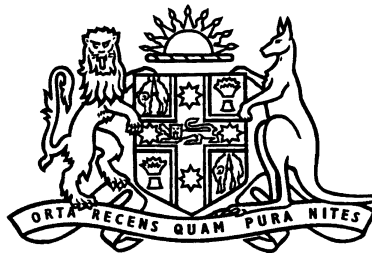


Social Justice Budget Statement

2002-03



New South Wales

FOREWORD

We are pleased to present the Government's Social Justice Budget Statement 2002-2003, introducing another budget that lifts and sustains those in most need in our community. Our key initiatives include:

- ◆ A commitment of \$117.5 million over four years for Families First, our plan to help struggling parents bring up children under the age of eight;
- ◆ Other prevention and early intervention programs that help strengthen families and communities, including new funding for Better Futures Regional Strategy, Aboriginal Community Partnerships Program and our Aboriginal Child, Youth and Family Strategy;
- ◆ Improving opportunities for our children and young people with record spending of \$8 billion in Education and Training, a 6.5 percent increase on last year's budget - plus increased capital spending of 16.5 percent to ensure our students have the best possible facilities;
- ◆ Record recurrent health funding of \$8.3 billion, an increase of 7.4 percent plus \$504 million is provided for capital works to enable continuation of our plan for redevelopment of hospitals, community and mental health facilities, including 226 new mental health beds, across the State;
- ◆ Improving access to justice and building safer communities through improved court systems, front line policing, crime prevention measures and community partnerships to prevent and combat crime;
- ◆ Sustained commitment to the Drug Summit Plan of Action through ongoing funding and development of community partnerships to address the drug problem (an additional \$194 million since 1999);
- ◆ Supporting rural and regional growth, jobs and tourism through programs such as the Regional Coordination Program and Staying in Town;
- ◆ A massive \$1.3 billion over the next four years for technology in our schools and hospitals, including broadband and satellite Internet connections, telemedicine and new computers in schools;
- ◆ Increased funding of \$52.3 million for the Department of Ageing, Disability and HomeCare.

Social justice is a great test of a community's humanity and compassion. With the measures outlined in this statement, the people of NSW can be assured their Government places the highest priority on supporting communities and families in need. In a time of general prosperity and economic confidence, our Social Justice Budget Statement conveys a simple message: we will not leave the poor, the sick, the frail, the vulnerable behind.



Bob Carr
Premier



Andrew Refshauge
Deputy Premier

CONTENTS

1. Social Justice in New South Wales	1
2. Funding Social Justice for 2002-03	2
Supporting Children, Youth and Families	2
Strengthening Education and Training	10
Promoting Health	15
Providing Access to Justice and a Safe Community	22
Partnerships for change: the NSW Government and the community working together to address the drug problem	27
Supporting Rural and Regional Communities	30
Enhancing Social Housing	37
Meeting the Needs and Aspirations of Aboriginal People	41
Supporting Older People and People with Disabilities	49
Meeting the Needs of Women	52
Promoting Diversity	56

2002-03 SOCIAL JUSTICE BUDGET STATEMENT

1. Social Justice in New South Wales

Social justice is fundamental to healthy and safe communities. The New South Wales Labor Government considers social justice to be one of the cornerstones of good government—along with economic development, environmental protection, and financial responsibility.

The New South Wales Social Justice Strategy is based on the four interrelated principles:

- ◆ Access
- ◆ Equity
- ◆ Rights
- ◆ Participation

The Government is committed to implementing these principles in ways that respect people's needs and aspirations. Particular attention is paid to those members of the community who are vulnerable or in need.

This approach to social justice was outlined in the inaugural New South Wales Social Justice Directions Statement, entitled *Fair Go, Fair Share, Fair Say* (October 1996).

The achievements of that Statement were built upon with *Supporting People and Strengthening Communities* (February 2000).

This year, the Social Justice Budget Statement presents both new Government initiatives and builds upon existing programs.

Social justice initiatives reflected in this statement revolve around the following priority areas:

- ◆ Supporting Children, Youth and Families
- ◆ Strengthening Education and Training
- ◆ Promoting Health
- ◆ Providing Access to Justice and a Safer Community
- ◆ Partnerships for Change: the NSW Government and the Community Working Together to address the Drug Problem
- ◆ Supporting Rural and regional Communities
- ◆ Enhancing Social Housing
- ◆ Meeting the Needs and Aspirations of Aboriginal People
- ◆ Supporting Older People and People with Disabilities

- ◆ Meeting the Needs of Women
- ◆ Promoting Diversity

The coordination, development and implementation of the Government's social justice policies and strategies is overseen by the Cabinet Standing Committee on Social Justice, chaired by the Deputy Premier. The Cabinet Committee is one means of coordinating social policy across Government and monitoring its effectiveness. Another component is the standing group of chief executive officers known as the Human Services CEOs Group.

The Government's primary source of community advice on major and strategic Social Justice issues continues to be the Social Justice Reference Group. The Reference Group, chaired by the Reverend Harry Herbert, reports to the Premier, through the Deputy Premier, on matters referred to it by the Government.

2. Funding Social Justice for 2002-03

The programs and initiatives listed below are presented in sections focusing on key social justice priority areas. While not exhaustive of the Government's social justice activities they reflect key priorities for expenditure in 2002-03.

Supporting Children, Youth and Families

Strong and caring families are an important foundation for a healthy functioning society. It is the responsibility of families and communities to prepare the next generation to lead fulfilling lives. The Government is also playing a role in providing support and protection for children and young people in our community and being responsive to family needs.

As young children have special needs to give them the best start in life, the Government is committed to paying particular attention to children in families where there is economic or social disadvantage. Specific programs are aimed at helping young people, supporting vulnerable people and strengthening communities.

Families First is a coordinated State Government strategy to support families with children aged 0-8 years. Families First links early intervention and prevention services and community development programs. These form a comprehensive service network providing wide-ranging supports to help families raise healthy well adjusted children, connect with each other for support and to prevent problems before families find themselves in crisis. The Families First service networks are planned at the local level to ensure that services are relevant to local families and can be adapted to their changing needs. Families First is an inter-agency strategy that is delivered by five departments, including the Departments of Community Services, Education and Training, Ageing, Disability and Homecare, Housing and NSW Health with The Cabinet Office coordinating the program. The budget which totals **\$22.92 million** for 2002-03 will be allocated across NSW Health (Area Health Services), The Cabinet Office and the Department of Community Services

Over the next **four years**, **\$117.5 million** is to be spent on Families First.

Families First is currently operating in 11 of 16 areas across New South Wales, with the remaining five areas starting in 2002. Families First is improving support for families in a variety of ways:

- ◆ by providing extra early childhood nurses who are able to contact more families with newborn babies and support them in their home;

- ◆ through volunteers providing practical help and advice to families with very young children in many communities;
- ◆ by employing Family Workers to help parents increase their parenting skills;
- ◆ by providing more playgroups for families which are run by early childhood trained staff;
- ◆ improving access to information on parenting;
- ◆ through more community projects where families have improved access to the services they need and more opportunities to be supported by other families;
- ◆ providing services for Aboriginal, non-English speaking and young parents; and
- ◆ improving communication between services that support families, particularly those families with more complex needs.

The Office of Children and Young People (OCYP) in The Cabinet Office coordinates the development of policies and programs which affect the lives of children and young people in New South Wales. The work of OCYP is directly focused on furthering the Government's broader social justice objectives by focusing on the needs of a key section of the community, children and young people under 25 years of age.

In July 2001 the New South Wales Government launched **Better Futures: An Action Framework for Vulnerable Young People in New South Wales**. Its central messages are that all young people should have the opportunity to lead rewarding and positive lives, and that there are practical things that government, families and communities can do, working together, that can be helpful in minimising risk for vulnerable young people and in building resilience.

Part of this Strategy, the **Better Futures Regional Strategy**, has received **\$1.31 million** funding under the 2002-03 budget. The Strategy will focus on communities where young people are more vulnerable, helping these communities to reduce risk factors for young people and better meet their needs. Some strategies will work through universal approaches, while others will have an emphasis on providing assistance to more vulnerable young people. Evaluation will be used to inform communities of what is working and to measure outcomes and outputs against performance measures.

The Strategy will be implemented through joint regional planning by a wide range of agencies to identify needs, current services and gaps in provision for young people. **\$8.6 million** over 4 years has been allocated to facilitate this process. New funds will be distributed regionally based on young people's population. Other factors which will be taken into account when determining where to allocate resources include rurality and socio-economic status; schooling issues such as literacy, numeracy and retention rates; and issues such as juvenile justice rates and child protection notifications.

NSW Government's Youth Partnerships Initiative: The Youth Partnerships Initiative is a strategy to work with young people in their local communities. It builds on the Government's commitment in **Focus on Young People – the NSW Youth Policy**, to encourage young people to become actively involved in their communities. It is designed to tap into their aspirations and creative ideas, and involve them in addressing their problems and issues. It has been agreed that the funding for this project in 2002-03 will be based on agency contributions outside the budget process, including a contribution from Premier's Department. While details of contributions are to be determined, the estimated expenditure for 2002-03 is around **\$250 000**.

The Youth Partnerships Initiative mobilises resources from a range of funding sources, to fund projects which are:

- ◆ innovative;
- ◆ strategic;
- ◆ sustainable and likely to endure;

It also encourages young people, in partnership with business, government and their local community, to develop innovative, strategic and sustainable local projects;

The program focuses on three key issues:

- ◆ preparing young people for work;
- ◆ providing young people with a safe environment in which to live, and access to community space and facilities;
- ◆ assisting young people address issues such as rights and responsibilities as citizens and self-esteem.

Over the last 12 months funds have been brokered to assist a wide range of projects including the construction of the Parkside Youth Centre in Gosford, the Worldskills National Finals in Newcastle and the 'Safe Chiks' young women's safety initiative in Manly.

The **Department of Community Services (DoCS)** main role is assisting and providing support and protection for children and young people in our community, and to provide responsive services to help families and communities within New South Wales. The activities of the Department include child protection, assisting families to protect and care for their children, providing accommodation and support services for young people who live away from their families or who are homeless or in crisis, supporting vulnerable people, regulating childcare, and coordinating services for people affected by disasters.

In 2002-03, **\$641.125 million** has been allocated to the Department of Community Services to meet the Government's commitment to provide support and protection to children, and to help families. This funding will be expended under four program areas, as follows:

A total of **\$170.380 million** will be allocated to **Prevention Services**, incorporating Children's Services, Family Services, Families First – Connecting Families and Community; Youth Development, Parenting Services, Community Development and Support Services, and Essential Concessions. Key objectives of these services include:

- ◆ Planning and provision of funds towards the delivery of early childhood and related services for children, including pre-schools and day care centres, vacation care, licensing of child care services, youth development, monitoring and evaluation of compliance with legislation and standards covering those services; Provision of support for community development and support services through Neighbourhood Centres or Family Resource Centres funded by the Community Services Grants Program and administration of essential concessions to assist families in times of temporary need; Effective prevention services support, family education and assistance to communities to build their capacity for life management.

- ◆ Support and assistance to children, adolescents and families under stress or in crisis; To support and assist people and families so as to be able to care for themselves and their children, provide young people with opportunities for self-development, and to reduce the isolation of people in communities by increasing their ability to engage in community activities.

In 2002-03, **\$131.338 million** will be allocated to **Early Intervention**, incorporating Family and Personal Support Services, Alcohol and Drug Abuse Prevention, Supported Accommodation Assistance, Domestic Violence Support Services, and Natural Disaster Assistance. Key objectives of these services are:

- ◆ To provide support services to children, young people and families at risk of involvement with alcohol and drugs; Early intervention support services to families, children and young people who are at risk of abuse or family breakdown; and provide a range of support services to women and children escaping domestic violence; To provide transitional support and accommodation services to children, young people, women and men; To provide immediate and long-term assistance to families and communities affected by natural and other disasters; To plan and provide funding to non-government agencies to deliver a range of support services to children, young people and families across New South Wales.
- ◆ To provide early intervention services that support families, men, women and children and prevent them moving into crisis; Provision of support for organisations that assist vulnerable children, young people, men and women; Provision of transitional support and accommodation services; Statewide coordination and provision of disaster welfare assistance to people who experience disadvantage due to natural disasters.

A total of **\$128.270 million** will be allocated to **Intensive and Statutory Intervention Services**, including Child Protection Services. The key objectives of these services are to provide intensive intervention and statutory services to protect children from risk and harm, to implement a range of child protection initiatives that comply with requirements of the new legislation for the care and protection of children, to support families in the care for their children, notification, investigation and intervention in respect of children in need of protection or at risk of harm and licensing and management of carers.

A total of **\$185.784 million** will be allocated to **Out-of-Home Care and Adoption Services**, incorporating Out-of-Home Care, and Adoption Services. The key objectives of these services are:

- ◆ To provide alternative care options for children unable to live at home; To ensure that young people have the support and skills they need for independent living following a period in care; To plan and provide funding to non-government agencies to deliver a range of accommodation and support services to children and young people across New South Wales; To assist people to adopt children, young people and adults, from within and outside Australia.
- ◆ To provide information and assistance to people wishing to contact their natural parents.
- ◆ Provision of a range of out of home care options, such as foster care and residential care, for children separated from their parents; Monitoring and review of placements, licensing and management of carers; Provision of support to young people who are leaving or who have left care. Provision of services to effect the adoption of children by families that takes into account the needs of the child that meet legislative requirements and provision of information about adoptions.

The Joint Working Party examining the workload of Department of Community Services, chaired by Mrs Kibble, has provided preliminary advice to the Government, supporting provision of additional resources to support frontline child protection services. The Government has agreed to work with the Public Service Association immediately on a package which will include the allocation of additional staff and changes to work practices to facilitate the better use of existing and additional resources.

The Commission for Children and Young People is an independent organisation established in 1999 that reports directly to the New South Wales Parliament. The Commission is committed to working with others to make New South Wales a better place for children and young people. The Commission brings about change for children and young people by influencing the work and activities of others. The work of the Commission is aimed at:

- ◆ encouraging the participation of children and young people in decision making that affects their lives;
- ◆ strengthening the connectedness of children and young people with their families, schools and their communities;
- ◆ promoting and monitoring the well-being of children and young people;
- ◆ promoting and monitoring the safety and welfare of all children and young people in New South Wales.

The Commission works in partnership with both children and young people, and those relevant policy and service system agencies within and outside government, in its endeavour to make New South Wales a better place for children and young people. The Commission works with the Departments of Education and Training; Ageing, Disability and Home Care; Community Services; Juvenile Justice; Health; Aboriginal Affairs; Sport and Recreation; Attorney General's Department; NSW Police Service and The Cabinet Office. Total expenses to be funded for 2002-03 will be **\$5.611 million**. Key initiatives during 2002-03 include:

- ◆ continued implementation of a participation strategy which ensures views of children and young people in key areas are available to the public and decision makers through information resources;
- ◆ continuing to ensure the participation of children and young people in the Commission's work through the Young People's Reference Group, ensure local councils and non government organisations have information on the benefit of participation of children and young people in their activities;
- ◆ developing and piloting curriculum materials for primary schools on children's leadership, participation and relationships and organisations that can help them.

The Department of Sport and Recreation has allocated **\$79,000** towards the ongoing operation of the **NSW Playground Advisory Service**. The Advisory Service will provide advice and support to local councils, schools, childcare facilities and other organisations responsible for children's play areas **regarding appropriate design and construction to ensure safe and welcoming play environments for young children**.

Sydney Water Corporation's Equity and Diversity Strategy received enhanced funding. The strategy aims to create ongoing employment opportunities and retention strategies for minority and disadvantaged groups. The Strategy will ensure Sydney Water's workforce population reflects the external labour market and the community it serves; and respect and value the diversity of Sydney Water's employees. Total expenses in 2002-03 are estimated to be **\$750,000**. As part of this overall strategy The **Youth Employment Strategy** aims to ensure the Corporation's workforce population reflects the external labour market and the community it serves and increases the organisation's innovative capacity. This will allow Sydney Water to attract and retain youth to maintain a balanced workforce profile and to meet the future needs for key positions and skill requirements within the Corporation. Total expenses in 2002-03 are estimated to be **\$307,200**.

The **Office of the Children's Guardian** will receive an increase of **\$143,000** to its maintenance base to assist with the introduction of permanency planning initiatives in the Children and Young Persons (Care and Protection) Act 1998. Total funding of **\$2.576 million** will be allocated to the Office in 2002-03. The Office of the Children's Guardian will work with children and young people, families and carers, community based organisations and government departments to improve out-of-home care for children and young people in New South Wales. This is to ensure children and young people in care have a stable placement that offers long term security.

PlanningNSW works to enable sustainable economic and jobs growth in the right location, to protect natural and cultural values and to plan for diverse, equitable and pleasant neighbourhoods which reflect community needs and aspirations. In this way, the Department fosters outcomes in the social, economic and natural environment which are essential to creating the longer term strategic environment in which the Governments social justice objectives can be delivered.

The **Area Assistance Scheme (AAS)** involves a partnership between the New South Wales Government, local councils and the community in developing, funding and managing community projects. The Scheme focuses on areas that are experiencing significant social and economic stress and change. Priority is given to innovative programs that meet community needs and which build local community capacity. In 2002-03 expenditure on the AAS will total more than **\$10.5 million**. At least **\$10.2 million** of this funding is allocated to community infrastructure initiatives through grants to community groups and to local government. The AAS program has been enhanced to meet the new Social and Community Services Award.

During 2002-03, **existing commitments to 150 projects** will account for the funding allocation to the value of **\$5.6 million**. AAS funded projects address a wide range of Government priorities where they are not the core responsibility of a mandated Government agency. Examples of priority outcome areas within these commitments are as follows:

- ◆ Children/youth/family: 65 projects valued at **\$1,723,847**
- ◆ Aboriginal: 20 projects valued at **\$740,137**
- ◆ Non English Speaking Background (NESB): 9 projects valued at **\$32,344**
- ◆ Women: 7 projects valued at **\$180,061**
- ◆ Older people & people with disabilities: 5 projects valued at **\$131,457**

The aim of the Area Assistance Scheme is to build stronger communities and community infrastructure. Other agencies involved in these activities, through partnerships and pick up program arrangements, include the Departments of Ageing, Disability and Home Care; Community Services; Health; Housing; Transport and the Ministry for the Arts.

The **Casino Community Benefit Fund** is forecast to spend approximately **\$9.475 million** on services or programs with a significant social justice component during 2002-03. The bulk of this expenditure is to be applied to projects that are directed to alleviating gambling-related harm. This is consistent with the Government's 1999 election commitment that the Government recognises the community's concern to foster responsible gaming.

Program outcomes will include new or enhanced information, counselling and other support programs or services to counter gambling-related problems in the State, and the provision of other services having an acknowledged community benefit.

The **Department of Fair Trading** serves consumers and traders in New South Wales through various consumer safeguards and advice to traders and businesses on fair and ethical practice. The Department provides information and assistance on consumer issues, motor vehicles, home building and renovations, credit, property and tenancy issues, cooperatives and business name registration through a 1300 number and a network of 23 Fair Trading Centres.

