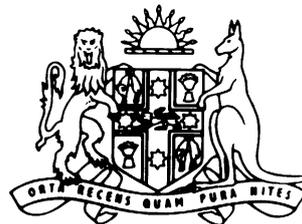


Western Sydney Budget Statement

2001-02



New South Wales

FOREWORD

I'm delighted to announce, for the fourth successive year, a record level of funding by the New South Wales Government for Western Sydney families and communities.

This year more than \$4.5 billion has been allocated for capital and recurrent programs across the 14 Local Council areas that make up Western Sydney. The 2001-2002 Western Sydney Budget Statement is part of the Government's determination to help build Western Sydney into a knowledge region, a clean and green region, a fair region with opportunities for all, and an empowered and entrepreneurial region.

Highlights of Government expenditure in the Western Sydney Budget include:

- ◆ \$1.9 billion for Western Sydney schools and TAFE colleges
- ◆ \$1.2 billion for new and ongoing hospitals and health services
- ◆ \$378 million on Western Sydney public transport and roads
- ◆ \$289 million for housing, family, child and community support services
- ◆ \$435 million for police and public safety in Western Sydney, and
- ◆ \$181 million for regional parks, water, waste and other environmental initiatives.

Almost one-in-ten Australians live in Western Sydney, and the region's 72,000 businesses produce \$58 billion in turnover each year. Western Sydney is the third largest regional economy in Australia (after the rest of Sydney and Melbourne) and also one of the fastest growing regions in the nation.

The Western Sydney Budget Statement is clear evidence of our commitment for economic, environmental and social infrastructure and services. We are providing for the needs of the people of Western Sydney now, and meeting emerging needs.

The Government will continue to work in partnership with industry, Local Councils and the region's communities to encourage the sustainable growth of the region.



Kim Yeadon MP
Minister for Western Sydney
Member for Granville

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CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

Western Sydney covers fourteen local government areas over some 8,000 square kilometres. It encompasses the local government areas of Bankstown, Auburn and Parramatta, down to Wollondilly Shire in the south, Blue Mountains City Council to the west and north to the Hawkesbury Shire.

This Western Sydney Budget Statement reports on the Government's progress of its major initiatives.

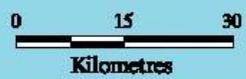
The Statement is not a description of every Government initiative which will impact on Western Sydney in 2001-2002, nor is it a complete list of the programs or funding which will be delivered in the region. Rather, it provides an outline of the key programs and priorities for Western Sydney in the coming financial year. Funding allocations specifically to be spent in Western Sydney are indicated in bold type.

The objectives of the Statement are to provide a comprehensive picture of key Government programs in Western Sydney and to assist Government agencies and the people of Western Sydney to assess program and service priorities across the region.



Office of
Western
Sydney

Western Sydney
by Local Council Area



CHAPTER 2: MINISTER FOR WESTERN SYDNEY

The Government appointed the State's first ever Minister for Western Sydney in 1997. The Minister for Western Sydney regularly meets with the region's key organisations as well as local government, business and community leaders. These meetings provide an opportunity for the Minister to be kept informed of regional developments. They are also the platform for ensuring that Western Sydney economic, social and environmental issues are raised at the heart of Government, in Cabinet.

The Office of Western Sydney was established by the Government in 1998 to provide strategic leadership for the region and to achieve significant improvements in the economic performance, social development and urban livability of Western Sydney. It provides high level strategic advice to Government on Western Sydney issues and develops and drives innovative regional initiatives to address economic development, social and environmental priorities for the region.

The Office of Western Sydney works in partnership with businesses, industry associations, the three levels of Government, the University of Western Sydney, community organisations and other key stakeholders within and outside Western Sydney to meet the needs of families, communities, businesses and the environment in Western Sydney. The Office reports to the Minister for Western Sydney and forms part of the New South Wales Department of Information Technology and Management. The Government will fund the **operations of the Office of Western Sydney** to the extent of **\$2.324 million** in 2001-2002. The Office is located on the Westmead Campus of the University of Western Sydney and in the Macarthur area at Campbelltown.

The Knowledge Economy and Society will be a major priority area for the Office in 2001-2002. **The Western Sydney Knowledge Economy and Society Strategy** will draw on a status report of Western Sydney's knowledge assets, currently being prepared by the Office of Western Sydney. It will focus on accelerating the global strategies of Western Sydney industry and building the knowledge, education and skills base of Western Sydney. Other initiatives of the Office for 2001-2002 include:

- ◆ the **Western Sydney Industry Awards**, through the Global Excellence Awards and a suite of Technology Awards, articulate the key drivers of growth for business and jobs and recognise excellence, innovation and leadership in Western Sydney industry in areas that are of strategic importance to the future of Western Sydney's economy.
- ◆ **Advancing Information Technology in Western Sydney Industry Conference**. This annual conference profiles the dynamic IT sector in Western Sydney and Western Sydney businesses' strategic use of IT.
- ◆ **Emerging Technologies Cluster Development Strategy**. Cluster development strategies to accelerate the growth of high tech industry sectors are a key strategy for industry development. The Western Sydney Cluster Model will be a sophisticated high tech industry development strategy focusing on building the R&D and innovation, internationalisation, management and marketing capability of high tech firms through a range of initiatives, programs and services.
- ◆ **IT Sydney West – A Directory of the IT Industry in Western Sydney**. The development of the *IT Sydney West* directory in 2000 revealed a dynamic, globally competitive IT industry in Western Sydney with some 330 Western Sydney IT companies listed. The directory has been circulated internationally by Austrade and will be expanded in 2001-2002.

