$50,000 for new Regional Advisory Councils in Griffith, Bathurst, Albury and other rural and regional centres. These councils give regional communities a say on solving local problems and promoting new initiatives.
- ◆ \$300,000 to employ three new Community Relations Commission Regional Co-ordinators to serve migrant communities in the Illawarra and Southern NSW, Hunter and Northern NSW, and Western NSW.
- ◆ The Community Relations Commission and Principles of Multiculturalism Act 2000 came into effect in March 2001. It enshrines multiculturalism in statute for the first time by any Australian State.

ARTS

Funding arrangements for 2001-02 include:

- ◆ An extra \$100,000 a year to Wollongong for local arts development.
- ◆ Extra funding of \$100,000 a year to Newcastle for arts development focusing on youth arts.
- ◆ An extra \$100,000 a year to Northern Rivers Performing Arts in Lismore to help artists create new work in a regional context.
- ◆ An extra \$100,000 for projects of artistic excellence in regional NSW.
- ◆ \$280,000 a year, on top of the current \$862,500, to finance regional touring, including:
 - \$80,000 for the Railway Street Theatre to tour main stage work to smaller and remote towns, including Bingarra, Nyngan, Broken Hill and Inverell. Each visit will include an educational program;
 - \$50,000 to Opera Australia for its Opera in Schools program; and
 - \$150,000 for the Sydney Symphony Orchestra to visit larger centres such as Bathurst, Dubbo and Orange under its chief conductor, plus master classes and performances by the Sydney Sinfonia in other towns including Inverell, Gunnedah, Moree and Tamworth.
- ◆ \$350,000 to preserve and provide access to regional archives in Armidale, Broken Hill, Wagga Wagga, Wollongong and Newcastle.
- ◆ \$500,000 for the Regional Filming Fund to help cover the extra cost of shooting on locations outside metropolitan Sydney.
- ◆ \$100,000 for the NSW Film and Television Office to help re-open cinemas in regional communities.
- ◆ \$200,000 to set up a digital library of film locations and to promote NSW as a filming destination.
- ◆ A \$600,000 Film Industry Attraction Fund will enable the NSW Film and Television Office and the Department of State and Regional Development to compete nationally and internationally for footloose production – many productions shooting in regional NSW.

COMMUNITY SERVICES

CONTINUING INITIATIVES

- ◆ Community, disability and home care services in regional NSW will benefit from record state-wide funding of \$1.7 billion. Recurrent funding levels have been maintained for out-of-home care services, children's services, the Supported Accommodation Assistance program and the Community Services Grants program.
- ◆ Families First is a co-ordinated State Government strategy to increase the effectiveness of early intervention in, and prevention of, difficult family problems. It will continue to be developed in country NSW, along with maintenance of existing services.
- ◆ The Supported Accommodation Assistance program will allocate \$4 million in growth funds negotiated with the Commonwealth under the Supported Accommodation Assistance Program IV Agreement. Although not specifically directed towards country NSW, distribution of these resources will benefit many country centres. Recurrent funding of \$21.6 million for the Supported Accommodation Assistance program will also be maintained in country NSW.

Details of the geographical distribution of funding for Families First, the Supported Accommodation Assistance program, the Community Services Grants program and other key community initiatives are provided below:

FAR NORTH COAST

- ◆ In 2001-02, recurrent funding has been provided to implement Families First, a co-ordinated strategy to increase the effectiveness of early intervention and prevention services to help families raise healthy, well adjusted children.
- ◆ \$3.3 million recurrent funding for Supported Accommodation Assistance Program services and \$3.2 million for Community Services Grants Program services.

MID NORTH COAST

- ◆ In 2001-02, recurrent funding has been provided for co-ordinating Families First.
- ◆ The Budget provides recurrent funding of \$2.7 million for Supported Accommodation Assistance Program services and \$2.9 million for community services grants.

NEW ENGLAND

- ◆ The Department of Community Services is working with the Department of Health and other departments to implement the Families First program.
- ◆ The Budget provides recurrent funding of \$3.4 million for Supported Accommodation Assistance program services and \$1.6 million for community services grants.

SOUTHERN HIGHLANDS

- ◆ The Department of Community Services is working with the Department of Health and other departments to implement the Families First program.
- ◆ The Budget provides recurrent funding of \$3.3 million for Supported Accommodation Assistance program services and \$1.4 million for community services grants.

CENTRAL WEST

- ◆ The Department of Community Services is working with the Department of Health and other departments to implement the Families First program.
- ◆ The Budget provides recurrent funding of \$2.3 million for Supported Accommodation Assistance program services and for \$1.3 million Community Services Grants program services.

ORANA FAR WEST

- ◆ The Department of Community Services is working with the Department of Health and other departments to implement the Families First program.
- ◆ In 1999-2000, one-off funding of \$85,000 was allocated under the Drug Summit strategy to establish a Youth Case Management position for Broken Hill/Wilcannia. Funding of \$120,000 per year over three years from 2000-01 has been provided. An Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander officer will be engaged to reduce petrol and solvent sniffing by young Aborigines.
- ◆ The Budget provides recurrent funding of \$3.3 million for Supported Accommodation Assistance Program services and \$1.4 million for Community Services Grants Program service.