The Department has an overarching **Access and Equity Strategy** that ensures policies, programs and services are accessible and appropriate to disadvantaged sections of the community. The Strategy reinforces ongoing practices such as providing translated information and using interpreters when required, employing Aboriginal Customer Services Officers and providing services to non-metropolitan areas. It also incorporates change projects such as specific staff training, disability strategies, changes to language services, targeted community education materials and Aboriginal programs. The Department's major program initiatives include:

- ◆ the **Fair Trading Strategy Program**: In 2002-03, approximately **\$9.029 million** will be allocated towards enhance the development and performance of the marketplace as a fair and equitable trading environment for all consumers and traders in New South Wales;
- ◆ the **Consumer and Trader Services Program**: This will provide information and assistance to consumers, traders and the community on fair trading, home building and property services through a network of 23 Fair Trading Centres. This includes access to complaint resolution services, information on tenancy issues and advice on access to the Consumer, Trader and Tenancy Tribunal for the resolution of disputes. Total Expenses in 2002-03 will be **\$65.6 million**;
- ◆ the **Consumer, Trader and Tenancy Tribunal**: Under this program, approximately **\$22.3 million** will be allocated in 2002-03 to fund the operations of the Tribunal. The Tribunal will aim to provide an efficient, inexpensive and informal means of resolving consumer and tenancy disputes. The brief of the Tribunal has been expanded to also handle disputes in the home building industry. Disputes can be easily lodged in person at a range of locations or electronically.

In 2002-03, the Department of Fair Trading and the Rental Bond Board will allocate **\$6.4 million** to the **Tenants Advice and Advocacy Program**. Of this **\$3.2 million will be allocated to fund ten community based tenancy advisory services** located in regional areas.

This year's allocation represents a 53 percent increase in funding which will particularly benefit tenants in rural and regional areas and western and south western Sydney, as well as Aboriginal tenants and residential park residents. The three inner Sydney services will continue to be based within local communities, meeting the needs of tenants in those regions.

The Government has commenced a three-year, **\$13.2 million Human Services Agencies Better Service Delivery Program** to enhance communication and **improve client referral services** between government agencies providing community support services and Non Government Organisations. A common approach among government agencies and non government organisations for the collection, processing and recording of client information will result in better coordination of services to the community, consistency in the quality of services delivered, better use of government and non-government resources and improved client satisfaction.

The Human Services Agencies Better Service Delivery Program will improve client services by providing the necessary policies, business rules and common client referral and service directory tools needed to support government and non-government organisations. It will also deliver computers, communication links and training support to around 1,000 non-government organisations so that they can operate and communicate with government agencies in an increasingly electronic environment.

Implementation of the Better Service Delivery Program commenced in 2001 with the establishment of the Program in the Department of Information Technology and Management and development of support tools for common client referral and service directories. In 2002-03, **\$6.4 million** will be provided to commence the installation of computers and communications links in non-government organisations and implementation of the client referral and service directory tools in government and non-government organisations.

Premier's Department is undertaking a number of significant programs with social justice outcomes.

A Report on the International Year of Volunteers (IYV) 2001, which includes an **Action Plan for Volunteering**, is scheduled to be published in mid-2002. The Action Plan will include recommendations on strategies that could be undertaken by both the non-government and government sectors post-IYV. A number of IYV Demonstration Projects that received funding during 2001-02 are scheduled to be completed in 2002-03.

The four year **Strengthening Local Communities Strategy** provides assistance and practical support to projects designed to integrate government and community responses to key social, economic or environmental issues in priority urban and rural communities. Evidence from current projects suggest that a contribution is being made to positive outcomes in several local communities, including improvements in community safety, more accessible and effective human services, new employment opportunities, better use of public space, and a strengthening of the bonds and collaboration within neighbourhoods. The Strategy will have **\$330,000** to allocate in 2002-03. The New South Wales Government's web site communitybuilders.nsw aims to help local communities across the State share ideas on how to enhance and strengthen their community.

The Premier's Department coordinates communitybuilders.nsw as a joint Government and community project in partnership with a wide range of people involved in community building. This interactive site will continue to evolve to accommodate new ideas and developments in response to feedback and suggestions.

Through its agencies and programs the Government continues to invest strongly in local initiatives that enhance the quality of life of communities throughout metropolitan and regional New South Wales by providing **\$10 million** in 2002-03 to support **innovative responses to social, crime prevention and economic issues impacting on communities**.

Under this community renewal program, overseen by the Premier's Department, Government agencies are aligning their efforts with those of local government and non-government organisations to work with communities in developing strategies which address issues of priority. A strategic local action plan in Miller has been developed, following extensive consultation with service providers and community organisations. The action plan for Miller details wide-ranging strategies to resolve problems in the community. To implement priorities, **\$2.43 million** over three years has been provided.

Funded initiatives for Miller comprise: additional early intervention services and parenting initiatives; action to reduce recidivism rates of targeted youth serial offenders; improvements to public amenity; capital funds to provide facilities for services and community; intensive case management; training for longer term unemployed; and recreational and cultural programs for children and young people.

Capacity Building for Non Government Organisations (NGOs) administered by the Premier's Department, is identifying the key organisational development challenges which the State's NGO sector will have to address over the next 5 years. Proposals are being developed in the areas of information technology and management, financial management and fundraising, pooled purchasing of goods and services, governance, management support and organisational change. The project is part of the Government's commitment to build better relationships with the non-government sector, as well as assisting with building stronger NGOs as part of cross government efforts to strengthen the capacities of communities. This project will be allocated **\$60,000** from the Strengthening Communities core budget.

The Redfern-Waterloo Partnerships Project is a major place management initiative designed to comprehensively address interrelated social issues, in a partnership between government agencies, the local council, community organisations and the local indigenous and other communities. Key activities will focus on youth services, the redevelopment of neighbourhoods, family support, domestic violence, new employment and local enterprise opportunities, public amenity, homelessness and mental health. An allocation of **\$2.9 million** has been made available for this Project in 2002-03. Lead agencies include: Department of Community Services, Housing, Education and Training, NSW Police Service, Planning NSW and South Sydney Council.

NSW Treasury (Office of State Revenue) contributes to the Government's social justice objectives:

- ◆ by providing stamp duty exemptions/concessions to eligible first home buyers in New South Wales (First Home Plus);
- ◆ through making information and services to taxpayers more accessible by continuing to develop electronic service delivery options.

First Home Plus provides exemptions or concessions on transfer stamp duty and mortgage duty for first home buyers and builders in New South Wales. Eligible first home buyers do not pay transfer stamp duty or mortgage duty on first homes costing up to \$200,000 in the metropolitan area or up to \$175,000 in other parts of the State. Concessions on duty are on a sliding scale between \$200,000 and \$300,000 in the metropolitan area and between \$175,000 and \$250,000 in other parts of the State. The value of the stamp duty exemptions/concessions available under the **First Home Plus** initiative for 2002-03 is estimated to be **\$140 million**.

Strengthening Education and Training

The Government is committed to providing high quality school and vocational education and training options for all New South Wales citizens regardless of their background and circumstances. The Department of Education and Training supports this commitment by ensuring that all public school and TAFE students can reach the highest educational standards.

A high quality public education system is a key pillar of the Government's social justice strategy. Public education provides equality of opportunity for all. It can also be seen as preventative assistance by providing students with the knowledge skills and capabilities to live productive and fulfilling lives.

To implement this commitment the Government has increased total spending in 2002-03 for the education portfolio by 6.5 percent to over **\$8 billion**. The Department of Education and Training's **capital expenditure** for 2002-03 will be **increased by 16.5 percent** on last year's budget. Additionally, **recurrent funding for all schools** (i.e. both Government and non government) will be **increased by 6.2 percent** or **\$357.5 million** over last year's budget.

Key initiatives funded in the 2002-03 budget to strengthen education and training funded include:

- ◆ **Increasing Network Bandwidth:** This initiative will progressively upgrade bandwidth in schools and TAFE colleges, using available technology including government owned infrastructure and a range of telecommunications carriers. Total Expenses for 2002-03 comprise capital expenditure of **\$25 million** and recurrent expenditure of **\$31 million**;
- ◆ **E-learning for staff and students in schools and TAFE:** This project will provide e-mail accounts to teachers and students, filtered access to the Internet, discussion forums and Web hosting facilities to all schools and colleges. Remote access will be available from locations such as home or libraries. Total Expenses for 2002-2003 comprise recurrent expenditure of **\$12 million**;
- ◆ **Trial of a “priority action schools” program:** Conduct of a “priority action schools” program trial aims to provide intensive support to specifically targeted primary, high and central schools, designed to improve educational outcomes. Total Expenses for 2002-2003 comprise recurrent expenditure of **\$2.5 million**;
- ◆ **Pilot of reduced class sizes:** Conduct of a pilot program of reduced class sizes in designated schools in Kindergarten to Year 3. This program is to be independently monitored and evaluated. Total Expenses for 2002-03 are **\$2.5 million** for recurrent expenditure.

School maintenance programs will receive funding of \$179 million in 2002-2003. **Capital funding of \$300 million** has been allocated for the construction and enhancement of **school facilities**, an **increase of \$42.4 million** or **16.5 percent** on last year’s allocation. The allocation is part of a four year **\$1.1 billion Schools Improvement package**, which will not only provide for a significant upgrade of school accommodation, but will also provide for a major thrust in the expansion of Internet services for staff and students.

This year’s **capital funding program** will provide for the commencement of **41 new building projects** including the first stages of the Brisbane Waters and Tuggerah Lakes Colleges and the second stages of the Northern Beaches and Callaghan Secondary Colleges. Work will also commence on the second stages of the new or redeveloped schools at Jerrabomberra, Alford’s Point, Auburn West, Denistone East, Rockdale (St George School relocation) Seven Hills (North Rocks School relocation) and Blue Haven.

TAFE NSW capital programs will receive **\$72 million** for 2002-03. This program provides for the commencement of **27 new major projects** in 2002-03 including new facilities at Albury, Cootamundra, Dubbo, Grafton, Lightning Ridge, Meadowbank, Shellharbour and Wyong campuses, and refurbishment works at Gympie, Liverpool, and Ryde campuses.

In 2002-2003, the Government is providing over **\$60 million** for specific social justice initiatives which will support participation of children and families in education and training and over **\$1.1 billion** for social justice initiatives to strengthen education and training. Examples of these social justice programs which have been funded by the Department in 2002-2003 to meet special needs include:

- ◆ The Government’s **Literacy and Numeracy Strategy:** This focuses on new teaching programs and provides a framework of statewide testing at key stages. Testing includes English Language and Literacy Assessment, Secondary Numeracy Assessment Program, the Primary Writing Assessment Program, Count Me In Too and Counting On. This strategy also provides intensive programs for students requiring additional support. This strategy will improve the literacy and numeracy achievements of all groups of students as has been demonstrated by the performance of New South Wales in national and international benchmarking exercises. Total funding for 2002-03 is **\$124.6 million**;

- ◆ As part of the Literacy and Numeracy Strategy, the Government will allocate approximately **\$25 million** in 2002-03 for **Reading Recovery** to enable more teachers to be trained, additional schools to join the program and more young students to be helped with literacy. In 2002, the program is **available in 840 schools** and is taught by **932 teachers**. By the end of 2002, **more than 1500 teachers** will have been trained in **specialist Reading Recovery techniques** that can also be used in general classroom teaching. Reading Recovery provides targeted and intensive support to students with special learning needs;
- ◆ Over **\$6 million** will be allocated in 2002-03 under the **Links to Learning Community Grants Program** to assist young people at risk to remain in or return to education and training. The Department also offers projects to assist young Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in rural and regional areas;
- ◆ Approximately **\$85.6 million** will be allocated to support the intensive and post intensive **English as a Second Language programs** which provide intensive instruction for primary and secondary students to foster English language and literacy skills. These services include the English as a Second Language (ESL) Program, community language programs and community liaison and support to ensure equitable educational outcomes for these students;
- ◆ **TAFE NSW administration charge exemptions:** These apply to students who are low income earners in receipt of eligible pensions/allowances such as AUSTUDY, students enrolled in designated programs targeting key disadvantaged groups such as Indigenous students, students with disabilities, women and students from non English speaking backgrounds and students enrolled under the TAFE NSW Capped Scholarship Scheme. Under this Scheme, **all students receive \$200**, however, **students from rural and low socio-economic areas receive additional financial assistance of \$200 per annum** to meet travel and other costs associated with their studies;
- ◆ A total of **\$37.9 million** has been targeted for **Aboriginal students** in 2002-03. This includes Aboriginal training and employment programs, grants to schools under the Literacy and Numeracy strategy, funding to support over 300 Aboriginal Educational Assistants and 30 Aboriginal Community Liaison Officers;
- ◆ Approximately **\$72.4 million** will be allocated for **rural students in Government schools**. This includes funding to support nineteen Distance Education Centres, staffing betterments to smaller schools, isolated schools grants and staffing supplements for central schools;
- ◆ Over **\$11.8 million** will be provided for a wider range of placement and support options for **students with disruptive behaviour**;
- ◆ Funding of **\$1.8 million** in 2002-03 for the **TAFE Youth at Risk Program** will provide support for disadvantaged young people in the community by providing pathways for further education and employment;
- ◆ Over **\$4 million** for the **Student Assistance Scheme** will complement the Back-to-School allowance and assist needy students with education costs and covers items such as textbooks, stationery, excursions, uniforms and footwear;
- ◆ The **Living Away From Home Allowance** with a total expenditure of **\$0.836 million** will enable support for students who are required to live away from home to access a secondary school. The Allowance in 2002 is \$1,028 per student; and
- ◆ Over **\$0.4 million** funding for **Access Scholarships** for isolated students will assist boarding costs for isolated students eligible for enrolment at special government schools.

The successful **Computers in Schools** plan will be continued and expanded with recurrent funding of **\$201.4 million** in 2002-03, including enhancement funding of **\$55 million** for technology initiatives. The plan will also help disadvantaged and isolated students without access to information. Capital funding of **\$28 million** has also been provided. These initiatives include:

- ◆ **\$31 million** recurrent funding for **increased network bandwidth** (described above);
- ◆ **\$12 million** recurrent funding has also been provided for **E-learning for staff and students in schools and TAFE** (described above);
- ◆ **\$3.8 million** for a **Computer Skills Assessment Program** for all **Year 6 students** in Government schools. This was introduced in 2001 to ensure students have the necessary computing skills for secondary school;
- ◆ **\$4.3 million** for **Technology in Learning and Teaching (TILT)**. This program is continuing to provide teacher training in schools in the use of the latest computer technology.

Under the **Ready for Work Plan**, funding of **\$5.4 million** in 2002-03 has been provided to prepare students in Years 9 to 12 for work through the development of individual school to work plans.

In 2002-03, **more than \$14 million** will be allocated to support nearly 67 **Adult and Community Education (ACE)** organisations across New South Wales to ensure adults have access to high quality education and training opportunities. It is anticipated that more than 30,000 adult and community education courses will attract more than 400,000 enrolments throughout the State.

Approximately **\$6.8 million** will also be allocated to assist ACE organisations to develop and implement initiatives to encourage greater participation and maximise successful outcomes for geographically isolated communities, people from non-English speaking backgrounds, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, people with a disability, older people and those experiencing social and economic disadvantage, for example, people who are unemployed or with low literacy levels.

Programs which promote and develop **access to education and training** for groups in the community which are **under-represented** in vocational education and training will be allocated **\$8.2 million** in 2002-03. Programs include the **NSW Apprenticeships for People With Disabilities and the Mature Workers Program**. The **Group Training (Joint Policy) Program** assists a large number of disadvantaged groups to gain access to the labour market through apprenticeships and traineeships.

The **Back-to-School Allowance** will be provided to help parents in the purchase of clothing, shoes, books and equipping children for school. Total Expenses in 2002-03 are **\$56 million**.

Other agencies contributions to strengthening education and training are as follows:

The **Adult Training, Learning and Support (ATLAS) Program** assists young school leavers with a disability to access services that are appropriate to their needs. The enhancement funding to the Department of Ageing, Disability and Home Care will supplement existing ATLAS funding and will:

- ◆ Improve the movement of young people with a disability from existing Post School Options/ATLAS services to employment, supported employment or to lower cost Day Programs;
- ◆ Improve the quality and capacity of Day Programs to address the support needs of those moving from existing ATLAS services, older people who have not previously accessed Day Programs and people moving from school to post-school supports who cannot work; and

- ◆ Provide activities in Day Programs that meet the client's needs, in such a way as to minimise the development of challenging behaviours or family breakdown.

An additional **\$17 million** will be allocated to the ATLAS Program in 2002-03.

An allocation of **\$427.2 million** in 2002-03 to the **School Student Transport Scheme** has been made to Department of Transport. This provides free travel to and from school for eligible students on Government and private bus, rail, ferry services, school charter services, long distance coaches and in private vehicles where no public transport services exist.

Government and private bus, rail, ferry services, school charter services, long distance coaches and in private vehicles where no public transport services exist.

A total of **\$4.5 million** will be allocated by the **Roads and Traffic Authority** to **School Crossing Supervisors** in 2002-03. This promotes safety by helping infant and primary school children cross streets outside their school safely.

In 2001, the Government established an **Information and Communications Technology (ICT) Skills Action Plan** to focus on the development of ICT skills in government, industry and the community. The Plan focuses on 10 essential areas and captures new and ongoing programs both in the public and private sectors. The New South Wales Government and industry will spend more than **\$31 million** and **\$32 million**, respectively, over four years to deliver the program. Implementation of the Action Plan commenced in 2001 with the Department of Information Technology and Management establishing an ICT Skills Unit to work with industry and agencies to coordinate implementation of the plan, develop partnerships with business and the community and monitor ICT skills development across New South Wales.

In 2002-03 **\$740 000** will be spent in coordinating the **implementation of the ICT Skills program** including an ICT skills awareness campaign for specially targeted groups and establishing a computer re-use program utilising obsolete government computers. The Department will continue to work with the public and private sectors on new skills initiatives. These include increasing teacher training in technology, skills awareness and training for women, seniors, people from an indigenous background, people with a non-English speaking background and people with a disability, and increasing ICT training and cadetship opportunities.

The **National Parks and Wildlife Service** runs a number of programs that strengthen particular aspects of education and training in New South Wales. In 2002-03 these programs include:

- ◆ **Discovery Community Education Program** for families (**\$300,000** in 2002-03) to foster appreciation and understanding of nature and cultural heritage, and its importance to the community;
- ◆ **Farming for the Future Program** to encourage development of skills in property management planning, and implementation of biodiversity and cultural heritage conservation themes (**\$500,000** NHT grant);
- ◆ **Development of Nature Tourism Industry Education Kit on Biodiversity and Minimum Environmental Impact** (**\$80,000** in 2002-03) to build capacity in sustainable use of national parks and reserves.

Promoting Health

The New South Wales Government is improving the health of the residents of New South Wales by improving people's access to appropriate, high quality health services.

The Government is currently implementing substantial, comprehensive improvements across the State's health system. Teams of clinicians, managers and consumers are leading this unique and challenging process, which is firmly based on principles of clinical improvement. The change process, instigated under the banner of the **Government Action Plan for Health (GAP)**, aims to create an environment of greater certainty and stability for the New South Wales health system, build upon the strengths already present and promote best practice patient care.

The ultimate aim under GAP is to provide the people of New South Wales with a health service that is both consistent and more effective. To achieve this outcome, the Government has engaged stakeholders, including Aboriginal people and rural communities, in discussions about priorities and directions for health reform.

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

- ◆ 206 general hospitals;
- ◆ 18 rural hospitals and health services;
- ◆ 15 nursing homes;
- ◆ 280 community health centres;
- ◆ 500 early childhood centres.

On a daily basis:

- ◆ 3,600 people are admitted to NSW public hospitals for inpatient care;
- ◆ 17,000 people spend the day being treated in a hospital bed;
- ◆ 5,100 people every day (or around 4 people per minute) are seen in emergency departments;
- ◆ 58,000 non-inpatient services of care are provided; and
- ◆ 2,300 calls a day are responded to by the New South Wales Ambulance Service.

The injection of real growth funding, combined with new technologies and improved work practices, are helping to cope with the pressures of delivering health care to a growing and ageing population. The average length of stay has declined from 6.1 days in 1993-94 to a projected 5 days in 2001-02, a reduction of 18 percent over this period.