- ◆ the **IT Roadmap – Technology Diffusion and Knowledge Management Program** is designed to accelerate the use of IT and knowledge management and enhance the global competitiveness of Western Sydney businesses, their key supply chains and the region. It is anticipated that the 2001-2002 programs will bring together supply chain partners in the lighting, steel and railway industries.
- ◆ **Western Sydney New Entrepreneurs Program.** The program will provide a practical package of information, training, resources and mentoring to small to medium sized enterprises (SMEs) in various industry sectors in Western Sydney. It will assist SMEs to take advantage of the supply chain, customer service, financial controls, exports and global marketing opportunities open to them if information and communication technologies are adapted to suit their needs.
- ◆ **Local Government IT Initiatives.** The Office of Western Sydney is currently working with Western Sydney Councils to develop a strategic framework for on-line service delivery to provide enhanced levels of customer service by local government in Western Sydney.
- ◆ **Corporate Partners for Change** is a successful partnership between government, industry and the community that has provided jobs, traineeships or apprenticeships for over 220 people in the region in areas such as information technology, electronics, retail, general engineering, bricklaying, the call centre industry, hospitality and assistants in nursing (aged care). The initiative will be expanded to target people with disabilities and those living in housing estates in Western Sydney. Training programs are funded by the New South Wales Department of Education and Training.
- ◆ a new **Social Entrepreneurs Program** will focus on building capability within disadvantaged communities through social entrepreneurship initiatives. Links will be built between Western Sydney businesses and socially disadvantaged communities to create pathways to jobs and traineeships to break the cycle of inter-generational unemployment.
- ◆ the **Environment Strategy for Western Sydney** provides a blueprint for bringing industry, the community and government together to work towards environmental sustainability and sound resource management. Details of the Strategy are outlined in Chapter 3 of this Budget Statement, *Protecting the environment*.
- ◆ **The Western Sydney Arts Strategy** is a joint initiative between the Office of Western Sydney and the NSW Ministry for the Arts. Funding from the Ministry for the Arts commenced on 1 July 2000. Two new funding programs have been established under the Arts Strategy: the Western Sydney Local Government Arts Incentive Fund; and the Western Sydney Artists Fund.
- ◆ **Initiatives for Women in Western Sydney.** The Government's Initiatives for Women Project in Western Sydney is a joint venture between the Office of Western Sydney and the Department for Women to improve opportunities for women. Planned initiatives are outlined in Chapter 3 of this Budget Statement, *Supporting families and communities*. In addition, in 2001-2002, the Office of Western Sydney will implement the Women Mean Business initiative to assist women entrepreneurs through a targeted package of business skills development, mentoring and training in the use of the Internet as a business tool.
- ◆ **The Western Sydney Budget Statement** outlines the key State government programs for securing jobs and investment, supporting families and communities, protecting the environment and delivering better government services. This information assists government agencies and Western Sydney people to assess regional programs and service priorities. It also reports on expenditure outcomes for the previous year's programs and initiatives.

Further details of the Office of Western Sydney initiatives are available on the website www.westernsydney.nsw.gov.au.

CHAPTER 3: FUNDING FOR WESTERN SYDNEY FOR 2001-02

The New South Wales Government initiatives for Western Sydney are presented in sections focusing on four key priority areas for the region:

- ◆ securing jobs and investment;
- ◆ supporting families and communities;
- ◆ protecting the environment; and
- ◆ better Government services.

The initiatives outlined provide an indicative rather than an exhaustive list of all programs and expenditure which will impact on Western Sydney in 2001-2002.

3.1 SECURING JOBS AND INVESTMENT IN WESTERN SYDNEY

Western Sydney is increasingly recognised as Australia's economic powerhouse, contributing a gross domestic product of some \$38 billion. The current gross turnover of around \$58 billion is expected to reach \$80 billion in a decade with the creation of an additional 100,000 jobs. Western Sydney's population will exceed 2 million in ten years.

The Government's Western Sydney Jobs Plan is encouraging jobs and investment by building partnerships between business and Government. One major element of the Plan is the *State Environmental Planning Policy 59 - Central Western Sydney Economic and Employment Area*. This Planning Policy will generate jobs and investment in the Blacktown, Holroyd and Fairfield areas through the redevelopment of the Boral Greystanes quarry site and a new 154 hectare high technology business park at Wonderland, Eastern Creek. Fully developed, the Boral site should provide up to 4,000 jobs in Western Sydney. The Business Park, Eastern Creek, will generate 1,000 jobs over the next two years and up to 5,000 jobs when fully completed.

The Government has announced that it will make available \$4.4 million in land and construction costs to build the Australian Toolmaking Innovation Centre on 2 hectares of a 16 hectare site at Ingleburn. The Centre will become a specialised toolmaking business park for toolmaking firms and assist them to identify and implement industry best practice as a means to achieve world competitiveness through improved productivity and quality.

Regional employment continues to be directly assisted by the State Government through the location of its agencies in Western Sydney. In February 2001, the Minister for Public Works and Services announced the move of 1,350 non-frontline police staff from Sydney's business districts to Parramatta, the largest decentralisation of public servants in the past 15 years. Corporate and specialist staff currently in the Avery Building in College Street and other city locations would join existing staff at Parramatta in new premises. The consolidation of 2,200 staff into one location has the potential to generate over 1,000 construction jobs and inject up to \$120 million into Western Sydney's economy. The relocation is being timed with the expiry of current leases in College Street and the Ferguson Centre in Parramatta during 2003 and 2004, respectively.