RIVERINA/MURRAY

- ◆ The Department of Community Services is working with the Department of Health and other departments to implement the Families First program.
- ◆ Funding of \$200,000 per year in 2000-01 and 2001-02 has been provided for the Wula Wula Information and Access Centre. This is an Aboriginal-owned and managed centre, which facilitates access to Government funded services. It will also provide outreach services to isolated Aboriginal communities in the Richmond Valley.
- ◆ The Budget provides recurrent funding of \$3.3 million for Supported Accommodation Assistance program services and for \$1.7 million community services grants.

AGEING AND DISABILITY

The State Government's plan for older people, people with disabilities and their carers will ensure that rural and regional people get their share of \$1,114 million of expenditure.

In 2001-02, rural and regional areas will receive benefits from:

OLDER PEOPLE

- ◆ Total growth funds in the Home and Community Care of \$26.2 million, when additional State and Commonwealth contributions are combined.
- ◆ Funding to establish the next phase of the Action Plan on Dementia, with \$2.7 million this year.
- ◆ \$600,000 (\$1.7 million over three years) for a Seniors IT Strategy.

DISABILITY

- ◆ \$13.5 million for additional supported accommodation programs for people with disabilities.
- ◆ \$13.5 million to provide a range of support options for people with disabilities, including respite and other flexible forms of support.
- ◆ \$2 million to purchase new equipment for children with disabilities under the PADP scheme.

BOARDING HOUSE REFORM

- ◆ The State Government's Boarding House Reform strategy, receives another \$9.5 million in capital funding, dedicated to housing stock for individuals relocating to funded community accommodation.

WOMEN

STRATEGIC PROJECTS AND PARTNERSHIPS

- ◆ The State Government has funded a community organisation in Kempsey to develop a training package for indigenous women to build skills in community and business management. This was identified as a key need through a previous Department for Women project in the region.
- ◆ Under the 2000-2001 Women's Grant program, the Central West Regional Council of Adult and Community Education was given \$100,000 for a partnership project to increase employment of women in the NSW Central West; at Orange, Cowra and Condobolin. The program will focus on helping young women, Aboriginal women and women from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds.
- ◆ The State Government will continue to work with young women, building partnerships with business and community organisations to improve opportunities for girls in regional, rural and remote NSW.
- ◆ The State Government is developing a course on Women in Decision Making: Boards and Committees. This will be piloted in August-October 2001 in the Central West.

NSW WOMEN'S GRANTS PROGRAM

Thirteen projects worth \$461,454 have been funded in regional NSW, including:

- ◆ \$87,645 to the Barkuma Neighbourhood Centre (Kurri Kurri).
- ◆ \$52,590 to the Broken Hill Multicultural Women's Resource & Information Centre.
- ◆ \$31,418 to the Coffs Harbour Neighbourhood Centre.
- ◆ \$37,500 to the Boomerang Meeting Place (Batemans Bay).
- ◆ \$99,840 to the Armidale Development Corporation.
- ◆ \$39,270 to Bellingen Ace.
- ◆ \$19,960 to the Far North Coast Carer Respite Centre.
- ◆ \$17,640 to the North East Riverina Counselling Service.
- ◆ \$17,710 to the Rocky Hall Pre-School Association.
- ◆ \$19,618 to the Armidale & District Women's Centre.

- ◆ \$19,983 to the Burnside Family Support Service (Coffs Harbour).
- ◆ \$15,650 to the Arts Mid North Coast.
- ◆ \$19,980 to the Griffith Adult Learning Association.

WOMEN'S INFORMATION AND REFERRAL SERVICE

- ◆ The Women's Information and Referral Service operates a 1800 freecall number.
- ◆ Statistics on caller inquiries are available on request to rural municipal and shire councils. These provide details about the needs of women by local government area.
- ◆ Women's Information and Referral Service information officers have conducted outreach programs in the South Coast, Southern Tablelands, the Riverina and Central West areas to inform service providers of available support and to ensure accurate information about providers.

WEBSITE

- ◆ The Department for Women's web site is constantly being refreshed to improve access. It now allows rural community groups and individuals to post events and notices.
- ◆ The Women's Information and Referral Service database is gradually being downloaded onto the department's web site. This will allow greater access to 4,000 services for women and their families in rural NSW.

GATEWAY

- ◆ The Women's Gateway was launched in March 2001, providing a portal for women to obtain information on a wide range of services and topics including: health, family law, domestic violence, legal aid, legal tenancy and housing issues, education, child care, employment, training and grants. The Gateway has links to approximately 3,000 other web sites and can be accessed at Internet cafes, local community centres, telecentres and libraries.

PREMIER'S COUNCIL FOR WOMEN

- ◆ In 2001-2002, the Premier's Council for Women will run various strategic consultations in regional areas, covering issues of concern to women. The program will cover a range of topics including transport, health and safety, access to information resources, employment and education, and women participating in local decision making. This follows successful consultations held in Grafton in 1998, Broken Hill in 1999, Albury in early 2000 and the Central Coast in August 2000. Locations planned for 2001-02 consultations include communities in the Far South Coast, Southern Highlands and Southern Tablelands districts.
- ◆ Members of the Premier's Council for Women participated in the Department's Women on Wheels Outreach project, which visited 23 towns in western NSW in May 2001.