The percentage of booked surgery performed on a same day basis has steadily increased over the last five years, from 46 percent in 1995 to 60 percent in 2002-03. The percentage of booked patients admitted on the day of their surgery has also risen – from 40 percent in late 1997 to 82 percent as at November 2001.

In 2002-03, the budgeted recurrent expenditure for Health is **\$8.3 billion – an increase of 7.4 percent** over the previous year's Budget allocation. The 2002-03 Budget sees the achievement of the Government's commitment to the improvement of health services over a three year period that has

provided guaranteed and enhanced levels of funding for health care. The recurrent health expenditure in 2002-03 will exceed the Government's **\$8.1 billion** target by over **\$240 million** at **\$8.3 billion**. This level of recurrent health expenditure is **an increase of more than \$575 million** over the 2001-2002 Budget year. During 2001-02, the Government committed to an historic change in the provision of public liability indemnity cover for doctors working in public hospitals. From 1 January 2002, the Government will provide coverage for all Visiting Medical Officers (VMOs) who elect to be covered under the Treasury Managed Fund scheme for all work they perform on public patients in public hospitals in New South Wales.

Planned expenditure on health capital works in 2002-03 will be **\$504 million**. Major new projects and their 2002-03 allocations include:

- ◆ **Royal North Shore Hospital Redevelopment Strategy:** A total of **\$20 million** (comprising \$16.3 million on existing works in progress/planning and \$3.7 million of new planning funds) is allocated in 2002-03 toward the comprehensive redevelopment of the Royal North Shore Hospital campus, consolidating facilities into acute, subacute and support service zones around a central plaza. Implementation will be ongoing through to 2010 but the priority projects to be completed over the next five years are:
 - **Acute Services Zone:** Paediatrics, Obstetrics and Emergency Medicine (POEM) Department (in construction) the expansion of the POEM building to include a new Burns Unit and Phase 1 of the main block adjacent the current Emergency Department;
 - **Sub-Acute Zone:** Relocation of Community Health Services from Chatswood and Cremorne, and the relocation of dialysis and home training from Duntrim, Potts Point;
 - **Research Services:** Collocation of the currently scattered laboratories on the Royal North Shore Hospital campus;
 - **Support Services:** Relocation of the energy plant and engineering facilities, and the expansion of car parking within easy access to the hospital zones.

The redevelopment will free up extensive land along the Herbert Street frontage of the Royal North Shore Campus as well as the current health facilities at Chatswood, Cremorne and Potts Point. Revenue from the future sale, or lease, of these properties will support the redevelopment strategy. The total estimated cost of this project is **\$452 million** (including \$44.6 million in current works in progress and planning).

- ◆ **Bourke Hospital and Health Services:** In 2002-03, **\$2.9 million** will be allocated for the complete redevelopment of Bourke health services, including new construction. This project includes staff accommodation units. The total estimated cost of this project is **\$14.5 million**.
- ◆ **Hay Hospital and Health Services:** In 2002-03, **\$2.9 million** will be allocated for the complete redevelopment of Hay health services, including new construction. This project includes staff accommodation units. The total estimated cost of this project is **\$10.9 million**.
- ◆ **Henty Hospital and Health Services:** In 2002-03, **\$1.9 million** will be allocated for the collocation of new hospital and community health services with the existing aged care facility. This project includes integrated staff accommodation. The total estimated cost of this project is **\$5 million**.
- ◆ **Kyogle Hospital and Health Services:** In 2002-03, **\$1.9 million** will be allocated for the complete redevelopment of Kyogle health services, including new construction. This project includes refurbishment for community health and staff accommodation. The total estimated cost of this project is **\$10.4 million**.

- ◆ **Metropolitan Clinical Networks Infrastructure Strategy:** A total **\$10.5 million** will be allocated in 2002-03 for the establishment of sustainable clinical networks in the Greater Metropolitan Areas of Sydney, Newcastle and Wollongong through investment in clinical speciality services infrastructure. This program has been developed as an outcome of the Greater Metropolitan Services Implementation Group 2001 report. The total estimated cost of this project is **\$10.5million**.
- ◆ **Bathurst PACS Radiology:** A total of **\$0.5 million** will be allocated for the installation of a Picture Archive and Communication System (PACS) at Bathurst Base Hospital. This will be the first stage of a roll out of PACS across the Mid Western Area Health Service and will enable the hospital to move to digital x-ray, which can be transmitted to other hospitals and specialists' consulting rooms. Benefits to patients are immediate with 24-hrs availability of x-rays on line, improved efficiency and diagnostic accuracy, all contributing to improved patient outcomes. The total estimated cost of this project is **\$0.5 million**.
- ◆ **Hornsby Hospital Obstetric Paediatrics & Emergency:** In 2002-03, **\$1.5 million** will be allocated for new facilities for Obstetrics, Paediatrics and Emergency Services at Hornsby Ku-ring-gai Hospital. This project includes construction of a new two-storey facility, site infrastructure and demolition of existing buildings. The total estimated cost of this project is **\$16.4 million**.
- ◆ **Shellharbour Hospital Emergency:** In 2002-03, **\$0.5 million** will be allocated for the expansion of Emergency Services from 12 to 20 spaces by providing a new extension adjacent to the existing Emergency Department. The total estimated cost of this project is **\$5 million**.
- ◆ **Nepean Hospital Emergency:** In 2002-03, **\$1.8 million** will be allocated for the redevelopment and extension of the existing Emergency Department to meet expanding service needs. The works will be phased due to the need to work within the existing Department. The new extension and refurbished areas will accommodate acute treatment areas, paediatric treatment areas, shortstay/observation ward, administrative and public facilities. The total estimated cost of this project is **\$8.6 million**.
- ◆ **Liverpool Hospital Emergency:** In 2002-03, **\$1.4 million** will be allocated for the expansion of the existing emergency/trauma department within the Liverpool Hospital, the provision of additional space for paediatrics services and the relocation of pharmacy to the Don Everett Building. The total estimated cost of this project is **\$9.1 million**.
- ◆ **Blue Mountains Hospital:** In 2002-03, **\$1 million** will be allocated for a major redevelopment of clinical and inpatient units at the Blue Mountains District Anzac Memorial Hospital by consolidating the ward areas, relocation and expansion of the dental unit, a new mortuary, an upgrade of outreach and clinical support services located on campus, engineering works, provision of adequate parking, fire safety upgrade and the construction of a new helipad. The total estimated cost of this project is **\$6 million**.
- ◆ **Mental Health Accelerated Accommodation Program:** A total of **\$4 million** will be allocated for the development of additional mental health inpatient beds within surplus accommodation to meet mental health service needs. Existing under utilised ward accommodation will be refurbished and made available to fast track the increase in accommodation. The total estimated cost of this project is **\$4 million**.

- ◆ **Point of Care Clinical Information System Pilot (PoCCS):** A total of **\$5 million** will be allocated for the implementation of PoCCS order management within a single teaching hospital to achieve safer, more efficient and better quality clinical care. Functionality will be deployed for presentation of patient diagnostic results at the point of care, automate test and service ordering and alert clinicians to any potential contraindication or adverse event. The total estimated cost of this project is **\$5 million**.
- ◆ **Milton-Ulladulla Hospital Redevelopment:** In 2002-03, **\$0.5 million** will be allocated for a major upgrade. This will integrate services including inpatient, birthing and operating suites, emergency, imaging, occupational therapy, kitchen and domestic services. The redevelopment will significantly improve functionality of the Milton-Ulladulla hospital. The total estimated cost of this project is **\$4.35 million**.

NSW Health's forward **Asset Acquisition Program** recognises a significant schedule of priority projects to be considered for introduction in future years. A systematic approach to pre planning work is incorporated within the 2002-03 program.

The Government is also continuing its commitment to a number of key **Area Health Service Asset Strategies**. The 2002-03 Budget allocates capital funds of:

- ◆ **\$4.5 million** as the first phases for the **Newcastle Strategy** (total estimated cost \$235 million) - involving the upgrade of Belmont and John Hunter Hospitals;
- ◆ **\$7.1 million** from the total estimated cost of \$178.5 million for the **Western Sydney Strategy** is allocated to Westmead Hospital;
- ◆ **\$58.4 million** out of an estimated total cost of \$206 million for the Central Coast Health Access Plan for the redevelopment of Gosford and Wyong hospitals and to provide facilities for the new Wyong Mental Health Unit;
- ◆ **\$32 million** for the **Illawarra Strategy** Stage 2 (total estimated costs \$109.3 million) for the development and upgrade of Shoalhaven and Wollongong (Hickman House) Hospitals;
- ◆ **\$16 million** from the **Macarthur Sector Strategy** (total estimated cost \$108.7 million) for the refurbishment of areas within existing buildings at Campbelltown Hospital;
- ◆ **\$38.4 million** from the **Resource Transition Program** (total estimated cost of \$395.4 million) for a comprehensive property and facility reform program to realign acute inpatient capacity, improve mental health services, aged care, rehabilitation and community health services for the Central Sydney Area Health Service.

Health Services in New South Wales are categorised under ten program areas for budget reporting purposes. Significant initiatives to be introduced across a range of programs in 2002-03 include:

- ◆ a major metropolitan planning initiative, led by clinicians, has resulted in enhancements of some **\$60 million** per annum being provided to meet a range of **specialist services**, such as severe burns, brain injury and spinal cord injury. Services such as cardiac, bone marrow transplantation and stroke units will be increased across the greater metropolitan area. Funding to district metropolitan hospitals will also be boosted to provide a greater range of health care services to their resident communities; and
- ◆ Under the **Rural Government Action Plan for Health**, there is additional new funding of **\$35 million** for rural health initiatives.

The programs and significant 2002-03 projects being undertaken within these program areas are:

(1) **Primary and Community Based Services:** The program entails the provision of health services to persons attending community health centres or in the home, including health promotion activities, community based women's health, dental, drug and alcohol and HIV/AIDS services. It also covers the provision of grants to Non-Government Organisations for community health purposes. Total Expenses in 2002-03: **\$731 million**. This program includes the delivery of the **Drug Summit Government Plan of Action** which in 2002-03 will involve some **\$38 million** of specific drug related programs. Details are outlined in the section relating to **Partnerships for change: the NSW Government and the Community working together to address the drug problem**.

A number of pilots of the **HEALTHshare** framework have been proposed. The Hunter Area Health Service has proposed an approach that packages together a range of integration models (a coordinated care trial, Maitland After Hours GP service and the Transitional Care Unit) as a preliminary step towards the share model. Next steps include the establishment of a joint planning group representing key stakeholders in the region and the identification of issues to be addressed under HEALTHshare.

The Far West Area Health Service pilot proposes the establishment of an integrated health planning and funding model incorporating funding, in the first instance, from the Commonwealth Department of Health and Ageing, the Far West Area Health Service, the Royal Flying Doctor Services, Home Care Service and Maari Ma Health Aboriginal Corporation in the Lower Western Sector (North) region.

The Central Coast Area Health Service has proposed the establishment of an integrated primary care service in the North Wyong sector. Key elements of the pilot include the integration of state and government funded health programs including GP services, allied health and community health services.

NSW Health is continuing to negotiate with the Commonwealth Government concerning their participation in the respective pilots.

An additional **\$16 million** has been made available for oral health services, exceeding the Government's April 2000 oral health commitment by **\$5 million**. The extra \$5 million provides for an additional 4,000 denture services to older persons across the State on an annual basis, increases the delivery of specialist oral health services and provides new funding for Aboriginal oral health care.

An additional **\$2 million** is allocated for **podiatry services**, providing an extra 40,000 podiatry occasions of service in the metropolitan area and 15,000 in rural areas.

(2) **Aboriginal Health Services:** The program covers the provision of supplementary health services to Aboriginal people, particularly in the areas of health promotion, health education and disease prevention. Total Expenses in 2002-03: **\$30 million**. A more detailed explanation of this program appears in the section entitled **Meeting the Needs and Aspirations of Aboriginal People**.

(3) **Outpatient Services:** Outpatient Services are those provided in outpatient clinics including low level emergency care, diagnostic and pharmacy services and radiotherapy treatment. Total Expenses in 2002-03: **\$808 million**.

In 2002-03 new and ongoing initiatives will include \$3 million to improve a range of paediatric care and clinical services provided by the Children's Hospital at Westmead, including speech pathologists and dieticians to fight child obesity and increase demand throughout the whole system for dialysis services.

(4) **Emergency Services:** The program covers the provision of emergency road and air ambulance services and treatment of patients in designated emergency departments of public hospitals. Total Expenses in 2002-03: **\$792 million**.

NSW Health and emergency medicine clinicians have been working on short and longer term means of meeting the increased demands for **emergency departments**. The strategies proposed have been able to be progressed through the **\$30 million** funding package over three years (2000-2003) provided to ease pressure on emergency departments.

The funding has been used to further improve discharge planning and bed management and to provide additional frontline resources for emergency departments. As a result, additional senior medical positions, nursing positions and clinical support positions have been created in New South Wales emergency departments.

\$10 million will be allocated to the **NSW Ambulance Service** to continue its implementation of the operational reforms identified by the Auditor-General, further building on its efficiency, operational effectiveness and improvements in response times.

(5) **Overnight Acute Inpatient Services:** Overnight Acute Inpatient Services relate to the provision of health care to patients admitted to public hospitals with the intention that their stay will be overnight, including elective surgery and maternity services. Total Expenses in 2002-03: **\$3,446 million**.

As part of the statewide **Intensive Care Service Plan**, which incorporates an agreed networking model for optimising use of Intensive Care Unit (ICU) beds, \$8.5 million has been allocated to fund the establishment of an additional 12 new ICU beds. These are to be located at Westmead (four), Wollongong and Royal Prince Alfred Hospitals (two at each) and at John Hunter, St George, Liverpool and Royal North Shore Hospitals (one each). This brings to 33 the number of ICU beds created since April 2000 and the total number of ICU beds to 451 across the health system, by 30 June 2003.

Ongoing initiatives in 2002-03 include **\$2.1 million** funding for the operational costs of the **twenty-five bed mental health inpatient unit** at Tweed Heads District Hospital and major redevelopment at **Tweed Heads and Murwillumbah Hospitals** at a cost of **\$6.5 million**.

The **Nursing Re-connect** strategy is designed to attract nurses who are not currently working in nursing back into the public health care system. Specifically, it will increase the size of the nursing workforce; reduce the number of positions actively being recruited; and have a mid-to-long term impact on the use of overtime and agency staff. The use of nurses attracted through this strategy will be primarily for this program area but will cover all programs where nurse requirements need to be addressed.

To fund the implementation of a **Universal Newborn Hearing Screening Program** across New South Wales, **\$8 million** will be made available on an ongoing basis. This program will utilise new technologies to test the hearing of every baby born in New South Wales from 1 December 2002. This will enable the early identification of newborns with significant hearing impairment and thereby ensure early treatment.

Additional resources will be provided to the **Australian Red Cross** to enhance its delivery of blood services within New South Wales and to fund additional supplies of Factor VIII and new supplies of Factor IX.

(6) **Same Day Inpatient Services:** Through this program health care is provided to patients who are admitted to public hospitals with the intention that they will be admitted, treated and discharged on the same day. Total Expenses in 2002-03: **\$486 million**.

In 2002-03 funding will be directed in part to addressing long term wait orthopaedic and ophthalmology patients, for example at Batemans Bay, Bega, Cooma, Wagga Wagga and Albury. Funding will also be provided in keeping with the strategy to promote the performance of surgical/medical procedures on the day that patients are admitted.

(7) **Mental Health Services:** This program relates to the provision of an integrated and comprehensive network of services by Area Health Services and community based organisations for people seriously affected by mental illnesses and mental health problems. It also involves the development of preventive programs which meet the needs of specific client groups. Total Expenses in 2002-03: **\$623 million**.

Further funding is provided for 2002-03 for **mental health services with the provision of an extra 226 beds**. This is on top of the 150 beds announced in 2000. Annual funding of \$20 million will enable the implementation of service network arrangements under the **Government Action Plan for Health** and the better utilisation of existing and new facilities for the benefit of mental health clients throughout the State. This enhanced funding means that around **300 new beds will be opened** in 2002-03.

(8) **Rehabilitation and Extended Care Services:** In this program health care services are provided for persons with long-term physical and psycho-physical disabilities and for the frail-aged. Services provided are coordinated with those provided by other agencies and individuals. Total Expenses in 2002-03: **\$897 million**.

In 2002-03 new and ongoing initiatives will include **\$3.5 million** to improve the access and provision of **aged care and rehabilitation services** on the Mid North Coast.

(9) **Population Health Services:** Population Health Services are those health services targeted at broad population groups including environmental health protection, food and poisons regulation and monitoring of communicable diseases. Total Expenses in 2002-03: **\$202 million**.

Controls on the point-of-sale advertising of tobacco products are being strongly enforced and more extensive compliance monitoring of illegal sales to minors is being undertaken. A NSW Tobacco Control Network has been established jointly with key Non-Government Organisations and an **Environmental Tobacco Smoke Campaign** commenced in 2001-02 with **\$2.4 million** over four years, designed to minimise young children's exposure to passive tobacco smoke.

Funding over four years will be provided to complete the development of systems and services to **manage lead exposure issues in Broken Hill**.

(10) **Teaching and Research:** In the Teaching and Research Program professional training is provided for the New South Wales health system. The program also includes strategic investment in research and development to improve the health and well being of the people of New South Wales. Total Expenses in 2002-03: **\$328 million**.

The Nursing Scholarship Fund demonstrates the Government's recognition of the financial outlay required for nursing education and also the particular challenges faced by nurses practising in rural and remote areas of the State. A total of **\$1.1 million** has been awarded to **449 nursing students** for **tertiary study** in 2002.

Over **\$20 million** is provided annually on **nursing workforce initiatives** for a range of educational initiatives including transitional support for new graduates, orientation programs for specialty clinical areas, mental health nursing grants, and a range of special initiative funding including mentor programs, graduate certificate courses and specialty short courses provided by the NSW College of Nursing and Trainee Enrolled Nurse Education through TAFE.

As part of the Government's initiative for implementing **BioFirst**, the Government's Biotechnology Strategy, \$36 million has been allocated over five years. In 2002-03, a total of \$7.4 million is being utilised by NSW Health to: establish a **St Vincent's research and biotechnology precinct**; develop the **Millennium Research Institute Hub at Westmead**; enhance existing research capabilities through the establishment of research clusters; provide seed funding to promote the convergence between biotechnology (including bioinformatics) with other technologies, with a particular focus on information technology; and increase the State's strengths and capabilities in bioinformatics. In the medium to longer term this infrastructure funding for research has the potential to find cures and therapies for a range of diseases including cancer and heart diseases.

The **Health Care Complaints Commission**:

- ◆ facilitates the maintenance of standards of health services in New South Wales;
- ◆ promotes the rights of clients in the New South Wales health system by providing clear and easily accessible mechanisms for the resolution of complaints;
- ◆ facilitates the dissemination of information about clients' rights throughout the health system;
- ◆ provides an independent mechanism for assessing whether the prosecution of disciplinary action should be taken against health practitioners who are registered under health registration Acts.

The following programs will be implemented by the Commission during 2002-03:

- ◆ decreasing the turn-around time for investigations. This involves working with professional registration boards, the Department of Health and the Area Health Services to achieve this goal. Total Expenses in 2002-03: **\$700 000**;
- ◆ expanding the Patient Support Service to rural and regional areas. The Community Justice Service within the NSW Attorney General's Department is assisting the Commission to provide local and timely dispute resolution services. Total Expenses in 2002-03: **\$500 000**; and
- ◆ strengthening capacity to deal with complaints through the development of a comprehensive complaint handling system. Total Expenses in 2002-03: **\$200 000**.