The Government's office accommodation reform program, introduced in 1996, is expected to save taxpayers more than \$500 million by better management of government accommodation over ten years. These savings are being achieved by reducing the amount of rental space per employee and by moving public servants out of high rental accommodation in the Sydney CBD to locations such as Parramatta. The relocation of the Police Service to Parramatta will also assist in employment opportunities for the Parramatta city centre workforce, which is expected to grow to at least 60,000 over the next 20 years.

Agencies with head offices in the region are the Department of Fair Trading, Landcom, the Office of State Revenue, the Heritage Office, the Aboriginal Housing Office and the Home Care Service of NSW (Parramatta), the NSW Rural Fire Service (Rose Hill), the Department of Housing (Liverpool), the Department of Local Government (Bankstown), Sydney Catchment Authority (Penrith) and Integral Energy (Blacktown). In June 2001, the Government will relocate around 120 staff of the Department of Sport and Recreation's Head Office as well as its Sydney Regional Offices, to Homebush Bay to consolidate the Olympic precinct as the 'home of sport' in New South Wales. These significant employment bases generate additional work opportunities for other businesses in the communities and stimulate additional economic growth for the region.

State Government local offices located in Western Sydney to assist business in the region include NSW Agriculture, the Department of Community Services, the Department of State and Regional Development, the Roads and Traffic Authority, WorkCover, TAFE, the Department of Industrial Relations and the Department of Transport.

Government programs, initiatives and services for which funding has been allocated in 2001-2002, and which will encourage investment and job creation in Western Sydney are outlined below.

Public Infrastructure

The Government is investing \$12.1 billion on **major new and on-going capital infrastructure projects** in Western Sydney. This infrastructure includes new and upgraded roads and rail, schools, hospitals, correctional facilities, water and sewer infrastructure and community facilities. This is providing an average of more than 3,000 jobs per year over four years in the construction sector, and complemented by private sector investment, is sustaining jobs growth in the region. Full details of the Government capital works can be found in Budget Paper No. 4. Major capital projects for agencies in 2001-2002 include:

Attorney General's Department

The Department is to construct a Metropolitan Children's Court in Parramatta which will incorporate discrete care and custody courts with holding areas, at a total cost of \$17.3 million over five years. A shared registry will serve two care courts, two custody courts and two multi-function courts. The Capital Works program allocation for 2001-2002 is **\$482,000**.

Department of Corrective Services

Correctional facilities are being provided in Western Sydney with the upgrade and expansion of the centre at Parklea at a cost of \$39.6 million and a new centre for female inmates at Windsor costing \$48 million. A new \$6.2 million Transport Unit at Silverwater will become fully operational in 2001-2002. Funds totalling **\$39 million** will be spent in 2001-2002 on these projects.

Department of Education and Training

Over **\$68 million** will be spent on the provision of **major new and refurbished facilities for schools**. New schools will be constructed at Cecil Hills, Glenwood, Prestons, Glenmore Park, Harrington Park, Hoxton Park, Kellyville, Mount Annan and Mount Druitt. Replacement schools will be built at North Rocks, Rouse Hill and Quakers Hill. In addition, an estimated **\$32 million** will be expended on school building maintenance in Western Sydney. A total of **\$13.5 million** will be spent on the development and refurbishment of **TAFE facilities** at Blacktown, Liverpool, Miller, Quakers Hill and Wetherill Park.

NSW Fire Brigades

The \$25 million Greater Sydney Area program provides for the construction of a number of new fire stations in Western Sydney and the upgrade of the Dunheved facility. To-date, nine new fire stations have been constructed at Blacktown, Kellyville, Narellan, Rosemeadow, St Andrews, Horningsea Park, Huntingwood, Regentville and Bonnyrigg Heights. During 2001-2002, the Brigades will: commission **new fire stations at Cranebrook and Schofields** representing a community investment of more than **\$2.5 million**; provide **new Type 4 Urban Pumper fire trucks** to seven fire stations in Western Sydney at a cost of **\$2.8 million**; provide 35 firefighter jobs; subject to availability, acquire land for a new fire station at Horsley Park; and relocate fire stations to Baulkham Hills, Glenhaven and Yennora.

NSW Health

In 2001-2002, over **\$58 million** is allocated for **health related capital works** in Western Sydney including facilities at Camden, Campbelltown, the Blue Mountains, Penrith and Westmead.

Department of Housing

Total capital expenditure in Western Sydney in 2001-2002 by the Department will be over **\$121 million**. Around \$44 million has been allocated for the **construction or purchase of 348 new public housing and community housing properties** for eligible people on low incomes and over \$71 million will go towards **capital improvements and maintenance** for more than 7,900 existing public and community housing properties.

Department of Juvenile Justice

The Government has allocated \$35.8 million over five years to **develop Reiby and Cobham Juvenile Justice Centres** and to construct a **new young women's facility at Lidcombe** to replace the Jasmara facility at Haberfield. Of this funding, **\$3.142 million** is projected to be spent in 2001-2002.

