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Media Release

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Investing in the future of regional New South Wales

The Minns Labor Government is building a better NSW where regional communities thrive, with the 2025-26 Budget securing the future of the state's essential services and the economic prosperity of the communities that rely on them.

Delivering better essential services

After 12 years of delays and broken promises by the Coalition, the Minns Labor Government is investing **\$3.5 billion** in vital hospital upgrades across regional NSW.

These include:

- **\$220.0 million** to support the future expansion and redevelopment of the Wollongong Hospital and Health Precinct
- **\$23.1 million** for the Dubbo Alcohol and Other Drug Residential Rehabilitation Centre
- **\$20.2 million** for the Forbes Hospital Operating Theatre Redevelopment
- **\$7.5 million** to increase the existing car parking capacity at the new Maitland Hospital.

The Government is investing **\$836.4 million** in an Essential Health Services Package across NSW. This will support core health services at facilities scheduled to open, including at Gunnedah Hospital. Continued funding is provided for the Farmgate Support Program, enabling essential mental health support for farmers and farming families.

On top of the **\$126.6 million** already invested, this year's budget allocates **\$158.8 million** to continue delivering three new regional helicopter bases.

\$2.1 billion will be delivered for new and upgraded schools across regional and rural communities. This includes:

- The rebuild of Willyama High School as a brand-new, world-class school
- A new primary school for West Dapto.

This Budget continues the Government's plan to deliver 100 new public preschools by 2027, including a preschool co-located at the new West Dapto primary school. This brings the number of new regional public preschools to be delivered to 50.

Keeping communities safe

The Minns Labor Government continues to work towards a safer NSW, with better support for victim-survivors and tougher penalties for perpetrators.

\$272.7 million will be invested in domestic, family and sexual violence services, and to support victim-survivors. The Government understands that victim-survivors face unique barriers in regional communities. This funding will strengthen service delivery and increase avenues for women and children across the state to seek help and safety.

The Government is taking regional youth crime seriously, which is why we have legislated the strongest knife crime laws in the country, strengthened bail laws for youth offenders, created a new offence for "post and boast" crimes, and are undertaking a review of the "doli incapax" legal principle in NSW.

Securing our economic future

This Budget sets NSW up for long term prosperity by making responsible investments to ensure our agricultural and regional industries are safeguarded.

An additional **\$100 million** will boost biosecurity preparation and responses, bringing the state's biosecurity budget to over a billion dollars for the first time in history.

A **\$9.3 million** investment will continue the Feral Pig and Pest Control Program, which over the past two years has seen more than 212,000 feral pigs and 18,000 feral deer controlled.

Building on \$59.6 million invested last year to upgrade research facilities neglected by the former government, a further **\$41.2 million** will boost the state's primary industries research capacity.

This Budget also lays the foundations for the future success of coal-producing communities.

\$27.3 million is being invested to establish the Future Jobs and Investment Authority to coordinate new economic opportunities in coal-producing communities in the Hunter, Illawarra, Central West and North West.

We are also unlocking more than **\$100 million** in funding to attract investment, plan for post-mine land use and undertake skills mapping through the new Future Jobs and Investment Fund.

And we are deferring up to **\$250 million** in royalties on new critical minerals projects, supporting jobs, investment and economic development in regional areas.

Building better communities

The Minns Labor Government is building better communities in the regions, with the 2025-26 Budget investing in regional infrastructure and disaster recovery, helping communities across the state thrive and rebuild.

From funding safer, more reliable roads and transport to strengthening recovery efforts after devastating natural disasters, the Minns Labor Government is making sure regional NSW has the services and support it needs.

The Budget invests **\$2.8 billion** in partnership with the Australian Government in road safety, delivering on commitments in the 2026 Road Safety Action Plan to focus on reducing deaths and serious injuries. This includes the delivery of life-saving road safety infrastructure upgrades such as intersection upgrades, safety barriers, wider medians and road widening.

The Budget also invests in regional road upgrades, including:

- **\$35 million** for Thornton Rail Bridge
- **\$20 million** for motorway ramps at Dapto
- **\$15 million** for the intersection at Yass Rd, Bungendore Rd, and Ellerton Dr in Queanbeyan East.

This Budget includes **\$48 million** to improve mobile coverage on major regional highways across the state.

Regional NSW has experienced extreme levels of natural disaster, including floods and Cyclone Alfred this year. This budget includes **\$4.2 billion** in partnership with the Australian Government to support natural disaster and recovery programs. This includes:

- **\$2.3 billion** for restoration works to repair local and state roads damaged in major flood events, including in the Hunter and Northern Rivers
- **\$1.6 billion** for disaster relief and recovery programs funded through the Disaster Relief Account administered by the NSW Reconstruction Authority
- **\$63.2 million** for the Resilient Lands Program to unlock new home and land options in safe locations in the Northern Rivers and to support relocations
- **\$27.0 million** over three years for repair and restoration of water and sewer infrastructure in the Central West, which was damaged by severe weather and flooding in 2022

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