Providing Access to Justice and a Safe Community

The New South Wales Government is committed to improving the administration of justice and improving community access to the justice system for the people of New South Wales. A just society requires a legal system and laws that are based on the principles of equity, access, participation, rights and continuing responses by Government to changing social trends.

An increased focus on working with the community to reduce crime, visible front-line policing and a range of policing and corrective services initiatives will work towards making New South Wales a safer community. The Government will also provide quality juvenile justice services that are diversionary and community based.

The Department of Juvenile Justice serves the community by providing quality services to young people who have committed criminal offences, to maximise their capacity and opportunity to choose positive alternatives to offending behaviour. These young people include those who are placed in a juvenile detention centre pending appearance at court and those sentenced by a court to community based supervision or to a period of custody in a juvenile detention centre.

The provision of juvenile justice services in New South Wales is clearly focused on diversionary and community based services. However, those juveniles who become repeat offenders or commit serious offences and are sentenced to detention are required to be held in juvenile justice centres providing humane, developmental and abuse-free custodial environments. The Department's estimated expenses for the 2002-03 financial year are **\$123.2 million**.

The Department's **Pre-Employment Skills Training** for juvenile offenders will receive enhancement funding of **\$ 0.8 million**.

Several programs and initiatives are in place to reduce the over-representation of Aboriginal young people in the juvenile justice system. These projects have a total funding of **\$1.4 million in 2002-03** and include:

- ◆ an Aboriginal over-representation Strategic Plan;
- ◆ Bail Accommodation Support;
- ◆ Local Offender and Employment & Skills Training Programs.

The 2002-03 budget year will see the maintenance of Youth Justice Initiatives, including accommodation support services, sessional supervision, graffiti project and the programs mentioned below. A total of **\$6.7 million** will be allocated to Youth Justice Initiatives including:

- ◆ **Post Release Support Program:** Ten services providing post release support throughout metropolitan, regional and rural New South Wales. Three new Post Release Support Services have commenced in 2002 - one in Western Sydney and two others supporting clients exiting detention in Grafton and Dubbo. The new model for Post Release Support includes a brokerage component designed to address the needs of clients from rural and remote areas. A total of **\$967,400** will be allocated to this program in 2002-03.
- ◆ **Pre-employment Skills Training:** The Pre-employment Skills Training and Mentor Support Program is designed to increase the employment prospects of Juvenile Justice clients by linking these clients with providers of employment, education and training services. A total of **\$800,000** will be allocated to this program in 2002-03.
- ◆ **Mentor Program:** The Mentor Program aims to support clients on community supervision through matching them with an adult who has the personal and / or cultural skills to address their support needs. A total of **\$210,000** will be allocated to this Program in 2002-03.

A total of **\$22.7 million** has been budgeted over three years (2001-02 to 2003-04) for the construction of a new **Young Women's Juvenile Justice Centre** to be located at Lidcombe.

A total of **\$35.38 million** has been budgeted over four years (2001-02 to 2004-05) for the redevelopment of the existing **Reiby Juvenile Justice Centre (\$22.1 million)** located at Campbelltown, and for upgrading of **Cobham Juvenile Justice Centre** located at St Mary's (**\$13.28 million**).

A comprehensive physical and mental health survey of young offenders held in detention will be undertaken. A total of **\$0.25 million** will be allocated to this program.

The "NSW Drug Summit Government Plan of Action" specified a number of projects that the Department of Juvenile Justice is implementing. These total **\$3.9 million** and are detailed in the section entitled **Partnerships for Change: the NSW Government and the community working together to address the drug problem**.

The **Department of Sport and Recreation** has allocated **\$300,000** to the **Youth in Sport** program for 2002-03. The Youth in Sport program is a partnership between Police and Community Youth Clubs and the Department of Sport and Recreation. The program includes sport and recreation programs in 16 areas throughout the state with a strong focus on crime prevention.

To ensure that Government responds to changing social needs the **Attorney General's Department** will fund ongoing justice policy and planning. Sound legislation, help in accessing the legal system, removing inefficiencies and the pursuit of strategies for conflict resolution outside the court system, are all part of the Government's approach. The development of improved justice options, anti-crime interventions, initiatives to provide for safer communities and increasing support for victims of crime are other key issues.

The **Beat Graffiti Project** is funded under the **Justice Policy and Planning Program**. Funding of **\$422,000** in 2002-03 has been provided to the Attorney General's Department to increase graffiti prevention activities. Up to **250 additional projects** will be funded in high priority areas across New South Wales. In addition, vocational skills development and training opportunities will be provided to young people through councils and community organisations to address local crime and community safety concerns associated with graffiti.

A total of **\$600,000** funding is being provided in 2002-03 to enable the Attorney General's Department to continue the operation of the **Legal Resource and Referral Centre**. This initiative is designed to deliver whole of government legal information, assistance and referral service to the people of New South Wales.

Improvements will be made to a number of courthouses to modernise facilities, provide a "single counter" facility and seamless access to the Supreme, District, Local Courts and other courts and tribunals. These include:

- ◆ **Courthouse at Blacktown:** During 2002-03, the Attorney General's Department will commence a three-year program of works to upgrade and enhance the Blacktown Courthouse, including the construction of an additional court. The total cost of the project is estimated at **\$4 million** and **\$400,000** will be allocated in 2002-03;
- ◆ **Courthouse at Nowra:** The Attorney Generals' Department will commence the construction of a new District (Criminal) court and associated infrastructure at Nowra. The new work will replace the existing small local court. The replacement court will provide modern support facilities, and will better serve the population of Kiama and adjacent South Coast districts. It is expected the project, which has an estimated **total cost of \$4.8 million**, will be completed in the 2004-05 financial year. In 2002-03, **\$300,000** will be allocated to this initiative;
- ◆ **Courthouse at Bankstown:** The construction of a new four-court complex with associated facilities is planned to commence in 2002-03 at Bankstown. The complex will be located on the present court site, and will incorporate the area presently occupied by the Police Service. The proposed court complex will be able to accommodate District as well as local criminal and civil matters. The project has an estimated **total cost \$16 million** and is due for completion in the 2005-06 financial year. In 2002-03, **\$500,000** will be allocated to this project;
- ◆ **Courthouse at Mt Druitt:** The construction of a new courthouse at Mt Druitt is planned to commence in 2001-02 to serve the growing districts of Mt Druitt/St Mary's in the North Western area of Sydney. At present, these areas are served by facilities, which are far removed from the present population. The three-year project is estimated to cost **\$9.2 million in total**, with **\$750,000** being allocated in 2002-03;

- ◆ **Metropolitan Children's Court:** Funding is being provided for the continuation of the construction of a new Metropolitan Children's Court at Parramatta. The six-court facility will provide discrete care and criminal courts, with holding areas and other necessary facilities. The Court will form part of a justice precinct being developed on the adjacent Parramatta Hospital site. A total of **\$4.1 million** will be allocated to this project in 2002-03;
- ◆ **Children's Court at Worimi:** Funding is being provided for the continuation of the construction of a new Children's Court at Worimi in the Hunter District. The two-court facility and associated facilities will provide for children's care and criminal matters. A total of **\$1.5 million** will be allocated to this project in 2002-03.

The core business of the **Department of Corrective Services** is providing custodial and offender management services in carrying out the orders of the court, while adding value by delivering offender development programs which seek to reduce rates of re-offending. The mission of the Department of Corrective Services is "To reduce re-offending through secure, safe and humane management of offenders."

For the 2002-03 financial year, the Department of Corrective Services' Consolidated Fund recurrent budget allocation of \$515.362 million (net cost of services **\$581.789 million**) provides funding for the custody and security of inmates in correctional centres, a court escort and security service, and the supervision of offenders in the community.

The 2002-03 Consolidated Fund Capital budget allocation of **\$117.122 million** covers provision for major new works (ie. Electronic Case Management, Long Bay Hospital Redevelopment and additional inmate accommodation relating to Bail reform) and for works in progress including Western Region Correctional Centre, Mental Health Assessment Units, Kempsey Correctional Centre, Parklea Remand Centre, and the Dillwynia Women's Correctional Centre at South Windsor.

Within the Program, **Assessment, Classification and Development of Inmates**, provision has been made in 2002-03 for the Department's initiative relating to the establishment of **Mental Health Assessment Units** at Mulawa Correctional Centre for women and the Metropolitan Remand and Reception Centre (MRRC) for men, which will assist mental health professionals to provide appropriate assessment and treatment within a therapeutic environment. These units will be jointly operated by the Department of Corrective Services and Corrections Health Service of the Department of Health. A total of **\$0.85 million** will be allocated to this project in 2002-03.

An **additional \$5.1 million** will be allocated to provide for the growth of offenders under community supervision (from 21,518 in 2001-02 to 22,265 in 2002-03) and for the increase in the number of pre-sentence reports to the courts (from 28,000 in 2001-02 to 32,000 in 2002-03) under the **Alternatives to Custody** Budget Paper Program.

A total of **\$800,000** will be allocated to **Throughcare Community Grants** in 2002-03. This will fund increases to existing community grants to non-government agencies which support rehabilitation both during and after inmates' periods of incarceration.

The **Department of Industrial Relations** is responsible for the enforcement of rights and obligations arising from New South Wales industrial laws, in particular, the Industrial Relations Act 1996.

The Department has adopted a broad approach in ensuring compliance with New South Wales industrial laws and awards. Education strategies, industry targeting, general investigations and individual complaint handling are employed concurrently to optimise compliance and understanding of employer obligations.

In March 2002, the Department increased the number of inspectors from 43 to 56, following a comprehensive review of services and functions of the Client Services Division. The **projected workplace visits** for 2002-03 and 2003-04 will be 9,000 per year.

The **Department of Gaming and Racing** is continuing the “**No More. It’s the Law**” responsible serving and drinking program. As in past years, more than **\$100,000** will be expended on this program during 2002-03. This is in keeping with the Government’s 1999 election commitment to expand the joint government-liquor industry education program.

The key result areas for the **NSW Police Service** are crime prevention and detection, meaning all the activities of the police have a social justice outcome. The total Police budget will increase from **\$1.6 billion** in 2001-02 to almost **\$1.8 billion** in 2002-03.

Supplementary funding of **\$150,000** has also been provided in 2002-03 for interpreter services for the Cabramatta Anti-Drug Strategy.

The NSW Police Service will have an increased focus on visible front-line policing. This will be assisted by the restructure of the NSW Police Service, which will reduce the number of Region Commands from eleven to five and **redeploy up to 1,000 police to Local Area Commands**. In addition to the number of police available to respond to crime, the Police have measures in place to incorporate community concerns into the planning process that determines how those police will be employed. Local police, especially the Community Safety Officer at each Local Area Command, liaise closely with Local Government Councils to ensure that Police plans complement broader government crime prevention strategies.

There is a strong focus on issues of cultural and linguistic diversity through such programs as the **Police and Community Training Program**. This Program aims to reduce crime by bringing together police, youth and community groups to identify innovative strategies, enhance stakeholder awareness of policing and provide training opportunities. Ethnic Community Liaison Officers are also employed to promote interaction with police, equality and justice for multicultural communities. This program encourages communities to work with police to determine how to effectively police their own neighbourhoods, building networks between police and leaders of culturally and linguistically diverse groups and institutions such as churches and schools. A total of **\$486,000** will be allocated to this program in 2002-03.

The **Workplace Training Program** provides innovative and customised learning opportunities to facilitate culturally appropriate policing services. The Workplace Training Program is funded to **\$224,000** in 2002-03.

The **Police and Community Training project** receives funding under the Community Partnerships Scheme. The concept of the project was identified in a report by the then Ethnic Affairs Commission, Police and Ethnic Communities, in November 1994. In 1996 the NSW Police Service and the Ethnic Affairs Commission signed a Memorandum of Understanding which launched the first stages of the project. The project focuses on providing an effective ‘whole community’ framework for finding solutions for local issues relating to service delivery, crime and communication between service providers and service recipients. The Community Relations Commission provides **\$30,000** a year to the program through the Community Partnerships Scheme.

Partnerships for change: the NSW Government and the community working together to address the drug problem

Following the Drug Summit in May 1999, the Government committed an additional **\$176 million** for capital and recurrent projects over four years to implement its **Drug Summit Plan of Action**.

In 2002-03 **close to \$52.2 million** is projected to be spent on Drug Summit projects.

In addition to Drug Summit expenditure, on 27 March 2001, the Premier announced a four year, **\$18.8 million** comprehensive package of measures to tackle drugs and drug related crime in **Cabramatta** and across the State. In 2002-03, **\$4.7 million** has been allocated to these projects.

The additional Drug Summit and Cabramatta funding brings projected expenditure by New South Wales Government agencies on drug related programs, to around **\$500 million** over the four years to June 2003.

Key areas where the extra funding has been allocated in 2002-03 are as follows:

- ◆ **\$38.5 million** for expanding health care **treatment**;
- ◆ **\$7.6 million to help families and young people through prevention and early intervention programs**. Support services for young people, including juvenile justice detainees, have also been enhanced;
- ◆ **\$2.8 million for education in schools and community action** including establishment of Community Drug Action Teams and public education;
- ◆ **\$6.5 million** to drug programs and facilities in **correctional facilities**;
- ◆ **\$1.5 million to law enforcement and the justice system**;

Over **\$18 million** will be distributed to Area Health Services **to expand and improve treatment programs** such as methadone, buprenorphine and naltrexone, and includes new places, case management and counselling for clients. Over **2,800 extra treatment places** have been created since the Drug Summit.

Funds will also allow:

- ◆ continued expansion of the home detoxification program with an **extra 2000 people** receiving detoxification treatments at home or as outpatients since the Drug Summit;
- ◆ continuation of services provided by the eight new drug and alcohol counsellors already appointed in rural Area Health Services, the New England and Mid North Coast multi purpose centres, and the Illawarra outreach service, with **over 150 000 extra drug and alcohol counselling sessions** having occurred in New South Wales since the Drug Summit;
- ◆ continued training for General Practitioners, pharmacists and specialists in drug treatment pharmacotherapies with over **1,000 GPs to receive training** or related support in 2002-03.

In 2002-03, recurrent funds of **\$1.6 million** have been provided for the **Lismore detoxification centre**, opened in 2001.

In 2002-03, **\$1.7 million** recurrent has been allocated to the **new 15-bed detoxification** unit to deliver drug and alcohol inpatient and out-patient programs in the grounds of **Nepean Hospital** opened in May 2002.

Recurrent funding of **\$1.3 million** has been allocated to the recently opened **15-bed drug treatment unit at Wyong Hospital**. The services include pharmacotherapy treatment, inpatient detoxification and out-patient detoxification treatment, counselling and referral services. The Wyong and Nepean facilities will provide treatment for up to 900 people annually.

In 2002-2003 in the Justice area, five programs will continue under the **Commonwealth / State National Illicit Drugs Strategy Diversion initiative** with joint funding of **\$17.8 million** allocated. The aim of these programs is to move people away from the criminal justice system, to increase the chances of rehabilitation of both long and short term drug users and to provide a gateway to treatment for people.

The projects include the Youth Drug Court, the first of its kind in Australia, and the Magistrates Early Referral into Treatment program (MERIT).

The **Youth Drug Court Trial**, and associated treatment services, have been established with a commitment of more than **\$8 million** over the period of the trial.

The **MERIT scheme**, an innovative partnership which links local Courts and treatment services by enabling bailed defendants to be referred to dedicated drug treatment programs, has a proposed Commonwealth/State budget of up to **\$11.0 million** for 2002-03. It will cater for an estimated **4200 clients**.

Three new detoxification centres are now **treating inmates withdrawing from drugs and alcohol** at Bathurst, Grafton and Parklea Correction Centres. In 2002-03 close to **\$1.3 million** will be allocated to running these units.

A transitional centre, **Bolwara House**, has opened at Emu Plains Correctional Centre for 16 minimum security women prisoners. The program will cater for women with a history of serious drug problems, who have only six months left to serve in gaol, and prepare them for release back into the community. Recurrent funds of **\$880,000** have been allocated for the unit in 2002-03.

The **Department of Juvenile Justice** has allocated **\$3.9 million to Drug Summit projects** in 2002-03. **Ten additional alcohol and other drug counsellors** have been recruited and will continue to work with departmental clients in regional areas. Funds will also assist with providing **comprehensive detoxification services, improved nursing and counselling, drug detection and training for workers** in Juvenile Justice Centres.

The **Pre-employment and Skills Training and Mentor Support Program** has been allocated **\$800,000** to increase the employment prospects of young offenders by linking them with providers of employment education and training services.

Two new youth treatment facilities have opened in Coffs Harbour and Dubbo. A one-off **\$800,000** was allocated for **capital funding** to locate, purchase and refurbish suitable properties. Funding for the project is currently **\$4 million over two years**, with \$2.4 million coming from the New South Wales Government and \$1.6 million from the Commonwealth under the National Illicit Drug Strategy (NIDS) funding agreement. The recurrent budget for both facilities is **\$800,000 per annum**.

The Government's commitment to the outcomes of the NSW Drug Summit includes an allocation of **\$2.06 million** in 2002-03 for the **Drugs and Community Action Strategy**.

Funds for the 2002-03 financial year will enable work covering nine regions in metropolitan, rural and regional areas and the implementation of projects by **65 Community Drug Action Teams** across the state. Specific projects for 2002-03 include:

- ◆ a local government training and information project;
- ◆ a grants program for Community Drug Action Teams;
- ◆ training for up to 500 frontline workers on alcohol and other drug issues – as part of the Commonwealth/State National Illicit Drug Strategy Diversion initiative;
- ◆ **\$200,000** has been set aside for an evaluation of the Strategy in 2002-03.

The NSW Police Service has allocated **\$100,000** funding for participation in Community Drug Action Teams and related activities, and **\$400,000 to the Crimestoppers Drug Crime Reporting Project**. This supports the Government's commitment to work with the community to address the drug problem.

In 2002-03, a total of **\$435,000** will be spent on **drug-related community education and information activities and resources** across New South Wales under the New South Wales Community Drug Information Strategy. Initiatives will include pamphlets, information sheets, newsletters, websites and community education campaigns.

- ◆ **\$125,000** of the budget will be spent by Premier's Department on the NSW Family Drug Information Kit to provide information to families and young people;
- ◆ **\$310,000** will be spent by Premier's Department on the Community Drug Information Strategy providing a wide range of communication tools and resources to New South Wales communities.

In a joint project between the State Library of New South Wales and the Premier's Department, **over 370 public libraries across the State, 230 of them in rural areas**, will provide referral information and drug related information.

In 2002-03, **\$4.3 million** will be provided to **drug education strategies**.

This includes an amount of **\$160,000** in 2002-03 (**\$610,000 over 4 years**) in Drug Summit funding to undertake an evaluation and to expand the **Ted Noffs Foundation Schools Program**. In 2002, the program will be operating in 11 schools in the east and inner west of Sydney.

In 2002-03 funds will also be allocated to:

- ◆ the extension of the **Healing Time** program, a culturally appropriate drug education resource for Aboriginal students. Now in 44 schools, an additional 83 schools will be invited this year to participate in this highly successful program;
- ◆ ongoing training for school and TAFE NSW counsellors on strategies to support students at risk of harmful drug use;
- ◆ the development and trialing of culturally specific drug and alcohol education and cannabis education resources, and the translation into 20 community languages of a number of family activity sheets from current drug education resources;
- ◆ **\$540,000** has been provided to **support school drug education and strengthen local community links**.

The Department of Community Services has been allocated **\$3.6 million over four years** and **\$1.03 million** in 2002-03 for the continuation of the Getting it Together program. This offers a service to approximately **250 young people a year** in twelve locations across New South Wales. It involves a case manager arranging services specific to the individual needs of these young people. These services might include treatment, education, housing, or interpreter services.