Landcom

Landcom has entered into an agreement with Sydney Water to commit \$23 million over a five year period to the implementation of water, sewer and trunk drainage **infrastructure for the Rouse Hill residential land development**. \$7 million has been expended to date and in 2001-2002, a further **\$5 million** has been allocated. Also in 2001-2002, Landcom will create approximately **850 home sites** in Western Sydney with total expenditure of around **\$28 million**. Landcom's Industrial/Commercial Division, the Business Land Group, is providing an ongoing supply of **serviced industrial land at Smeaton Grange** industrial estate in Camden. In 2001-2002, road and infrastructure works to the value of **\$5 million** will be undertaken. This will provide local employment opportunities during construction in addition to longer term opportunities as more industry is attracted to the region.

Olympic Co-ordination Authority

In 2001-2002 the Sydney Olympic Park Authority will be created to manage and secure the long-term future of the Homebush Bay precinct, taking over the role and responsibilities of the Olympic Co-ordination Authority. A master plan will be developed and expressions of interest will be called for a range of private sector commercial developments at the Park. Some **\$24.5 million** has been allocated in 2001-2002 to reduce the seating capacity of Stadium Australia from 110,000 to 80,000, to relocate the Olympic cauldron and to make other improvements to the Sydney Olympic Park precinct.

Department of Public Works and Services

The **Parramatta Government Property Strategy**, is a whole-of-government approach to the co-ordination and redevelopment of properties under the ownership of five government agencies. With a development program valued at over \$500 million, the Strategy is a bold attempt to link the Planning and Transport Policy platform for Western Sydney with major new development opportunities, thus stimulating investment and employment growth. The Strategy involves the delivery of new government office accommodation, a justice precinct containing up to 21 courts, community health care facilities, an educational precinct, a new facility for the NSW Heritage Office, a tourism and leisure precinct as well as residential development. There are four key government sites in this Strategy, namely the Civic Centre site, the Parramatta Hospital site, the Marsden Rehabilitation Centre site and the North Parramatta site. New construction and development work is planned to commence in 2001. The management consultant engaged by the Department to carry out financial analysis for the Strategy, estimates the project will provide 3,600 construction jobs and 5,400 jobs in allied areas. The Treasurer has approved **\$920,000** in 2001-2002 and \$2.8 million in 2002-2003. Priorities include demolition work, archaeology studies, foreshore strategy and community services relocation.

Roads and Transport

In 2001-2002, it is anticipated that the Government will spend more than **\$378 million** on Western Sydney **roads and public transport infrastructure**, including:

- ◆ \$145 million for the Parramatta Rail Link project, including commencement of the Epping to Chatswood section and the Parramatta Station Interchange;
- ◆ \$18.1 million for the Richmond Line amplification. Construction work to improve track and signalling is to continue on the Marayong to Quakers Hill section;
- ◆ \$90 million to provide the first of the new millennium trains for the metropolitan network;
- ◆ \$5.4 million for improved train stabling facilities at Blacktown to increase reliability of rail services;
- ◆ several projects are being undertaken on the East Hills line which will improve rail services to the Campbelltown area by increasing flexibility and reliability:
 - ◆ \$10.6 million to build two new tracks between Turrella and Kingsgrove (total cost \$63 million);
 - ◆ \$6 million for a turnback facility to be built at Padstow; and
 - ◆ \$2.5 million for track works in the Glenfield – Campbelltown area (total program of \$10 million).
- ◆ \$44 million for the construction of the Liverpool to Parramatta bus only Transitway and \$13.1 million for the development of the planned network of other Transitways in Western Sydney;

- ◆ \$47 million to upgrade Windsor and Old Windsor Road including: Old Windsor Road and Seven Hills Road intersection improvements; upgrade between Sunnyholt Road and Schofields Road; upgrade between Roxborough Park Road and Showground Road; Pitt Town Road intersection improvements; provide a flood evacuation route for Windsor; and Hawkesbury Nepean Flood Strategy upgrade of Windsor Road between Henry Road and Curtis Road;
- ◆ \$4 million to widen the Great Western Highway between Leura and Katoomba;
- ◆ \$4 million to improve the Great Western Highway between Hazelbrook and Lawson;
- ◆ \$2.2 million to upgrade The Horsley Drive between Elizabeth Street and Mimosa Road;
- ◆ \$6.9 million to upgrade Cowpasture Road between Mount Street and Elizabeth Drive;
- ◆ \$3 million to upgrade Hoxton Park Road from Brickmakers Creek to Hill Road;
- ◆ \$6.2 million to construct the Parramatta to Granville cycleway; and
- ◆ a total of more than \$60 million on road maintenance, traffic management and road safety works.

Western Sydney will continue to benefit from Sydney-wide transport improvements in 2001-2002, including **improved access to CityRail stations** at Holsworthy (**\$500,000**) and Padstow (**\$1 million**). Work will also continue on stations at Fairfield, Katoomba and Regents Park at a cost of **\$1.3 million**.

Improved interchange facilities will be provided at Mt Druitt Bus/Rail interchange (**\$2 million**), Holsworthy commuter car park expansion (**\$4.7 million**), Emu Plains Car Park (**\$400,000**), University of Western Sydney Car Park (**\$400,000**) and Wentworthville Car Park (**\$500,000**).

During 2001-2002, the Waterways Authority will spend **\$15,000** on annual maintenance of its wharves at Charles St, Parramatta and John St, Rydalmere.

Urban Affairs and Planning

The **Department of Urban Affairs and Planning** is responsible for the procurement of land in Western Sydney to be used for future infrastructure development as well as to meet conservation and recreational needs. Over the past three years, \$39.8 million has been expended in Western Sydney for the purchase of 381 hectares of land, including the former Telstra site on the Great Western Highway at Doonside for \$25 million. Land for infrastructure includes future transport corridors, special use corridors for infrastructure services and sites for future regional centres, employment areas and education centres. It is estimated that in 2001-2002, the Department will spend around **\$8 million to purchase land for infrastructure development** in the region.

During 2001-2002, the Department of Urban Affairs and Planning will be proceeding with the Expression of Interest and planning phase of the **Rouse Hill Regional Centre development**. On completion, this \$900 million project will provide up to 1,200 home sites, 2 schools, 100,000 square metres of both retail and commercial space, regional public transportation facilities, large recreation and open space areas, community facilities and approximately 12,000 jobs. This major project is being developed through a government (Department of Urban Affairs and Planning and Landcom) and private industry joint venture.

Government Trading Enterprises and State owned Corporations

As part of the Government's \$3 billion Waterways Package, **Sydney Water** is undertaking significant actions to improve water quality in Western Sydney waterways. The Corporation will spend approximately **\$66 million** in 2001-2002 in Western Sydney.

Environmental impact assessments are underway for sewerage schemes under the **Priority Sewerage Program**. In addition to The Oaks/Oakdale/Belimbla Park schemes, approvals are currently being sought to proceed for the Menangle/Menangle Park, Mulgoa, Wallacia and Silverdale sewerage schemes. When completed, they will provide about 3,400 homes with reticulated sewerage for the first time.

Preparatory work for the **Penrith Sewage Treatment Plant (STP)** amplification project is continuing. The amplification will service planned growth in the Penrith area and will involve substantial additional facilities being built at the STP. The overall project will also include the closure of Glenbrook STP, which services the Lower Blue Mountains area. Flows will then be transferred from Glenbrook to the Penrith system at Emu Plains via a directional bore. These works are due for completion in 2003.

The \$80 million **Blue Mountains Sewerage Scheme** project is being completed in two stages. \$7 million has been allocated in 2001-2002 for stage 1 – providing sewerage facilities to 1,600 properties in 18 separate areas between Hazelbrook and North Katoomba and extending the system to include over 1,300 additional urban properties in Blackheath, Medlow Bath and Mt Victoria.

Approximately \$500,000 will be expended by Sydney Water in **investigating servicing solutions** for a number of development sites in Western Sydney, which will provide employment and residential lands.

Sydney Water is undertaking work to amplify and **upgrade sewage treatment facilities** at Rouse Hill and St Marys. The Rouse Hill water recycling plant will be amplified at a cost of \$14.5 million to service the rapid expansion of dwellings in the north-west sector. The project also includes increasing the recycled water supply.

Sydney Water has allocated about \$300,000 in 2001-2002 for initial design and tender preparation for a \$30 million amplification of the **West Camden Sewage Treatment Plant** to meet growth in the area. This includes upgrading the existing plant to meet *WaterPlan 21* targets and a recycled water scheme. Additionally, \$265,000 in expenditure has been allocated for initial design and tender preparation for a new facility to replace the ageing **Richmond Sewage Treatment Plant**. A higher quality effluent is expected to be supplied as recycled water to the adjacent University of Western Sydney Hawkesbury campus and golf course.

The **Sydney Catchment Authority** will spend **\$30 million** in 2001-2002 on the continuation of the \$150 million **Warragamba Dam major upgrade**. The regulatory compliance requirement for a new bypass spillway for the dam is designed to ensure the dam's safety, integrity of the water supply and minimise flooding along the Hawkesbury River. The Authority has initially allocated in the order of **\$3.85 million** for the **renewal of capital assets** at Warragamba Dam, Warragamba Pipeline and in the Blue Mountains.

Integral Energy will invest **\$70 million** in its Western Sydney network during 2001-2002. This **capital investment** is scheduled to occur in addition to normal operating and maintenance investment to ensure continued secure electricity supply to customers. Some of the key projects include:

- ◆ nearly \$9 million will be spent constructing two new Zone Substations in Prestons and Narellan as well as upgrading the North Richmond Zone Substation. These substations will help meet the growing customer demand within these developing areas;
- ◆ the newly commissioned \$13 million Parklea Zone Substation will be used to deliver supply to customers in the rapidly expanding western and north western sectors of Sydney;
- ◆ nearly \$2 million to enhance the capacity of its existing Zone Substation in West Castle Hill;
- ◆ \$500,000 for new distribution lines to meet the supply requirements of new and growing industrial customers in Wetherill Park;

- ◆ up to \$4 million in new underground residential electricity distribution system development throughout Western Sydney. An investment of \$5.2 million is planned for distribution line upgrading and a further \$2 million is planned for distribution transformer upgrades;
- ◆ up to \$6 million in new industrial and commercial customer connections and electricity distribution system development throughout Western Sydney; and
- ◆ approximately \$28 million on major system refurbishment projects throughout Western Sydney.

EnergyAustralia will be expending **\$2.4 million** in 2001-2002 on electricity distribution capital works in the Bankstown and Auburn local government areas.

State and Regional Development and Tourism

It is anticipated that the Department of State and Regional Development will fund the **Greater Western Sydney Economic Development Board** to the extent of **\$100,000** for administration in 2001-2002. Project funding to the Board will be allocated on a case by case basis. The Board will continue to advise the Government on the economic development of the region.