In connection with the Cabramatta Anti Drug Strategy, in 2002-03, **\$4.7 million** has been allocated to:

- ◆ police to shut down drug houses, clear the streets of drug dealers and users, stop the illegal trafficking of firearms, decrease the number of illegal guns in the community, and targeted police training in working with culturally diverse communities;
- ◆ provide compulsory treatment to encourage and support drug users to break out of their drug addiction and stop their criminal activities;
- ◆ implement a plan for local crime prevention to build partnerships with the community to find local solutions to local crime through the **City Watch** program;
- ◆ **Cabramatta Street Team** to help homeless and drug affected people;
- ◆ **Gateways** Program to keep students at school and away from drugs;
- ◆ **Schools as Community Centres** program to link families with schools; and
- ◆ the **Primary Connect** program to support at risk 5-12 year old students.

Supporting Rural and Regional Communities

A major part of the State's tradition and history has been formed by country people and those living on the land. The State's economy is significantly reliant upon the contribution made by rural and regional New South Wales to the overall State economy.

The New South Wales Government recognises the particular needs of rural and regional New South Wales. The Government also recognises that rural and regional areas of New South Wales have different strengths to urban areas, and is committed to enabling rural and regional New South Wales to build upon these strengths.

A number of programs funded by the New South Wales Government in the 2002-03 Budget also ensure fair access to health services, infrastructure improvements, employment and business opportunities.

The State Government continues to invest strongly in local initiatives that enhance the quality of life of regional and rural communities:

- ◆ **\$10 million** in 2002-03 to support **innovative responses to social, crime prevention and economic issues** impacting on communities. Rural and regional communities are being targeted under this approach. This program is set out in more detail in the section entitled **Supporting Children, Youth and Families**.

- ◆ **\$330,000** has been allocated to the Premiers Department in 2002-03 for the **Strengthening Local Communities Strategy (SLCS)**. This Strategy provides assistance and practical support to projects which are designed to integrate government and community responses to key issues in priority rural and urban communities across New South Wales. During 2002-03, assistance will be provided to projects based in Windale, Booragul/Bolton Point, Moree, Boggabilla, Wentworth, Mangrove Mountain and Port Kembla.

Under the **Government Access Program (GAP)**, the New South Wales Government delivers integrated government services and information from “one stop shops” in rural and remote communities. Services provided include vehicle registration renewal, applications for birth, death and marriage certificates and recreational fishing licences.

The Government Access Program (GAP) began as a pilot to trial the delivery of integrated government services and information from "one stop shops" in rural and remote communities. In March 2001, the Government approved the expansion of the Program by a further 38 Government Access Centres (GACs) and 22 Outreach or Access Points to be rolled out over three financial years.

The expanded Program will establish a network of shop-fronts in small rural communities to improve access to government transactions and information. This network will utilise existing Court Houses, RTA Motor Registries and other State Government shop-fronts and will provide a range of over the counter transactions, information and access to visiting departmental officers. Transactions provided through the Centres include, vehicle registration renewal, boat license renewals and birth certificates.

The New South Wales Government has provided **\$6.5 million over three years** from 2000-01 to improve the way Government agencies deliver services in rural and regional New South Wales. An amount of **\$1.25 million** will be allocated in 2002-03. These funds are provided under **Staying in Town** – a Government rural affairs statement which reinforces the Government’s commitment to refocussing Government services and resources in country New South Wales to better meet the needs of rural people. Projects which have been funded under Staying in Town include:

- ◆ **Natural Resources Service Centres:** This project is testing the provision of advice and assistance on natural resources management via a “one stop shop”. Pilot centres are being developed in Deniliquin, Tamworth and Maclean. These Centres will mean that farmers for example, will be able to get easier access to information about natural resource management issues such as salinity;
- ◆ **Place Manager - Wentworth Shire:** This is a Government and community partnership that is assisting communities in the Wentworth Shire to identify and implement actions to overcome pressing social issues;
- ◆ **Community Link & Information Access Centre:** This project will improve service and information delivery for the small rural communities of Pilliga/Gwabegar and Toomelah/Boggabilla. The particular service model will enable integrated service delivery to remote locations, for example, shared travel, peer support and better integrated case management;
- ◆ **Staff Recruitment and Retention in Remote Communities:** In Western New South Wales, the Regional Coordination Program is working with communities and Government agencies to improve the recruitment and retention of staff in remote localities;

An allocation of **\$586,000** will be made to the **Office of Regional Communities (ORC)** in 2002-03. The Office has staff in Orange and Sydney and manages rural and regional projects which require a whole of government or cross agency approach. The ORC supports the Regional Communities Consultative Council: the major community advisory body to the Premier on rural issues.

In 2002-03, **\$150,000** will be provided to support the work of the **Regional Communities Consultative Council** (the RCCC). The Council:

- ◆ 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.

In 2002-03, **\$1 million** will be allocated to the Regional and Rural Miscellaneous Grants Fund. The Fund was established in 1999 to support local initiatives across rural and regional New South Wales. Since then funds have been allocated to **over 80 communities**. The Fund provides direct Government support for small scale, local initiatives that have immediate and tangible community benefit.

Towns which have received grants vary widely in size, location and economic capacity, for example: Clarence Town, Dungog, Ellangowan, Evans Head, Grenfell, Gresford, Guyra, Gwabegar, Hazelbrook, Hinton, Kiama, Lightning Ridge, Merimbula, Moree, Moruya, Mudgee, Nana Glen, Narooma, Stokers Siding, Sussex Inlet, Tambar Springs, Tingha, Walgett, Woolgoolga, and Young.

In 2002-03, **\$2.7 million** will be allocated to the Premier's Department for the **Regional Coordination Program** (RCP). The RCP now covers all of rural, regional and metropolitan New South Wales.

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

- ◆ **Central Coast Moving Forward:** The New South Wales Government has been working with the Central Coast community to address the impact of population growth and employment issues in the region. The process has brought together State and Local government and engaged the community in agreeing on strategies to create jobs *and* maintain the region's lifestyle and environment;
- ◆ **River Towns Project:** This two year project is focusing on the river towns of Walgett, Brewarrina, Bourke and Wilcannia. Government and communities are working together to confront issues that impact on community health, wellbeing, and economic development;
- ◆ **Cross-Border Project for New South Wales and Victorian communities:** This initiative will improve service delivery in New South Wales communities along the Murray River on the Victorian border. The project is responding to concerns raised by communities, businesses, agencies, local governments and advisory committees situated adjacent to the New South Wales/Victorian border relating to the impacts on policy, licensing and service delivery differences between New South Wales and Victoria. Significant opportunities exist for cost savings and improved service delivery.

The project works with the New South Wales-Victoria Border Anomalies Committee. The Committee has reached agreement with the respective State authorities to simplify boating safety regulation on Lakes Hume and Mulwala. It has also worked with both health administrations in establishing a Ministerial agreement to improve the provision of out-patient health services to border communities;

- ◆ **The Goulburn Youth Project:** The Goulburn youth project is integrating health and support service delivery for young people in Goulburn. It is providing and coordinating recreational, community education, health and support services in a youth-friendly setting;

The New South Wales Government provides expert advice and quality services to advance economic development through the support of the Department of State and Regional Development. Its programs are targeted to support rural and regional communities.

Fundamental to the Department's activities is the New South Wales Government's goal of providing a high and improving standard of living to the people of the State. The Department adopts a whole of government perspective in approaching its undertaking and actively encourages and supports the interest of the business sector and the community in its work.

In 2002-03, **\$750,000** will be allocated to the **Community Economic Development Program** administered by the Department. Several projects, such as the Main Street/Small Towns and the Developing Regional Resources Programs, fall under this Program, designed to help communities in regional New South Wales to take a strategic and pro-active approach to their economic future and to explore opportunities that value-add to local resources and diversify from the traditional economic base.

An allocation of **\$250,000** has been provided for the **Townlife Development Program** in 2002-03. This program is aimed at assisting small regional communities, with populations of less than 2,500 facing hardship. It will enable these communities to develop products, services and markets that will lead to new economic activity.

To provide assistance to rural and remote communities and assist in alleviating the high cost of travel associated with participating in sporting competition, the Department of Sport and Recreation will allocate **\$100,000** to the **Remote Area Travel Assistance Scheme** in 2002-03. A further **\$560,000** has been committed to **seven regional academies** that service rural New South Wales. The Department will also contribute **\$260,000** for the **Country Athletes Scheme**, supporting athletes under 19 years of age in rural areas.

Local and timely dispute resolution services for rural and regional communities will be provided by the Health Care Complaints Commission which will allocate **\$500,000** to expand the **Patient Support Service** in 2002-03.

The **Mt Penang Parklands** project, based on the Central Coast, aims is to foster ecologically sustainable development, complement the existing heritage character of Mt Penang and enhance the quality of life of the people living nearby. The project, run by the Festival Development Corporation offers opportunities for recreation, new permanent jobs on the Central Coast and long term economic benefits on the Central Coast of New South Wales. The Government's allocation to this project is **\$25 million** over 4 years. A number of activities will be undertaken as part of the Mt Penang Parklands project, including the refurbishment of approximately **30 buildings** from detention centre uses into a number of commercial and community uses. Within the next budget period, 2 heritage dormitories will be refurbished to support children, youth and families by way of a Centre of Excellence for Sports. The cost of the refurbishment will be **\$120,000**.

The NSW Heritage Office has allocated **\$2.353 million** in 2002-03 to the **Heritage Incentives Program** for targeted rural communities to assist heritage conservation projects. All 126 rural and regional councils in New South Wales have been invited to participate in a three year funding agreement (to commence 1 July 2002) to cover a full range of heritage management projects. Currently heritage funding is provided to 83 rural and regional councils for ongoing heritage advisory services and 62 councils for local heritage funding programs.

Another initiative to support rural and regional communities will be continued by NSW Agriculture. To aid in the printing and distribution of a free NSW Agriculture's Rural Women's Network **Country Web newsletter**, an issues-based publication with a circulation of around 20,000, **\$57,000** will be provided.

The **Regional Economic Transition Scheme** provides for targeted assistance to attract new industry to regional communities adversely affected by economic restructuring. In 2002-03, a total of **\$5 million** will be allocated to this program.

The Government's **Community Technology Centre** program will establish up to **62 centres** in towns in rural and regional New South Wales (with populations of less than 3000) over the period from January 2001 to June 2004. The four-year Program is jointly funded by the Commonwealth (**\$8.25 million**) and the New South Wales Governments (**\$7.2 million**). Existing Telecentres funded under previous Commonwealth funding programs have taken up membership of the CTC@NSW Network, which is funded through the New South Wales Government's component of the CTC Program. This will mean that rural New South Wales communities will have access to approximately 90 Centres by June 2004.

The CTC program is providing support for communities in planning, managing and operating ICT based community enterprises. It provides ICT skills training programs in the use of computers and the internet and will improve online access to government and other services. Communities that have received funding to establish a CTC since December 2000 include Bowraville, Guyra, Ulladulla, Mathoura and Warialda. The CTC Program is working with Tourism NSW and the Department of Ageing, Disability and Home Care to support these agencies in achieving ICT skills training for regionally based tourism operators and seniors, respectively. A number of youth and small business initiatives are in place or in planning.

In 2002-03 Commonwealth and New South Wales funding will be used for grants for the ongoing establishment of new Community Technology Centres in rural and regional New South Wales.

General grants to **public libraries** will increase by **\$1.5 million** to **\$18.92 million** in 2002-03. A total of **\$2 million** will also be available for NSW.net grants. Both these categories of grants will significantly benefit public libraries in rural and regional New South Wales.

The NSW Film and Television Office supports rural and regional communities through its **Regional Filming Fund**, which aims to encourage film productions outside of Sydney, and the **Regional Cinema Program**, which promotes the development of volunteer and independent cinema in regional and rural areas. The New South Wales Film and Television Office will receive an enhancement of **\$311,000** to its **Industry and Audience Development Program**. This program strategically assists the expansion of film-related activities such as local film festivals and travelling industry programs, and specialised training initiatives outside the Sydney CBD.

The following are examples of some of the Government's plans for infrastructure and programs that support rural and regional growth, jobs and tourism.

Over the past two years a number of major initiatives have been announced that aim to **relocate jobs** and **create new jobs** in regional centres. These include:

- ◆ 500 staff from WorkCover and the Long Service Payments Corporation to Gosford by late 2002;
- ◆ 60 staff from the Department of Local Government to Nowra by late 2002;

- ◆ 180 staff from the Superannuation Administration Corporation have relocated to Wollongong. Another 110 should relocate by late 2002;
- ◆ 150 staff from the Police Traffic Infringement Processing Bureau to Maitland by September 2002;
- ◆ 24 staff from the Department of Land and Water Conservation to Wellington to establish a Native Vegetation Unit by 2003 together with a further 100 staff to Dubbo to create a new Centre for Excellence in Land and Water Management.

These initiatives not only reduce overall rental expenditure, they provide thousands of new regional employment opportunities and, in most cases, millions of dollars of investment in new infrastructure. They also provide an economic boost to regional centres through increased spending.

As part of the Government's commitment to consolidating jobs in rural and regional New South Wales, the Rail Infrastructure Corporation will continue its program of **employing additional full-time and fixed-term staff in rural and regional centres across New South Wales** during 2002-03.

New infrastructure to be provided includes the supply of 14 new **Hunter Valley Rail Cars**, by the State Rail Authority, which will replace the 620/720 class carriages operating in the Hunter Region. A total of **\$1.4 million** has been allocated to this project in 2002-03. State Rail is also awarding a contract for the supply of **three new rail cars** to operate on the Countrylink Broken Hill service. In 2002-03, **\$1.2 million** has been allocated to fund this contract. A further **\$4.6 million** will be allocated in 2002-03 to fund a contract for the supply of **41 new outer-suburban rail cars** to service the Blue Mountains, Illawarra and the Central Coast.

In March 2001, the New South Wales Minister for Transport announced that the Government would double spending on level crossings to **\$12 million over 3 years**, accelerating and extending safety improvement work to 130 level crossings throughout New South Wales. A total of **\$60,000** will be allocated to the **Level Crossing Awareness Campaign** in 2002-03.

The Department of Public Works and Services has a number of policy initiatives designed to support rural and regional communities. The pilot regional **Maintenance Contract** in the Riverina region commenced in August 2001. The purpose of the pilot is to combine or "bundle up" the maintenance requirements of the agencies with services being provided by a single, locally based contractor. Following assessment of the results of the pilot, the Program may be applied on a state-wide basis.

New police stations are planned for Muswellbrook, Griffith and Thirroul at a cost of **\$2.8 million** in 2002-03. Minor Works to progress in 2002-03 include the provision of improved accommodation at Gunnedah, Inverell, Deniliquin, Goulburn and Young Police Stations and the purchase of a suitable site for a new police station at Armidale and the commencement of preliminary design work.

A total of **\$7.1 million** has been provided for continued improvements to the **Telephone Communications and Country Radio** networks. Improved technology leads to improved police officer and public safety.

Plans by the **NSW Fire Brigades** to build **25 new or upgraded fire stations and training facilities** in Sydney, the Central Coast, the Hunter, the Illawarra and country areas, as well as major station refurbishments at a cost of **\$25.4 million** over four years will continue in 2002-03.

The **Maritime Property and Asset Management program** under the Waterways Authority ensures that the development and use of the State's assets meet client expectations and are in accordance with relevant legal, environmental, economic and safety requirements. In 2002-03, **\$2 million** has been allocated from these programs to provide infrastructure for regional recreational boating communities.

The **Department of Land and Water Conservation** is the lead agency in natural resource management for New South Wales. Its decentralised structure, with approximately 75% of staff located in over 120 locations, is ideally suited to assisting and supporting rural and regional communities in natural resource management and planning through a variety of natural resource management committees. These committees, which comprise a broad range of local community participation, are developing regional plans and strategies for vegetation, water, catchment, estuary, floodplain and coastal management. Such a community based planning process provides for regional communities to develop regional specific solutions to natural resource management issues which are integral to future regional economic development.

To address essential environmental health needs the **Country Towns Water Supply and Sewerage Program** will continue to provide councils in country New South Wales with financial and technical assistance to deliver appropriate water supply and sewerage services in 2002-03. Part of this is the Small Town Sewerage Program, providing financial assistance to councils to upgrade sewerage systems in towns of less than 1,000 people with a low growth potential, to a sustainable standard. Under this **\$168 million** initiative, **150 towns** with high or urgent human and environmental health needs are being provided with assistance to sewer their communities. A total of **\$11 million** will be provided under Small Towns Sewerage Program in 2002-03.

NSW Agriculture plans to spend in excess of **\$1.229 million** during 2002-03 on various social justice initiatives. A number of these initiatives are outlined in the section entitled **Meeting the Needs of Women**. The **Rural Financial Counselling Service** is the Department's greatest commitment to the Government's social justice objectives. This Service aims to strengthen rural families, businesses and communities. The Department will provide **\$1.02 million** to 26 rural community groups to assist the employment of 35 rural financial counsellors throughout New South Wales in 2002-03. The Rural Financial Counsellors provide financial counselling advice and support to farm families experiencing financial difficulty and who are unable to afford such services from commercial providers. The cost of operating each Service is met jointly by the Commonwealth and State Governments as well as the local community in a ratio of 50:25:25.

NSW Agriculture will provide **\$78,000** for Murrumbidgee College of Agriculture's **Aboriginal Rural Training Program** (ARTP). This program develops and delivers accredited training for rural and remote Aboriginal communities as well as correctional centres and schools. ARTP consults extensively with Lands Councils, CDEPs, correctional centres, schools, Aboriginal organisations and other training providers to ensure that customisation occurs and client needs are met. Learning pathways are promoted leading from school to college and onto university with support being provided for Aboriginal students at the College. Collaboration with Government agencies such as the Departments of Education and Training, Corrective Services and Juvenile Justice and the Commonwealth's Department of Education, Science and Training, help to ensure a whole of government approach.

The joint New South Wales/ Commonwealth **Forest Industry Structural Adjustment Package** (FISAP) was established in 1995 to assist businesses and workers adjust to changes in the New South Wales native timber industry resulting from government policy initiatives to develop an efficient, high technology and ecologically sustainable industry. Funding is available to both workers and businesses affected by government forest policies. Displaced workers may access funds to pay for vocational training and to relocate to new employment. Funding available to businesses includes grants to restructure businesses and to invest in value adding and job creation. Funding has also been provided for sector wide training to assist forestry workers adapt to a restructured industry. In 2002-03, **\$38.9 million** has been allocated to the FISAP.

A total of **\$17.9 million** in 2002-03 has been allocated to provide **motor vehicle tax concessions** to primary producers. This will reduce the impact of owning a motor vehicle for primary producers.

The **Petroleum Products Subsidy Scheme** administered by Office of State Revenue assists businesses in northern New South Wales by ensuring that they are able to compete with sellers of petroleum products in Queensland. In 2002-03, a total of **\$38 million** will be provided to fund the Petroleum Products Subsidy Scheme in Northern New South Wales.

The Office of State Revenue will provide **\$1 million** in 2002-03 to fund the **Grain Freight Rebate Scheme**. This is a rebate on freight charges for grain delivered to nominated silos operating in New South Wales, benefiting farmers by ensuring that increases in their rail freight charges do not exceed five percent, and are consistent with farmers in other areas of the State.

Enhancing Social Housing

The Government is committed to a diversified social housing system. The Housing Assistance Program delivers government-subsidised housing through public, community and Aboriginal housing agencies, and provides a growing range of financial assistance to disadvantaged private renters and home purchasers.

The Program also funds the provision of advice on housing needs, markets and strategic directions. Most of the Program falls under the auspices of the Commonwealth-State Housing Agreement (CSHA) which is jointly funded by the Commonwealth and State Governments. Housing Assistance Program funds are channelled through two Government agencies: the Aboriginal Housing Office (AHO) which is responsible for managing and delivering AHO housing, and the Department of Housing, which is responsible for managing the remainder of State-delivered housing assistance, and for overseeing and developing the mainstream community housing sector.

The New South Wales Government is directly contributing **\$209.4 million** to achieve social justice objectives through housing assistance. Together with Commonwealth funding of \$321.2 million, \$12.6 million contributed by the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Commission and \$88.5 million generated by housing agencies, this will provide assistance to an estimated **500,000** people on low incomes or who are otherwise unable to access or maintain appropriate, secure and affordable housing.

In 2002-03 the Government will introduce a range of initiatives that aim to modernise the public housing system, offer people more choices and improve the service provided to vulnerable families will be phased in. These include:

- ◆ renewable tenancies and rental bonds for new public housing tenancies;
- ◆ expanded community renewal initiatives for public and community housing;
- ◆ tenancy guarantees to private landlords to encourage them to accept clients who, for example, may not have a tenancy record;
- ◆ new assistance for boarding house owners to upgrade their properties;
- ◆ expanding the homeless out-of-hours service and other homelessness initiatives;
- ◆ supported housing strategies to support older people and people with disabilities; and
- ◆ a shared home ownership scheme for public housing tenants.

These reforms will be supported by a 2002-03 enhancement of **\$11.1 million**, over and above the State's commitments under the CSHA and additional State funding provided for other housing initiatives.

In 2001, the New South Wales Government announced a four year program of enhancement funding for the housing portfolio targeted at home improvements, repairs and maintenance in public and Aboriginal housing. The 2002-03 component of this program will bring **\$36.6 million in additional funding** to the portfolio, outside of the Government's commitments under the CSHA or to other existing programs such as the Affordable Housing initiatives. The funds will allow the Government to bring more public and Aboriginal housing homes up to a maintained state consistent with current standards and tenant expectations.

The Government will spend **\$231.5 million** towards the housing supply program which will bring **1,945 new dwellings** to the public, community and Aboriginal housing sectors, to provide additional housing opportunities for needy families. By June 2003, approximately **348,500 people** will be accommodated in Government-subsidised housing managed by public, community or Aboriginal housing providers in New South Wales.

In addition, at least 20 percent of new community housing properties will be earmarked for supported housing where there is a formal agreement between housing and support providers to ensure tenancies can be sustained in the long term. Public Housing will also extend the number of its existing properties that are used specifically for supported accommodation. There are a number of major initiatives in 2002-03 that are aimed at increasing assistance to disadvantaged households:

- ◆ the Government will increase Public Housing capital supply through the commencement of **479 new dwellings**, and spending of **\$64.6 million**. Around 85 percent of new public housing capital supply will be achieved through redevelopment of existing properties;
- ◆ the Government will increase mainstream capital community housing supply through the commencement of **277 new dwellings** and spending of **\$62.3 million**;
- ◆ the leasing program complements the capital works program by allowing a more flexible and rapid response to housing need. Leasing subsidies enable Public Housing and community housing associations to lease properties at market rent from the private sector, and sub-let them to low income tenants at an affordable rent;
- ◆ in 2002-03, some **450 additional and 2,200 existing public housing properties will be** leased at a total cost of **\$21.3 million**, while 500 additional and 5,000 existing mainstream community housing properties will be leased at a total cost of **\$39.3 million**. In addition, **60 short term** leases will be funded as part of the **Partnership Against Homelessness** to provide options for rough sleepers on the city streets;
- ◆ the **Crisis Accommodation Program (CAP)** is a tied program under the CSHA which provides funding for accommodation for people who are homeless or in crisis or who need transitional support to move toward independent living. A total of **\$13.6 million** will be directed towards CAP to fund **40 new capital works properties, and 25 new and 101 existing leases**;
- ◆ a further five percent of new community housing properties will be targeted to provide additional long term accommodation for Aboriginal people.

The Government will continue its strong emphasis on **improving older housing stock** in the public, community and Aboriginal housing sectors, and community renewal of public housing estates. With the \$36.6 million enhancement described above, total expenditure on improving older housing stock from within the Housing Assistance Program will rise to **\$244 million** in 2002-03. Up to **60,000 properties** will undergo some form of improvement. A total of **\$6 million** will be spent on upgrading existing mainstream community housing stock, while an additional **\$2.5 million** will be spent upgrading **Crisis Accommodation Program** properties.

Consolidating and progressing the eight existing **Intensive Tenancy Management** programs on public housing estates across the State will also be a high priority in 2002-03, to improve the coordination of support services for clients with complex needs, prevent crime and enhance employment opportunities for tenants. Intensive Tenancy Management programs are currently in place in Bidwill, Toongabbie, Minto, Bonnyrigg, Redfern, Lake Macquarie, South Moree and West Dubbo.

Tenant participation and community development initiatives will receive approximately **\$1.2 million**, including allowances to support the development of tenant participation initiatives in public, community and Aboriginal housing.

Other components of the Government's commitment to increasing diversity and improving the viability of housing assistance within the Department of Housing include:

- ◆ special needs groups will be assisted to secure affordable and appropriate housing in the private market through top-up subsidies under the **Special Assistance Subsidies Program**, at a cost of approximately **\$10.9 million**;
- ◆ **\$23.4 million** will be allocated for the **Rentstart Program** which aims to assist eligible applicants to obtain private rental accommodation. The scheme provides assistance with funds for bonds, rent in advance, and for **temporary accommodation** for people with urgent housing needs;
- ◆ approximately **\$900,000** will be directed towards new **homelessness initiatives**, including the homelessness after-hours service. This is in addition to a total of **\$53 million** provided for homeless people under other programs;
- ◆ funding will be continued for a range of homelessness initiatives including **the Sydney City Council Homeless Persons' Information Centre** and brokerage service, to help people in housing crisis in the inner city;
- ◆ a total of **\$1 million** will be directed towards the **Mortgage Assistance Scheme** in order to assist households experiencing temporary difficulties in meeting mortgage repayments;
- ◆ some **\$8.3 million** will be provided for **Affordable Housing** initiatives, building on the last three years' work of the Affordable Housing Service;
- ◆ over **\$500,000** will be allocated to the **Local Government Housing Initiatives Program**, managed by PlanningNSW. This program provides funds to local councils and peak local government bodies to develop regional housing strategies;
- ◆ a total of **\$200,000** will be directed towards boarding house owners to undertake fire safety works under the **Boarding House Upgrade Program**, complementing the new product that will assist owners to upgrade their properties while continuing to make low cost accommodation available;
- ◆ the Department of Housing will continue to support community providers to improve their viability through better business practices. The Department will also continue to review its service delivery approaches to improve both service standards and efficiency.

Further to enhancing affordable housing, **affordable housing levy payments** for land sales in the Pyrmont precinct are made by the Sydney Harbour Foreshore Authority. The cost for 2002-03 is forecasted to be **\$1.9 million**.

The **Aboriginal Housing Office (AHO)** is a statutory authority governed by an Aboriginal board. The AHO plans and administers the policies, programs and asset base for Aboriginal housing in New South Wales. This includes resource allocation, sector-wide policy, strategic planning and monitoring outcomes and performance in the Aboriginal housing sector.

The AHO manages and coordinates a substantial annual capital works program, and the development and implementation of a range of financial and resourcing strategies. In addition, the AHO has an important role in facilitating and improving training and employment opportunities for Aboriginal people.

In carrying out its functions, the AHO is guided by the principles of self-determination and self-management by Aboriginal people. The AHO therefore strives to maximise the involvement of Aboriginal housing providers and the Aboriginal community (including tenants and housing applicants) in the development of housing policy and standards, and the delivery of housing programs.

The capital works program plays a major role in meeting housing need in the Aboriginal community. In 2002-03, **\$16.6 million** of Aboriginal housing funds will be directed towards community-based Aboriginal housing providers through the **Housing Aboriginal Communities Program (HACP)**. In addition, **\$13.5 million** has been allocated for the acquisition of AHO housing stock.

A priority of the AHO is to ensure that Aboriginal Housing is safe and sustainable. In June 2000 the AHO accepted a grant offer from ATSIC State office to implement a NSW Fixing Houses for Better Health (FHBH) project, involving a two stage Housing for Health survey and fix process across up to 200 Aboriginal community-owned properties. Funding for the project involves contributions from ATSIC and NSW Health with the AHO contributing **\$0.7 million** as well as project administration resources, bringing the total NSW FHBH project budget to **\$1.3 million**. In 2002-03 a total of **\$8.9 million** has been allocated to **addressing the backlog of repairs** and maintenance for houses managed by Aboriginal housing organisations. This is in accord with priorities established by the Commonwealth and is one of the key issues to be addressed in ensuring the sector is viable and houses are safe and sustainable.

The **AHO Upgrade program** aims to bring all AHO stock to an acceptable standard over a five-year period. This planned maintenance cycle will help to ensure continuing acceptable standards of housing for Aboriginal people and to protect the AHO (HFA) asset value over time. Current estimates of the cost of the program are **\$66 million**. In 2002-03 the budget for the program is **\$10.2 million**.

The AHO has responsibility for developing the Aboriginal housing sector, which includes enhancing training and support for the sector and improving the standards and accountability of Aboriginal community-based housing services. In 2002-03, **\$1.4 million** is allocated to supporting and training the Aboriginal housing sector to improve housing management skills and the long term viability of providers and the stock they manage. Key initiatives are outlined below:

- ◆ In 2002-03 AHO's Kungala Sector Support Unit will continue to deliver the **"Housing Our Mob Everywhere" (HOME) Training Package**. Kungala has established a 'train the trainer' program in HOME and will establish a register of recognised HOME trainers.
- ◆ The Aboriginal Housing Act provides for the establishment by the Board of regional consultative and advisory structures, which are known as **Regional Aboriginal Housing Committees (RAHCs)**. The RAHCs key responsibilities include community consultation at a local and regional level, development and monitoring of Regional Aboriginal Housing Programs and the provision of advice in relation to policy and program development. The RAHCs are critical to ensuring effective consultation with the Aboriginal community and the Aboriginal housing sector and developing Regional Housing Plans for recommendation to the Board.

- ◆ During 2000-01 a draft set of **Management Standards** were developed. Consultation regarding the development of an **Accreditation System for the NSW Aboriginal Housing Sector** will commence in 2002-03. The development of the management standards and accreditation system will continue to be pursued through extensive consultation with the Aboriginal housing sector and Aboriginal community.

In addition, **\$5.4 million** has been allocated to **Resourcing Community Organisations**. These funds will be directed by AHO towards Targeted Housing Management Grants, (supplementary funding for administration and backlog repairs and maintenance to new Housing Management Pilot Projects), community and organisational planning and development (for example, surveys, needs analysis, business plans etc.) and GST compensation for community organisations.

The NSW Fire Brigades have allocated **\$96,000** in 2002-03 to continue **the Community Fire Units (CFUs) Aboriginal Communities Program**. The performance of CFUs has been closely monitored during recent bush fires. The CFU program demonstrates that it has saved many hundreds of thousands of dollars of property on the urban/bushland interface. The Brigades, together with the Aboriginal Housing Office and the Department of Housing, reviewed fire statistics involving homes managed by the two agencies for a five year period. Some of the key findings indicated that:

- ◆ there is a higher number of fires in AHO residences than in those of the general population of New South Wales;
- ◆ there is a need for targeted safety programs;
- ◆ the financial impact of fire to the AHO is significant even excluding administrative, medical and legal costs, pain and suffering.

Six Community Fire Units have been established in Bowraville, East Dubbo, West Dubbo, Kempsey, South Taree and Walgett and others are proposed for Bourke, Brewarrina, Condobolin, Coraki, Cowra, Lake Canggelligo, Moree and Nambucca Heads.

Meeting the Needs and Aspirations of Aboriginal People

New South Wales has the largest State population of Aboriginal people in Australia. The Government remains active in promoting policies and programs, in partnership with Aboriginal people, and is committed to economic and social equality and independence for Aboriginal people in New South Wales. The Department of Aboriginal Affairs (DAA) is a key agency in delivering and promoting this objective.

Since the announcement in 2001 of the Government's new plan for Aboriginal affairs entitled, **Partnerships: A New Way of Doing Business with Aboriginal People**, the Department of Aboriginal Affairs has successfully undertaken a range of programs and initiatives that have brought together government and the community and have significantly benefited Aboriginal people in New South Wales. In 2002-03 the Government is committed to introducing further innovative yet practical programs and partnerships. These programs are geared towards recognising and supporting Aboriginal culture, heritage and leadership and developing Aboriginal communities.

The **Improving Outcomes in Aboriginal Communities** project, is an initiative of the Chief Executive Officers group on Aboriginal Affairs. The project will be implemented through two strategies.

The first strategy, the **Aboriginal Community Partnerships** led by the Department of Aboriginal Affairs will develop new ways for Government to work in partnership with Aboriginal communities with the aim of:

- ◆ improving how the Government responds to critical issues in Aboriginal communities;

- ◆ developing and enhancing community capacity to enable Aboriginal communities to identify and address their own issues;
- ◆ bringing community and service providers together to redevelop services to be more effective; and
- ◆ supporting communities to develop shared goals.

The strategy will be implemented in three communities in 2002-03.

The second strategy, the **Aboriginal Child, Youth and Family Strategy**, led by the Office of Children and Young People, will facilitate Aboriginal community leaders and Government service providers to take action to help meet the needs of Aboriginal children, young people and their families and carers across New South Wales.

The strategy will utilise a regionally-based approach to have a positive impact on changing the way existing services are provided and improving outcomes for the target population. The strategy will promote:

- ◆ a focus on improving outcomes for Aboriginal children and young people through:
 - better support for their families and communities; and
 - Government working better with families and communities;
- ◆ improved responsiveness in service delivery to Aboriginal communities;
- ◆ a focus on prevention and early intervention; and
- ◆ integrated planning by Aboriginal organisations and communities and Government agencies.

The strategy will focus on improving outcomes in the health, safety, wellbeing and education of children, young people and families, by working with Aboriginal communities and drawing on evidence of what works in Aboriginal communities.

Both strategies are whole of government initiatives, with the key implementation roles to be undertaken by the Department of Aboriginal Affairs, the Department of Community Services, and The Cabinet Office. A total of **\$17.4 million** will be allocated to this project over four years, starting with **\$2.9 million** in 2002-03.

The Minister for Aboriginal Affairs will be the lead Minister responsible for the establishment of the project and progress on implementation of the project will be reported to the Cabinet Committee on Aboriginal Affairs.

Furthering support for New South Wales Aboriginal communities, the **Aboriginal Communities Development Program** will be in its fourth year during the financial year 2002-03. Throughout 2002-03 work commenced in preceding years will continue to deliver new housing, environmental health services and primary water and sewerage infrastructure.

In 2002-03 the program expenditure is predicted to be **\$32.6 million, including construction and purchase of 100 new homes, repair and maintenance or renovations/extensions to 150 existing homes** and additional landscaping, fencing and environmental health improvements in the form of related works.

To date, a total of **37 communities** have received improvements in the water and sewerage infrastructure component of the Program. During 2002-03 an **additional 6 communities** will receive service improvements.

The Aboriginal Communities Development Program also develops employment and training opportunities in communities. In 2002-03, existing **employment and training activities** will absorb a further **\$1.2 million** and employment and training will commence in an **additional 9 communities** including Boggabilla/Toomelah, Cabbage Tree Island, Enngonia, Gulargambone, Kempsey, Moree, Muli Muli, Tabulam and Weilmoringle. This will involve an estimated **90 apprenticeship or traineeship places** for a total of \$1.8 million.

Commitments for additional funding for the forward years of the program have been made by Government, including **\$5 million** in 2004 -05, **\$10 million** in 2005-06.

During 2002-03 the **Housing for Health** component of the Program, involving the repair of health hardware and other items which otherwise can result in immediate health or safety risks, will be delivered in a total of **461 homes in 13 communities**, including –

Boggabilla (35 homes); Bowraville (52 homes); Box Ridge/Coraki (31 homes); Coffs Harbour (50 homes); Collarenebri (35 homes); Coomaditchie (28 homes); Cummeragunja (35 homes); Lightning Ridge (65 homes); Macksville(16 homes); Mungindi (13 homes); Orient Point (28 homes); Toomelah (46 homes); Walcha/Summervale (27 homes).

NSW Health is managing these projects in partnership with the Department of Aboriginal Affairs (DAA).

In addition, NSW Health is delivering similar projects under the **Fixing Houses for Better Health** program in partnership with the Aboriginal Housing Office (AHO) and the Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander Commission (ATSIC) to another **191 homes in 8 communities**, those being:

Goulburn (9 homes); Yass (18 homes); Queanbeyan (49 homes); Moruya (18 homes); Bodalla (33 homes); Narooma (34 homes); Bega / Murrays Flat (12 homes); Eden 18 homes

The **Housing for Health and Fixing Houses for Better Health Programs**, aim to identify and address problems within a house that may affect the health of the occupants. They involve a house-to-house survey, a capital upgrade program, and a second survey to assess improvement. Projects have been completed in 600 houses in 16 communities between 1997 and 2001. Substantial health and safety improvements in house functionality are a demonstrated outcome of these projects. In addition a number of other initiatives have been developed by NSW Health's Aboriginal Environmental Health Officer Trainees that build upon the gains from the Housing for Health projects. Examples include pest control, waste management, dust suppression and rodent control programs.

NSW Health has extended its **Aboriginal Environmental Health Officer Traineeship Program** for Aboriginal Environmental Health Officers. There are now **nine trainees** in the program. There are two graduates from the program with another expected to graduate in August 2002. This program provides not just jobs, but a career for Aboriginal people in environmental health. It is the only program of its type in Australia. The trainees undertake a five to six year study program by correspondence in a Bachelor of Applied Science (Environmental Health) with the University of Western Sydney. In addition they are placed in Public Health Units where they gain on-the-job training, support and professional development.

In total, NSW Health will allocate **\$30 million** to **Aboriginal Health Services** in 2002-03. The program covers the provision of supplementary health services to Aboriginal people, particularly in the areas of health promotion, health education and disease prevention.

Two hundred and fifty years ago, the area now known as New South Wales hosted seventy Aboriginal languages and dialects, although views about this number vary considerably and some estimates are significantly higher. Today, due to the enormous impact of colonisation on Aboriginal culture, many of these languages have fallen into disuse while some have few surviving fluent speakers. However, there

is no such thing as a 'dead' or 'extinct' language, and given adequate resources, most languages can be revived.

Recognising this, the Government has allocated **\$1.019 million** over four years to establish a **New South Wales Aboriginal Languages Resource and Research Centre**. In addition, the DAA in close collaboration with the New South Wales Department of Education and Training and the New South Wales Office of the Board of Studies, is coordinating the development of a whole of government New South Wales Aboriginal Languages Policy.

The Policy will create a framework for State Government to assist Aboriginal people and communities across New South Wales to revive and preserve their traditional languages. In doing so, the Policy will be firmly based on the principles of community ownership and control, capacity-building and improved Government coordination.

The Department of Aboriginal Affairs' **Aboriginal Grants Program** assists in meeting the socio-economic and cultural needs and aspirations of Aboriginal people in New South Wales. The total funding of the Grants Program for 2002-03 is **\$800,000**. There are two components to the program – major and discretionary grants:

- ◆ **major grants** are distributed through a biannual process that is widely advertised. Grants can include research projects and partnership agreements with other funding authorities and the commercial sector. They are designed to make a major contribution towards addressing the priorities identified by the Government and the DAA; and
- ◆ **discretionary grants** are small allocations for Aboriginal people and organisations to alleviate social disadvantage, including family issues and other crisis situations. The discretionary fund is a grants program of last resort and applicants must demonstrate that other attempts to access funds have failed through lack of funding programs or rejection from other agencies.