In 2001-2002, eligible small and medium sized firms in Western Sydney will receive support for undertaking enterprise and export development projects. It is expected that over **\$500,000** will be made available through the **Small Business Expansion** and **High Growth Business Programs**.

The **Industries Assistance Fund** will continue to provide support for businesses in Western Sydney that are expanding and creating new jobs. The Department of State and Regional Development assists business through project facilitation and financial assistance. Project facilitation includes planning approvals liaison/advocacy, assistance with project requirements (including industry information), strategic advice on Government processes, issues resolution and business networking. In 2001-2002 the Department anticipates that approximately **\$500,000** in financial assistance will be provided to Western Sydney projects through the fund.

The Department will also provide small business advice to new business starters and newly established businesses through five outsourced **Small Business Advisory Centres** at Blacktown, Campbelltown, Fairfield, Parramatta and Penrith, at an expected total cost of **\$375,000**.

The Government is committed to spending \$16 million to 2004 on the **redevelopment** of the historic town of **Katoomba** in the Blue Mountains and the nearby major tourism attraction, the **Echo Point Lookout**. Some 1.4 million tourists visit Echo Point each year, making it one of the most visited sites in the State. With its annual value of around \$340 million per annum to the Blue Mountains, tourism is important for the creation of jobs in the region. In 2001-2002, expenditure on these redevelopment projects is estimated at **\$7.726 million**. Key elements will include construction of the Blue Mountains Cultural Centre on the former TAFE site and reconstruction of the Echo Point lookouts, improved car and bus parking areas, upgrading of the adjacent parklands and refurbishment of the Visitor Information Centre.

In 2001-2002, **\$335,000** will be expended by Tourism New South Wales on **Western Sydney tourism development**.

Skills Development and Resources

Funding levels in 2001-2002 for the **Western and South Western Sydney TAFE Institutes** and the Bankstown, Padstow and Lidcombe colleges within the **Southern Sydney TAFE Institute** will support Institute profiles which reflect industry trends and customer needs. Total operating costs for these three Institutes in Western Sydney are forecast at around **\$270 million** in 2001-2002.

An estimated **\$10 million** will be available to support **Industry Training Programs** in Western Sydney during 2001-2002 through the various programs delivered by the Program Field Services Units within the Department of Education and Training's **Industry Training Services Centres** located at Bankstown, Liverpool and Parramatta. The major roles of the Centres are to promote vocational education and training reform, skills formation, apprenticeships and traineeships, the strengthening of links with industry and the provision of advice on industry training needs.

Information Technology

The Office of Information Technology in the Department of Information Technology and Management co-ordinates the public sector's management and use of information technology and telecommunications. A number of whole-of-government information and communications technology programs will be conducted in 2001-2002 and will benefit all of New South Wales, including Western Sydney. These include:

- ◆ the **Australian Centre for Advanced Computing and Communications**, a \$20 million joint commercial venture between the NSW Government and eight universities in New South Wales. The NSW Government has allocated start-up funding of \$12 million over 3 years from 1999-2000. The Centre is the largest investment by the NSW Government in high performance computing and infrastructure for research and development. It has a strong industry development focus especially for small and regional businesses. In 2001-2002, \$4 million will be spent to establish the regional nodes in Western Sydney, Newcastle and Wollongong. The Western Sydney node will be closely associated with the recently opened NSW Centre of Excellence for eBusiness at Parramatta.
- ◆ **connect.nsw** is a whole-of-government strategy for the use of information technology to streamline internal government practices, reduce costs and improve service delivery for the NSW community. The connect.nsw program is providing an integrated approach to the delivery of services over a wide range of service channels including over the counter, Internet, e-mail and call centres. State-wide, a total of \$12 million will be allocated in 2001-2002 to co-ordinate government initiatives as well as establish a program to support agencies in delivering integrated services to the community and business. This will include an Online Address Changing Facility where the community and business will be able to notify their change of address to their chosen government and non-government organisations at the one Internet site.
- ◆ another key connect.nsw initiative will be a four-year program for **Online Business Licensing**. In 2001-2002, \$8 million will be spent to streamline business licensing practices and integrate licensing regimes across 28 agencies such as WorkCover and the Departments of Fair Trading and Gaming and Racing. It will also include the establishment of an online entry point for businesses, individuals and community groups to access licensing and regulatory services. The project team will be located in the Government's new Multi Agency ICT Project Development Centre, Parramatta.
- ◆ The **Government IT Project Development Centre** is to be established at Parramatta and will work closely with the Western Sydney based **NSW Centre of Excellence for eBusiness**. The IT Project Development Centre will act as an incubator for strategic, multi-agency projects aimed at improving electronic service delivery, customer requirements, community access to Government services and fostering skills exchange. One of the major projects to be developed at the centre is the Online Business Licensing program.

- ◆ the Government has established a four year **Information and Communications Technology Skills Action Plan** to focus on the development of ICT skills in government, industry and the community. The Office of Information Technology will work with NSW agencies to co-ordinate implementation of the plan, develop partnerships with business and the community and monitor ICT skills development across NSW. In 2001-2002, a number of projects including an ICT skills assessment for students in years 6 and 10, ICT skills training for seniors and an ICT skills community education campaign for specially targeted groups, will be implemented throughout NSW.
- ◆ the **Government Radio Network** is now one of the largest mobile radio networks in the world, covering 150,000 square kilometres of NSW and processing over 14 million calls per month. The network provides radio services to support the delivery of emergency and administrative services to the community. In 2001-2002, funding will be provided to augment the capacity and coverage of the network needed to maintain service levels to users.

Agriculture

Research, training and regulatory services will continue to be provided to the **diverse and intensive Western Sydney agricultural industries** by a network of NSW Agriculture staff based at Camden, Richmond, Windsor, Flemington and Gosford at a total cost of **\$30 million** in 2001-2002. Particular emphasis is being placed on training non-English speaking background farmers and the development of a co-ordinated education and training strategy. This strategy involves the implementation of a five year community based program including sustainable farming practices, environmental management, minimising chemical usage and improved business skills. The Elizabeth Macarthur Agricultural Institute at Camden is the State's Centre of Excellence for plant and animal health using state-of-the-art biotechnology to assist Western Sydney's multi-million dollar intensive livestock and horticulture industries.

In August 2001, NSW Agriculture will officially open its Centre for Greenhouse Horticulture at Gosford which will support the burgeoning intensive cut flower and vegetable industries of Western Sydney and the Central Coast. The Department's Organic Waste Recycling Unit at Richmond is strengthening guidelines on the productive application of waste water and sewerage and green waste composting.

Energy Exploration

The Government recently announced a major new initiative involving the expenditure of \$30 million over seven years, to attract exploration investment to the State. One aspect of the "Exploration NSW" initiative is a petroleum program through which the Government will continue to promote and foster petroleum exploration in regional New South Wales. The program will encourage further investment through the provision of comprehensive geoscience information and the promotion of the State's prospectivity. This will support the investment made by the petroleum exploration industry.

Sydney Gas Company has been exploring for coal seam methane on the South Western outskirts of Sydney under its Petroleum Exploration Licence No. 2. Encouraging results were obtained from a number of wells in the initial phase of exploration.

In November 2000, the NSW Government granted Sydney Gas a Petroleum Assessment Lease to carry out an assessment of the potential for producing commercial quantities of gas. The company has approval to connect up to 25 wells to the AGL gas network for testing over a period of about 12 months. The company has invested \$20 million to date. The testing phase began in May, 2001.

Should the Sydney Gas program be successful, it could lead to the development of an indigenous gas industry in this State. This would have significant economic benefits for the Western Sydney region and New South Wales.

Living Centres Program

The Government has designed this \$11 million, 3 year program to create jobs and encourage investment. The Living Centres Program of the Department of Urban Affairs and Planning moves the planning system from conservative plan making to a planning system that delivers better results. Job creation, strong communities and sustainable growth are the drivers of the program. Western Sydney Living Centres Projects are the Parramatta to Chatswood Rail Corridor and Greater Homebush. The Parramatta to Chatswood Rail Corridor work focuses on maximising the planning opportunities associated with the provision of the new rail line. The emphasis in Western Sydney is on the Parramatta CBD, to be served by the new Parramatta Transport Interchange in 2006 and redevelopment of Camellia consistent with the Parramatta Regional Environment Plan. The Greater Homebush Project will ensure that the development of the area complements the growth of Parramatta and that development opportunities in the corridor between Olympic Park and Parramatta are maximised.

3.2 SUPPORTING FAMILIES AND COMMUNITIES

Health

NSW Health continues to be a major component of the State Budget with the Government planning to spend in excess of **\$1.2 billion** on **better health services** for the residents of Western Sydney in 2001-2002. This level of funding for new and upgraded hospitals, obstetric services, palliative care and other health services will continue to make it easier for Western Sydney people to obtain health care without having to travel long distances.

In March 2000, the Government announced a commitment to a three year recurrent health budget providing for additional health funds to meet increasing demand for services and to repair longstanding inequities under the Resource Distribution Formula. 2001-2002 is the second year of this process. The Government is committed to ensuring that all areas of the State receive their fair share of health funds. For example, the South Western Sydney Area Health Service will receive in excess of \$72 million per annum by 2002-2003 from this cash injection; 16.4 per cent more than its initial 1999-2000 budget.

In 2001-2002, Western Sydney will receive an additional \$98 million above the 2000-2001 initial budget estimates. **Recurrent funding** for the **Western Sydney Area Health Service** will rise by \$38 million to **\$555 million** in 2001-2002. Similarly, **South Western Sydney Area Health Service** funding will increase by \$44 million to **\$510 million** and **Wentworth Area Health Service** by \$16 million to **\$212 million**.

The significant funding injection for the South Western Sydney Area Health Service in 2001-2002 includes **\$12 million** for the commissioning of new facilities and services as part of the **Macarthur Health Strategy**. These funds are in addition to enhancement funding for mental health, drug and alcohol and dental services.

Equitable access to health services will continue to be provided to people in Western Sydney who come from disadvantaged socio-economic backgrounds, including Aboriginal people, people from non-English speaking backgrounds and people with disabilities. It is generally recognised that these people have poorer health than the population as a whole. A wide range of health services are provided in Western Sydney, including health promotion, prevention, treatment, rehabilitation and palliative care. These programs aim to ensure that people in the community will be able to demonstrate behaviour supportive of better health, including regular exercise, nutritious diet, moderate consumption of alcoholic beverages and decreased levels of smoking and abuse of illicit substances.