The Department of Aboriginal Affairs has put forward a successful proposal to the **New South Wales Environmental Trust** to increase Aboriginal involvement in the Environmental Trust. In 2002-03, **\$449,000** will be allocated to this program. The Trust funds environmental restoration, rehabilitation, research and education projects that benefit the environment of New South Wales. This will ensure that Aboriginal people in New South Wales can participate more fully and effectively in environmental management strategies on their land, and on land that is culturally significant to them. There are four elements to this program:

- ◆ The addition of an **Aboriginal member** on each of the Environmental Trust's Technical Review Committees. That is, for the Environmental Education program, the Restoration and Rehabilitation program and the Environmental Research program;
- ◆ The establishment of an **Aboriginal Grants Program within the Environmental Trust**, where an agreed amount of funds is targeted specifically for grant applications from Aboriginal communities and organisations;
- ◆ The establishment of a specialist **Technical Review Committee** to assess applications under the Aboriginal Grants Program; and
- ◆ The establishment of a new identified **Aboriginal position**, funded by the Environmental Trust and hosted by the Environment Protection Authority, to work with Aboriginal communities to increase their access to the Environmental Trust and their involvement in land management and environmental education projects.

The **Aboriginal Archives Project** involves the management of records relating to the Aborigines Welfare Board. These records are held at the State Archives, however, they are owned and managed by the DAA. Management involves granting access to records and ensuring the proper use of the records.

The aim of the Aboriginal Archives Program is to create an accurate and thorough index of the Aborigines Welfare Board files. This project will assist Aboriginal people to access files relating to themselves and their families more easily and will be particularly relevant and beneficial to members of the Stolen Generations. In the last twelve months, **110 Aboriginal people** have used the files to search for their families. By 2003-2004 this figure is predicted to be 200.

In 2002-03, **\$136,000** will be allocated to extend the **Aboriginal Archives Program**. This money will be used for the indexing of all Aboriginal Welfare Board files and purchasing a Microfilm Reader Printer. This will enable a more efficient and effective service and more comprehensive research tools, including:

- ◆ indexing of new types of records;
- ◆ greater preservation of files to ensure the safekeeping of records for future generations;
- ◆ enabling the Department of Aboriginal Affairs to process requests for information contained within these files on site;
- ◆ more confidential and efficient means to provide archival information to Aboriginal researchers as well as preserving the material held at the State Records;
- ◆ simplifying researching and allowing for material to be compiled in Sydney and sent to people in rural locations.

The Government is committed to the **cultural and heritage rights of Aboriginal people**. In recognition of these rights, the Government has been actively involved in the transfer of land back to the Aboriginal traditional owners.

The Government has allocated **\$1.6 million over two years** to implement an **Indigenous Fisheries Strategy**. This Strategy aims to foster greater understanding of Aboriginal cultural issues; acknowledge the importance of traditional cultural fishing; and encourage the involvement of the Indigenous community in the emerging aquaculture industry.

In 2002-03 the Department of Aboriginal Affairs will be working with the National Parks and Wildlife Service and the Registrar, Aboriginal Land Rights Act 1983, **to return the following lands to Aboriginal owners**:

- ◆ Mt Grenfell Historic Site;
- ◆ Biamanga and Gulaga National Parks;
- ◆ Mt Yarrowyck Nature Reserve;
- ◆ Warrell Creek; and
- ◆ Stockton Bight.

The **New South Wales Heritage Office** has a responsibility to ensure that Aboriginal sites are represented on the State Heritage Register. The Heritage Incentives Program is a heritage funding program that funds Aboriginal heritage projects such as oral history, heritage site protection, heritage

site promotion and heritage site works in New South Wales. In 2002-03, \$200,000 has been allocated to Aboriginal heritage projects.

The **National Parks and Wildlife Services** of New South Wales contributes to the Government's social justice objectives through a range of programs and initiatives which meet the needs and aspirations of Aboriginal communities. Some examples include:

- ◆ **Celebrating Aboriginal Communities Week** (NAIDOC) (**\$30,000** recurrent allocations) to work in partnership with Aboriginal communities to foster awareness and understanding of cultural heritage protection and management issues.
- ◆ **Aboriginal Discovery Education Program** of walks, talks and tours interpreting Aboriginal cultural heritage (**\$40,000** recurrent allocations) to make provision for the employment of Aboriginal people to interpret their heritage and deliver cultural heritage education to the broader community.
- ◆ **Employment of Aboriginal staff**, including Site Officers and Heritage Officers (**\$1.5 million** recurrent allocations) to support economic and social development of local Aboriginal communities and appropriate management of sites.
- ◆ **Establishment of the Aboriginal Heritage Advisory Committee** (**\$50,000** recurrent allocations) meeting the needs and aspirations of Aboriginal communities.

This year the **Office of the Registrar (Aboriginal Land Rights Act 1983)** will receive a **\$281,000** increase in its funding to reflect amendments to the **Aboriginal Land Rights Act** which provide for changes to the functions and responsibilities of the Registrar. The funding of the Office of the Registrar is used to:

- ◆ assist with the satisfactory operation of the Aboriginal Land Rights Act on behalf of Aboriginal people in New South Wales, and
- ◆ ensure Aboriginal people are registered as Aboriginal owners of land for the purposes of the joint management between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal people of conservation estate in New South Wales.

The New South Wales Department of Aboriginal Affairs has the responsibility for overall coordination of NSW Government action to promote Aboriginal economic development. A wide range of initiatives are being coordinated and monitored at agency level through the **Aboriginal Economic Development Working Group** (AEDWG), chaired by the DAA.

The AEDWG is currently reviewing a draft **NSW Government Aboriginal Economic Development Policy**, and has developed a draft Strategic Action Plan outlining activities in progress or proposed to support Aboriginal economic development in New South Wales. This Plan includes activities aimed at developing Aboriginal businesses, involving non-Aboriginal businesses, expanding public and private sector employment, and encouraging industry and regional initiatives.

The **Aboriginal Business Development Program**, serviced by the Department of State and Regional Development, provides a range of initiatives designed to assist Aboriginal people start and develop a business in order to achieve a higher level of economic independence. The programs and services include:

- ◆ **Indigenous Business Advisory Service** – this service provides free business guidance and information to start-up and establish Aboriginal businesses throughout New South Wales;

- ◆ **Aboriginal Business Link Program** – this program provides financial assistance to Aboriginal businesses to access mainstream business development programs. The program also provides assistance for firms to participate in trade fairs, exhibitions and other networking events.

A total of **\$530,000** will be allocated to extend the Aboriginal Business Development Program in 2002-2003 to achieve full implementation of the **Budyari Ngalaya, First Peoples' Business Partnerships Program**, which was launched in July 2001, including:

- ◆ establishment of an Aboriginal Business Roundtable;
- ◆ ongoing engagement of a Partnership Broker to assist private companies and Aboriginal businesses to form partnerships;
- ◆ extend beyond one year the appointment of Aboriginal Business Development Managers to assist the development of Aboriginal businesses and provide support for a business diagnostic;
- ◆ establish a panel of mentors to advise companies and Aboriginal people on the best ways of working together;
- ◆ support for the development of regional or industry based forums and networks; and
- ◆ develop a range of information to publicise new and successful partnerships, including a web site, newsletter, annual awards and exhibition of Aboriginal business ventures.

The New South Wales **Department of Industrial Relations** is committed to delivering a range of relevant industrial relations services to Aboriginal people and Torres Strait Islanders throughout the State. The Department's **Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Workplaces Services Unit** was established formally in August 1999 to coordinate the delivery of these services. In 2002-03, **\$120,000** will be allocated to the Unit.

The Unit works to provide New South Wales Indigenous people with better access to information about their employment rights and responsibilities. The Unit has compiled a loose leaf Employment Information Kit. The Unit also publishes a quarterly Newsletter advising of updates and changes to New South Wales industrial laws.

The Unit's staff work closely with other organisations already involved with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities to improve employment conditions. In addition, a program of visits to regional centres and a Telephone Advisory Service ensures availability of the Service to all Aboriginal people and Torres Strait Islanders throughout New South Wales.

The **Premier's Department** has a key role in improving employment outcomes for Aboriginal people in New South Wales.

During 2001-02 the Department, through a partnership with the then Federal Department of Employment, Workplace Relations and Small Business, established the Aboriginal Employment in Practice Support Strategy. During the year, this program **assisted in the employment of 217 Aboriginal people across 34 New South Wales public sector agencies and five local councils**. Fifty-two percent of these positions were located in regional New South Wales. The Department is seeking to extend the initiative and has allocated **\$50,000** for its implementation in 2002-03.

In 2002-03, the Department will deliver a management development program specifically for Aboriginal people in the public sector. Eighty percent of graduates from previous programs identified the program as the key to their promotion to decision making positions across the sector. **\$350,000** has been allocated to conduct the program.

In October 2001, the Minister for Aboriginal Affairs chaired a meeting of Ministers to discuss the issue of sexual violence in Aboriginal communities.

The Minister's meeting agreed to hold a series of **roundtables on sexual violence**, with representatives from Aboriginal communities and relevant departments, to discuss appropriate ways forward. The vision of these roundtables is to create safe families and communities free from sexual violence, raise the profile of sexual violence in communities and government, lower community tolerance for sexual violence, and raise community and government accountability for responding to and preventing sexual violence.

The recommendations from the roundtables aim to incorporate the particular needs of Aboriginal people and continue to build on partnerships between government and Aboriginal communities to develop and deliver programs.

An important initiative already in development is **Aboriginal Communities: Protecting Children**. This is an inter-agency project led by the Education Centre Against Violence and the **Commission for Children and Young People**. This innovative community education program seeks to equip community members and workers with the skills and education they need to promote a better understanding of child sexual assault in their communities. The New South Wales Government is committing a **further \$230,000** to this project to expand the project.

The Department of Aboriginal Affairs has also already funded six new projects in regional New South Wales that deal with issues related to sexual violence at the community level at a total of **\$216,111**.

The recommendations made at the two roundtables will be taken up by the State Management Group of the **NSW Violence Against Women Strategy** with specific community input which will take responsibility for progressing the recommendations from the roundtables. This will ensure that the momentum and the urgency the New South Wales Government attaches to the issue of sexual violence in Aboriginal communities is maintained, and acted on.

The **Department of Juvenile Justice** has several programs in place to reduce the over-representation of Aboriginal young people in the juvenile justice system. In 2002-03, **\$1.4 million** is allocated to these programs, including:

- ◆ an Aboriginal over-representation Strategic Plan;
- ◆ Bail Accommodation Support; and
- ◆ Local Offender and Employment & Skills Training programs.

NSW Agriculture, through the Murrumbidgee College of Agriculture, is successfully providing **vocational education and training to adult and juvenile inmates of correctional institutions**. Inmates, including Indigenous inmates, have been trained in the areas of agriculture, horticulture, viticulture and land conservation and restoration. The training is accredited and provides an opportunity for inmates to gain nationally recognised qualifications that will enhance job prospects post-release. The Department will allocate **\$165,000** to this project.

The **Student Leadership is for Koori Kids** program develops leadership skills for Aboriginal high school students through strategies to encourage students to become leaders in their school and to participate in their school's Student Representative Council (SRC).

The program aims to:

- ◆ increase the number of Aboriginal students in leadership positions in high schools; and

- ◆ increase the number of Aboriginal students participating in SRC activities.

Funding for Aboriginal student leadership programs was allocated to eight districts in 2001. A total of **\$50,000** is provided in 2002-03.

To develop **skills and sustainable sport and recreation opportunities** in communities, the Department of Sport and Recreation has allocated **\$100,000** per year to Aboriginal community organisations.

Supporting Older People and People with Disabilities

The New South Wales Government is committed to supporting those with special needs, particularly older people and those who have a disability.

Accessible and effective service delivery is a Government priority, particularly to meet the needs of those who may require support from a number of agencies or a range of services. The Government is committed to ensuring that people with special needs will be supported with effective and affordable services that as far as possible enable them to live as fully participating members of the community. Other agencies fund concessions to older people and other members of the community with special needs.

The Department of Ageing, Disability and Home Care purchases a range of support services from Government and non-Government providers for the frail aged and people with a disability and their respective carers to meet their support needs and as far as possible to enable them to participate fully in the community. The Department also provides services directly to children and adults with intellectual or multiple disabilities and their carers, including accommodation and support services for children and adults with an intellectual disability who are unable to live independently in the community.

The Department of Ageing, Disability and Home Care's total budgeted expenditure for 2002-03 is **\$1,166.8 million** – an increase of **\$52.3 million** over the 2001-02 budget estimate. The Department runs a number of programs that fulfil the Government's social justice objectives towards older people and people with a disability.

The **Home and Community Care Program** provides a range of home and community care services to frail older people, people with a disability, and their carers to enable them to live independently in the community. These services include domestic assistance, personal care, home nursing, paramedical, respite care, case management, counselling, social support and home maintenance and modification, food services and transport services. In 2002-03 an additional **\$28.4 million** will be allocated to this program. The additional funding will assist in:

- ◆ expanding the availability of HACC services in response to unmet demand;
- ◆ meeting the continued growth in demand for HACC services as a result of the ageing of the population; and
- ◆ augmenting services for younger people with a disability.

An additional **\$1.5 million** has been provided in 2002-03 to allow the relocation of individuals with a disability from boarding houses.

In 2002-03, an additional **\$5.4 million** will be allocated to the Department of Ageing, Disability and Home Care's **Disability Services**. This is designed to keep pace with increasing demand for disability services and to ensure that existing access to disability services is maintained.

Additional funding of **\$5 million** each year from 2001-02 has been allocated to improve **service viability** and provide additional “one-off” assistance to service providers to address service viability issues.

Additional capital funding of **\$2 million each year for four years** (1999-00 to 2002-03) is being used to buy and lease additional **equipment for people with a disability**, such as lifts and disability aids. Funding is distributed through NSW Health’s Program of Appliances for Disabled People (PADP) Scheme.

The former Dementia Action Program, now known as **Future Directions for Dementia Care and Support in NSW 2001-2006** has received an additional **\$452,000**. This will provide additional services and support for people with dementia and their carers, including people in rural and remote communities. **‘Future Directions’** is a joint strategy with NSW Health.

Further funding of **\$436,000** will be allocated to continue a **devolution program** to relocate people with a disability who are living in large residential facilities from those facilities into the community.

The **‘Seniors Online Strategy’** aims to promote the benefits of seniors using computers and the Internet as well as remove barriers that prevent older people accessing information technology. An additional **\$18,000** in 2002-03 will be used for training a group of seniors who will in turn assist other seniors in accessing information technology.

Active and Able, a joint initiative with the Motor Accidents Authority of New South Wales is designed to assist people with a disability, particularly those acquired through a motor vehicle accident, to participate in mainstream sport and physical activity. There are several pilot projects being conducted as part of the project with a final funding pool of **\$374,000** for 2002-03.

The Department of Sport and Recreation sponsor the following programs:

- ◆ **\$105,000** has been allocated to enable elite athletes with disabilities to increase their participation in sporting activities through the provision of the **Disabled Athlete Scholarship program**;
- ◆ approximately **\$230,000** will be allocated to support the **NSW Sports Council for the Disabled** through participation and event management, regional and athlete development and special project funding for member organisations;
- ◆ **\$25,000** per annum has been allocated to assist athletes with disabilities and escorts, where appropriate, competing in approved **international competition** for the period 2000 - 2004;
- ◆ **\$10,000** has been allocated to the **New South Wales Sport and Recreation Awards for Athletes with a Disability**.

The **New South Wales Active Community Grants Scheme**, run through the Department of Sport and Recreation, is a program aimed at increasing opportunities for people in New South Wales to participate in physical activity at a community level. For the 2002-03 funding year, the program has been allocated **\$350,000** and targets children, Aboriginal people, older adults and people with a disability.

Other agency initiatives which target aged and disabled members of the community are as follows:

The NSW Fire Brigades has also committed **\$10,000** for the **Smoke Alarm Battery Replacement for the Elderly (SABRE)** program. The local fire station forms a partnership with councils and community carer organisations to maintain battery operated smoke alarms in the homes of the elderly. Firefighters at local fire stations maintain a register for the regular maintenance of the smoke alarms of older adults. SABRE also involves carers who regularly have contact with the aged. SABRE has been extensively

piloted and evaluated in partnership with local community groups such as Meals on Wheels. The program has been implemented State-wide and is popular in rural and regional areas.

The State Transit Authority is providing new **buses with low floors** to provide better access for the aged, disabled and children. A total of **\$24 million** will be allocated to this program in 2002-03. A total of **\$38 million** will be allocated in 2002-03 to enable the State Rail Authority to complete 15 easy access station upgrades and commence work on five new station upgrades around its network to assist people with a disability.

A total of **\$350,000** has been allocated in 2002-03 to provide **auto-tactile push buttons at traffic lights** to assist people with visual impairment. Approximately **\$60,000** will be allocated to provide kerb ramps on roads. This will enhance the mobility and transportation for older people and people with disabilities through improving wheelchair access.

The Government provides an extensive range of **concessions and support for pensioners, seniors and other members of the community with special needs**.

To reduce the financial impact of owning motor vehicles for pensioners, a total of **\$106.2 million** has been allocated for **pensioner motor vehicle tax concessions** in 2002-03. A total of **\$28 million** will be allocated to provide **pensioner concessions on vehicle registration fees**.

A total of **\$15.3 million** has also been allocated for **drivers license concessions** to pensioners to reduce the financial impact of owning and driving motor vehicles.

A total of **\$1.5 million** has been allocated to provide concession rates on boat licences, recreational vessel registration and private mooring licences for persons in receipt of Commonwealth pensions.

The **Taxi Transport Subsidy Scheme (TTSS)** provides taxi travel at a half rate subsidy to residents who are unable to use public transport because of a qualifying severe and permanent disability. A total of **\$13.982 million** has been allocated to TTSS in 2002-03.

The **Pensioner Excursion Travel Program (PETs)** provides for unlimited pensioner and Seniors travel on all CityRail services and most State Transit Authority services on the day of ticket purchase. A total of **\$177.86 million** has been allocated to meet this cost in 2002-03.

Funding is allocated to **Countrylink** for the provision of subsidised travel on Countrylink services. A total of **\$45 million** has been allocated to this program in 2002-03.

Private transport operators will be provided with concession payments to enable private transport operators to meet the cost of **subsidised concession travel**. A total of **\$35.5 million** has been allocated to meet these costs in 2002-03.

The Government funds **half fare concessions** on State Transit Authority services to the unemployed and to others in the community who receive Commonwealth allowances together with first and second year apprentices and tertiary students. The estimated cost of those State Transit concessions is **\$29 million** in 2002-03. Vision impaired persons are provided with free travel on State Transit services.

A **Pensioner Energy Rebate** of \$112 per annum is provided to eligible pensioners as a discount off each energy bill. The energy rebate became effective from 1 January 2002 and replaced the separate electricity and gas rebates pensioners previously received. It is an increase for the majority of pensioners who will get the rebate even if they are not connected to gas. In 2002-03, a total of **\$78.076 million** will be allocated to the Pensioner Energy Rebate.

Water Rates Concessions for pensioners will total **\$65.6 million** from Sydney Water and **\$7.5 million** from Hunter Water in 2002-03. Those in receipt of a Commonwealth Pensioner Concession Card and some holders of Department of Veterans Affairs cards qualify for the concession.

The Hunter Water Corporation receives around **\$8.4 million** each year from the New South Wales State Government as **Social Program Funding**. This funds pensioner concessions on water and sewerage charges, rebates on water usage for people on dialysis machines and for exempt properties such as churches and public benevolent organisations.

The Sydney Water Corporation administers a **Payment Assistance Scheme (PAS)** worth **\$0.5 million annually**, to assist low-income earners in paying their water bills. PAS vouchers, worth \$25 each, are distributed by accredited charities and welfare organisations and are redeemable against Sydney Water bills. The Government also provides **Emergency Energy Account Payment Assistance (EAPA)** Vouchers to accredited charities and welfare organisations to distribute to financially disadvantaged households to prevent energy disconnection. The New South Wales Government will provide around **\$8 million** in funding for this program in 2002-03.

The budget provides for concessions to social security beneficiaries and other financial assistance including **\$76.0 million** in 2002-03 for **local council rate rebates**. Under the scheme, eligible pensioners are granted a 50 percent concession on local government rates, with a maximum rebate of \$250. The Government funds 55 percent of this cost to councils, with the other 45 percent being taken up by the councils themselves.

The **Life Support Rebate** program ensures that electricity remains affordable and available to users of specific life support equipment, including dialysis machines and oxygen concentrators. In 2002-03, a total of **\$2.037 million** has been allocated to this program.

Meeting the Needs of Women

The Government is committed to protecting and enhancing the rights of women in New South Wales while encouraging their aspirations. As part of this, the Department for Women was established by the New South Wales Government on 5 April 1995 to significantly improve opportunities and respond to the needs and issues facing women in New South Wales. The Department's current purpose is to develop a strategic agenda focusing on women's access to and participation in all aspects of society, particularly economic development. Strong emphasis is on building strategic partnerships and communities.

Working with the whole of government, business and the community, the Department's objectives reflect the issues that women in New South Wales have identified as important. They also incorporate the **New South Wales Government Action Plan for Women 2000-02** that aims for social justice, a sustainable environment, economic development and fiscal responsibility. The Department for Women has a total budget of **\$5.064 million** for 2002-03.

In 2002-03 **\$155,000** will be allocated to **Women's Lives Online**. This project will develop a life event approach to online information and service delivery with respect to key and significant events for women. This approach is an electronic tool that can improve the quality of customer outcomes and bring about cost savings to all stakeholders. The project has a whole of Government approach to service delivery advancing the implementation of integrated e-government services.

In 2002-03, **\$50,000** has been allocated to **Women on Wheels 2002 (WOW 2)**. WOW 2 involves a team of Department for Women and other Government and community agency staff, taking targeted events to women in regional and rural New South Wales. WOW 2 will target the North Coast, New England and Northern Tablelands regions of New South Wales between from 23 June to 6 July 2002. This program aims to:

- ◆ increase women's access to government services in regional and rural New South Wales;
- ◆ increase the Department for Women and the Premier's Council for Women's understanding of issues affecting women in regional and rural New South Wales, to be utilised in future policy and project development;
- ◆ stimulate and utilise public and private sector partnerships, to provide greater services and opportunities for women in regional and rural New South Wales; and
- ◆ act as a catalyst for action in regional and rural New South Wales communities.

The Department has an ongoing commitment to promoting and supporting the participation of women in the economic, social, cultural and environmental development of the Western Sydney region. To this end the Department commits resources and the time of senior officers to undertake specific projects with women in Western Sydney, to participate in whole of government initiatives (including the Regional Coordination Management Program), and to develop projects in partnership with other agencies. In 2002-03, **\$90,000** will be allocated to projects in Western Sydney, including:

- ◆ supporting women to participate in IT opportunities, including through sponsorship towards the **Western Sydney IT Cluster Start-Up Awards 2002**. The Award will assist entrepreneurs to start up a new business venture, encourage, promote and support research, development, innovation and commercialisation of new ideas and technologies, and promote innovation and foster entrepreneurship. The Department will sponsor an award for women in Information and Communication Technology;
- ◆ the participation of women in decision-making - Parramatta Council is one of four local government councils to pilot the 10 point plan of best practice to support women councillors, as part of the **Hands Up for Women in Council** project. The Department is canvassing the establishment of a reference group that would represent the interests of women across the region, and contribute to the development of initiatives aimed at improved outcomes for women in Western Sydney.

The **Women's Grants Program** allocates funding each year towards Partnership Projects that meet the Department's corporate objective of building safe, inclusive, participatory and economically developed communities in which women are full and equal participants. Three current Partnership Projects contribute to social justice outcomes for women in regional and metropolitan communities, including for Aboriginal women.

In 2001-02, **\$300,000** has been allocated to the **Women's Grants Program Partnership Projects**, including:

- ◆ **Valuing Women's Voices** – Barrickneal Housing and Community Ltd has been funded to auspice a project supporting the capacity and representation of Aboriginal women of the Murdi Paaki region of NSW in decision making;
- ◆ The **City Care MED** project has been funded to train women in Redfern/Waterloo to increase self sufficiency and skills in enterprise;
- ◆ The **Clarence Valley and Community Programs and Lower Clarence Valley Women's Group** have been funded to consider the role of women in creating and maintaining a sustainable future for the Clarence Valley.

A number of other Government agencies have developed programs that will cater towards the needs of women in New South Wales.

The **Department of Industrial Relations** continues to fund the **Women's Equity Bureau (WEB)**, at a cost of around **\$350,000**. The Bureau's aim is to improve and support the social, economic and labour market position of women workers by developing and implementing strategies to address pay and employment equity issues, and by providing advice and assistance to advance the industrial interests of women.

The WEB looks at balancing work and family, part-time and casual work and other issues of equity. Under the umbrella of the NSW Government Work and Family Strategy the WEB has been actively engaged in developing innovative approaches that support the rights of workers with family responsibilities. In the years ahead this approach will focus on selected industries with the aim of implementing family friendly arrangements at the workplace level. One such focus in recent times has been **rostering practices in the Residential Care Industry**.

Under the Work and Family Strategy, the WEB has produced a guidebook, **Time to Care: Good Family Friendly Ideas for Small Business**. This guide provides business with sound ideas for implementing and managing family friendly arrangements and complying with legal requirements. It results from the collaboration between the State Chamber of Commerce NSW and the Department of Industrial Relations and was launched in late 2001.

NSW Agriculture is providing funding for two **Year of the Outback Women's Overseas Study Scholarships** for women in outback NSW in 2002-03. The **\$10,000** Study Scholarships will be offered to support women of all ages and backgrounds currently living in the Western Division of NSW.

The Study Scholarships will provide an opportunity for two rural women to undertake an overseas study tour focussing on an initiative which promotes community development. The Study Tour will benefit both the individual and rural communities in the Western Division. The Scholarship could be used in a variety of ways such as examining overseas approaches to promoting community development, looking at new ways of dealing with isolation, developing leadership skills or knowledge through participation in a conference, course or seminar.

NSW Agriculture has allocated **\$36,000** to sponsor four community women to participate in the **Third World Congress on Rural Women** to be held in Spain in October 2002.

Women business owners make up a significant part of the small business sector and contribute to business growth and employment. At the same time, women business owners have the challenge of balancing business and family commitments. In order to support women to start, manage and grow small business, the Government funds a combination of mentor programs, workshops and regional based business development programs.

During 2002-03, the Government, through the Department of State and Regional Development will be assisting women in business through a number of initiatives. The **Women in Business Mentor Program**, which assists emerging women business owners to grow their business by linking them with experienced business people (mentors) will be allocated **\$160,000** in 2002-03.

The **Women in Business Workshop** series provides practical training on a range of business management and growth topics. The workshop series has been allocated **\$40,000** in 2002-03. An additional **\$40,000** has been allocated in 2002-03 to **delivering flexible models of business development support**, including mentoring and training, to regional businesswomen.

On 25 March 2001, the Premier announced a **\$4 million**, three year campaign entitled **Behind the Label – the Government's Clothing Outworker Strategy**. The aims of the Strategy are:

- ♦ to foster an Australian clothing industry that competes successfully on the basis of design, technological innovation and productivity, while providing healthy, safe and fairly paid employment for all its workers; and

- ◆ to remedy disadvantage experienced by some outworkers in the industry.

The **Behind the Label Unit** within Department of Industrial Relations has been expanded to four bilingual inspector/advisers. The inspector/advisers are working within the Vietnamese, Chinese and other communities providing practical assistance and information to employers and employees in the clothing industry to help them comply with their industrial obligations and enforce any breaches of the law. The communities that the inspector/advisers work in are predominantly located in the west and south west of Sydney. Permanently based industrial inspectors in the Bankstown contact centre also play an important role in the Department's compliance activities.

The Unit is also developing and delivering information and educational resources to employers and employees in the clothing industry to increase their knowledge and awareness of their rights and responsibilities. The Unit has commenced a number of outreach activities, participating in Chinese and Vietnamese New Year community events in Chinatown and Warwick Farm to promote DIR and the Outwork Strategy initiatives, and is working with a number of western Sydney based community organisations and SBS radio.

The Unit is also working directly with outworkers and their communities. Assistance will be provided to outworkers to recover unpaid remuneration and to access further education and training opportunities. The Department has funding for the design and delivery of community based programs to assist outworkers to access training and other opportunities.

A total of **\$1.5 million** will be spent in 2002-03 in funding the various aspects of the Behind the Label project.

In 2002-03, NSW Health will allocate **\$82,000** for the **Drugs in Pregnancy Consumer Consultation Project**. This project aims to conduct a wide consultation process with pregnant women who identify as drug users and identify services and forms of service delivery that are considered by the consumers to meet their needs in pregnancy. The initiative will identify barriers to accessing health and community services and identify gaps in service delivery.

NSW Health will allocate **\$106,400** to **Support Opportunities for young mums and girls at risk of getting pregnant in the Rosemeadow/Ambarvale Area – A Model for Macarthur**. This project is targeted at young women aged between 12-20 years. It aims to build social capital among the young women specifically targeting those in the Rosemeadow/Ambarvale Area. It will provide training and support opportunities for young women participating in the project.

The Mid North Coast Area Health Service has developed a community based project to develop social skills in girls at pregnancy risk. **The Feel Good Project Mid North Coast – Social Skills Program for Adolescent Girls** will be allocated **\$75,000** in 2002-03. The project aims to reduce risk-taking behaviour which will lead to a reduction in illicit drug use and teenage pregnancy and improve school retention rates.

A total of **\$487,550** will be allocated to the **Alternative Birthing Services Program** in the Illawarra, Walgett, Kempsey (Durri), Campbelltown (Tharwal) and Narooma (Katungal) in 2002-03. The services provide models of antenatal care for young Aboriginal women which are community based and link young women at risk of poor maternal and infant incomes to tertiary maternity services. They are either outreach services or are based at Aboriginal community controlled health centres. The services aim to improve access of Aboriginal girls to antenatal care and to improve support for Aboriginal girls in their communities.

In 2002-03, **\$100,000** will be allocated to the **Women's Sports Administration and Travel Scholarship Program**. This program aims to improve women's skills and knowledge in sport and recreation management and administration with a view to increasing opportunities for career advancement and facilitating organisational change within the sport, recreation and physical activity industry.

Promoting Diversity

New South Wales is culturally diverse - its community includes individuals and groups from a range of different backgrounds, beliefs and cultures. This cultural diversity is one of New South Wales' greatest strengths. The New South Wales Government is committed to promoting the value of cultural diversity.

The Community Relations Commission For a multicultural NSW (the Commission) actively contributes to the NSW Government's social justice objectives. The principles of multiculturalism which were enshrined in legislation in March 2001 ensure that all individuals in New South Wales have the greatest possible opportunity to participate in all aspects of public life in which they may legally participate. These principles incorporate the concepts of equity, access, participation and rights, which form the basis of the NSW Government's social justice strategy.

The Commission's role as lead agency in ensuring the advancement of community relations throughout New South Wales has meant that innovative and progressive projects have been implemented that either work closely with particular communities or delve into issues pertaining to a broad cross section of communities. The concept that New South Wales is a community of communities underpins each project undertaken or initiated by the Commission.

The **Cabramatta CityWatch** project encourages local community members from Cabramatta to create interest groups that focus on issues of concern within their local community. These issues are then taken to the CityWatch Council, which includes the NSW Police Service, a variety of New South Wales government departments and Fairfield Council to implement strategies to solve them. Through the project, members of the Cabramatta community are pursuing their rights as citizens by demanding a safer community while simultaneously fulfilling their duties and responsibilities as citizens by working towards their community's goals. CityWatch enables community members to work in partnership with local police and service providers through the Link Groups and bimonthly CityWatch Council meeting. Through these, community members have a means to participate in local decision-making through direct access to local and state government agencies and the local Police.

Cabramatta CityWatch is a multi-ethnic, multi-racial, multi-religious venture. It is inclusive of all individuals and communities in the Cabramatta area, an endeavour of the kind encouraged under the Community Relations Commission and Principles of Multiculturalism Act 2000. Through the allocation of **\$150,000** as part of the CityWatch project for the provision of interpreting services at the Cabramatta Local Area Command, the Government is ensuring that those from culturally diverse backgrounds have easy access to Police services.

The **Youth Partnership Initiative with Arabic-Speaking Communities** is a cross-departmental project that is working towards strengthening community relations in New South Wales. This partnership initiative between the New South Wales Government and Arabic-speaking communities responds to needs expressed by these communities by working closely with them. It seeks to provide young people with better learning opportunities and recreational activities for long-term personal development. Another aim of the project is to increase parental awareness of their rights and responsibilities as parents in Australia. In 2002-03, **\$1.3 million** will be allocated to the Youth Partnership.

One facet of the partnership is the establishment by the Community Relations Commission of youth liaison teams that will make positive connections and provide advice to young people. This style of direct action is a new and exciting approach to community development. The teams will focus their efforts in public spaces and will comprise approved members of Arabic-speaking communities such as youth workers, and Christian and Islamic clerics.

Six youth liaison teams were launched in December 2001. Two of these teams started work in early 2002 after completing an orientation program conducted by the Commission. Currently, the teams go to the areas of Liverpool, Bankstown, Harris Park and Parramatta and visit public spaces on Thursday and Friday nights. In 2002-2003, **\$226,411** will be allocated to the project. The Commission's long term project goals of creating positive connections with young people is generated through the youth liaison teams.

The Community Relations Commission's **Cross-cultural Training Project** is aimed at government agencies that work with different cultures. It is to be piloted in Local Government Areas that are participating in the Youth Partnership with Arabic-speaking communities project. In 2002-03, \$32,000 has been allocated to this project and the project will be expanded in scope and potential clientele.

NSW Agriculture has worked with agencies involved with those from culturally diverse backgrounds to organise **cross-agency training for staff on cross-cultural issues**. This enables staff to develop skills to better service the needs of a culturally diverse society. NSW Agriculture is also working with non-English speaking market gardeners in the Sydney Basin on a wide range of educational activities, primarily in relation to the safe use of chemicals. Funding for this initiative will come from the Department's recurrent allocation.

Government funding to communities through the grants process allows for community-based organisations to undertake projects for the benefit of our multicultural community. The **Commission's Community Development Grants Program** is an inclusive grants and subsidies program that encourages participation from communities. In 2002-2003 **\$1.5 million** will be allocated under the Program.

Carnivale is a significant occasion for the New South Wales community to celebrate its cultural diversity. The Ministry for the Arts is providing total support towards the 2002 Festival of **\$855,000** including \$555,000 provided in the 2002-03 budget.

The Community Relations Commission has created ten **regional advisory councils**, covering the Albury, Griffith and Leeton, the Central West, Hornsby -Wyong, Hunter, Illawarra, Northern, New England, and Macarthur - Liverpool and Penrith - Blacktown regions.

Regional advisory councils identify and provide advice to the Commission on multicultural issues affecting people in the region. They monitor and report on the implementation, value and effectiveness of Commission initiatives in regional areas and facilitate communication with relevant community groups. The Government representatives are based locally to contribute and make decisions on issues presented to the council. In 2002-03, approximately **\$35,000** will be allocated as meeting fees for the members. Eight regional coordinators work in country centres across New South Wales to improve rural and regional service delivery and progress collaboration between Government agencies and communities on issues of concern to people living outside Sydney. This is detailed further in the section entitled **Supporting Rural and Regional Communities**.

The Commission is implementing its **Online Services Project** to enable the provision of online transactions and interactive communication between the government and the community. It will provide a common entry point for the community to obtain information about relevant community groups and the government, as well as being able to interact with each other.

The Project will allow the Internet booking of interpreting services and the provision of the whole range of translation services. It will enhance the multilingual translation and interpreting service to the community that already offers a telephone information service to those from culturally diverse backgrounds as well as provide a wider choice of language services such as monitoring the ethnic media to achieve greater effectiveness.

In 2002-03 the Online Services will receive funding of **\$493,000** to further enhance the Commission's services, enabling EAPS online reporting and full deployment of Community Interaction.

The **Community Partnerships Scheme** is a funding program of the Commission that funds projects responsive to emerging community needs. In 2002-2003 the Commission will allocate **\$150,000** to the scheme.

Access to government services relies on the ability of the service provider and the client to be able to communicate effectively. The **Commission provides interpreting and translating services** in over 75 languages to all Government departments and agencies, private and commercial organisations, community groups and individuals. In 2002-2003, **\$5.947 million** will be allocated for language services to facilitate communication and the effective delivery of services by agencies to all their clients.

The **Ministry for the Arts** funds a variety of programs that are consistent with the Government's social justice objectives. For example, the Ministry's **Cultural Grants Program**, the **Indigenous Arts Fund**, **Community Cultural Development Program** and the **Western Sydney Arts Initiatives** address social justice priorities through funding for capital infrastructure, arts organisations, fellowships and cultural programs, including programs in regional and rural communities.

The **Community Cultural Development Program** encourages initiatives which enable artists and communities to develop and participate in a variety of arts and cultural activities that reflect the cultural diversity of the people of New South Wales. The total funding for this program in 2002-03 is **\$2.7 million**.

The **Powerhouse Museum** has a long history of researching, documenting and exhibiting materials of importance to the migration history and community heritage of New South Wales. **The Movable Heritage Research Centre** will expand thematic work in migrant heritage and facilitate the development of linkages and partnerships with communities and institutions throughout the State.

The development of greater migration heritage awareness will strengthen regional institutions and communities' acknowledgment of the value of their collections. Regional and rural communities and holdings will be an integral part of the focus of the Centre. The total funding for the Centre in 2002-03 will be **\$294,000**.

The over-riding aim of the Centre is to document and preserve the 'at risk' material culture, oral history and heritage from communities which are changing rapidly, due to changing generational values relating to the importance and cultural worth of this material. Oral and written histories will document the stories and context for this material.

The **Migration Heritage Centre NSW** is an initiative of the New South Wales Government led by the Premier's Department. The Centre works with a number of Government agencies and community groups.

The Migration Heritage Centre is a platform for activities which focus on both historical and contemporary expressions of migration heritage. The Migration Heritage Centre's role is to develop, realise and promote projects with community groups and the cultural, education, government and business sectors. These relationship-building projects increase the recognition of the valuable contribution made by all migrant communities to New South Wales cultural heritage. Treasury will allocate **\$375,000** to the Centre in 2002-03.

A **Multicultural Campaign** to promote New South Wales as a tourism destination will be allocated \$180,000 in 2002-03 by Tourism NSW.

Business migration makes a significant contribution to the business growth of New South Wales. The Government supports business migrants through the **Business Migrant Information and Referral Service** which is run by the Department of State and Regional Development. An allocation of **\$25,000** has been provided in 2002-03 for this service to provide one-on-one business guidance, business seminars, information on investment opportunities and referrals to government departments and services.