Major capital projects to be undertaken, continued or completed in Western Sydney in 2001-2002 include:

- ◆ continuation of the **Macarthur Sector Strategy** which includes redevelopment of Camden Hospital; upgrading of Campbelltown Hospital by 2003; mobile vans to assist isolated areas; and a child care centre in Camden/Wollondilly (**\$28.46 million**);
- ◆ **Blue Mountains Acute Inpatient Unit (\$1.8 million)**;
- ◆ **Blue Mountains Hospital Hydrotherapy (\$822,000)**;
- ◆ **Nepean Hospital Campus Detoxification Unit (\$2.894 million)**;
- ◆ A new \$5 million **Procedural Centre at Westmead Hospital** to provide greater access to day only surgery (**\$4 million**);
- ◆ **Radiology Oncology at Campbelltown Hospital** integrated with the major development (**\$6.8 million**);
- ◆ **Neonatal Emergency Transport** planning is continuing with expenditure in 2001-2002 of **\$1.719 million**;
- ◆ **NSW Breast Cancer Institute** at Westmead (**\$1.618 million**);
- ◆ **Campbelltown Adolescent Admission Unit/Day Centre** – new facility (**\$1.35 million**); and
- ◆ **Modifications to Emergency Departments at Auburn, Blacktown, Mt Druitt and Westmead Hospitals (\$150,000)**.

The following proposed major works are in the planning stage:

- ◆ **South Western Sydney Area Health Service – Mental Health Services Strategy**. This involves development of a 50-bed inpatient unit and ambulatory care unit at Liverpool Hospital and Area-wide mental health administration.
- ◆ **Western Sydney Strategy**. Approval of \$178.5 million, over 6 years, for a major upgrading of the Westmead campus in the areas of rehabilitation, allied health, cancer care, cardiac services, maternity, imaging, operating theatres and patient wards; the upgrading of Auburn Hospital; expansion of psycho-geriatric services at St Joseph's Hospital in Auburn; and the re-development of services provided by Lottie Stewart Hospital.

NSW Health will provide significant funding to maintain and expand specialised health services in Western Sydney in 2001-2002. These will include:

- ◆ overall enhancement funding of \$107.5 million was announced in April 2000 by the Minister for Health which provided the opportunity to significantly expand the provision of **Mental Health Services** throughout New South Wales over a three year period. This is the biggest increase in mental health funding in the State's history providing additional resources to support consumers, carers, mental health professional staff and non-government organisations in meeting the needs of families. The Government's spending on mental health services in 2001-2002 will grow by \$28.4 million. Areas identified as under-resourced are receiving the largest increase. In 2001-2002 the allocation for mental health services in Western Sydney will increase by \$9.5 million to provide additional direct care staff for community service clients, emergency department clients and clients receiving inpatient treatment. Specific initiatives include the establishment of a new regional Adolescent Inpatient Unit in Campbelltown, due to be commissioned in November 2001.

In addition, \$2.3 million will be allocated for the third year of a five year funding program in partnership with the Commonwealth Government. Funds were provided to develop partnerships, prevention, promotion, early intervention and other State-wide services. In 2001-2002 the total **allocation for mental health services** in Western Sydney is expected to exceed **\$126 million**.

- ◆ **Dental Services** in Western Sydney will be allocated an estimated **\$29 million** in 2001-2002, an increase of \$2 million or 7 per cent over 2000-2001 initial budget estimates. In the three year period 2000-2001 to 2002-2003, funding for Dental Services is being increased significantly and, for the first time, is being allocated on a Resource Distribution Formula basis to bring fairness to all areas. By 2002-2003 dental funding to Western Sydney, Wentworth and South Western Sydney Area Health Services will have increased by \$2.2 million (12 per cent), \$0.5 million (21.3 per cent) and \$3.5 million (75 per cent) respectively, over 1999-2000 funding levels. Initiatives to be progressed with the enhancement funds include completion of the information system for oral health and the provision of improved access to emergency and relief of pain services within the benchmark access criteria identified within the Priority Oral Health Program. In addition, Area Health Services and Oral Health Networks are expected to identify specific areas of need and develop programs to improve service access for refugees and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.
- ◆ **The Rehabilitation and Extended Care Program** in Western Sydney will be allocated an estimated **\$180 million** in 2001-2002. The objectives of the program are to improve or maintain the well being and independent functioning of people with disabilities or chronic conditions, the frail and the terminally ill.
- ◆ **Emergency Department Services** within Western Sydney are receiving an additional **\$2.7 million per annum**, commencing from 2000-2001. These funds are being used to assist in the reduction of waiting times for patients being seen in the Emergency Departments as well as improving access to inpatient beds for those people requiring ongoing hospital care.

Drug and Alcohol Services

The **Premier's Department** is the lead agency for the implementation of two major strategies of the *NSW Government Plan of Action* arising from the NSW Drug Summit in 1999. Through the **Drugs and Community Action Strategy**, the Government is helping to set up local Community Drug Action Teams (CDATs) to respond to and take action on drug related concerns in the community. The **Community Drug Information Strategy** ensures that Government communication on drug-related issues is effective and also supports the activities of the Drugs and Community Action Strategy. Regional Project Managers have been appointed in Western Sydney and South Western Sydney to implement the strategy and in 2001-2002 they will continue to develop and support the 12 CDATs within the region.

Significant additional funding for **Drug and Alcohol Services** to be provided by the **Department of Health** in Western Sydney in 2001-2002 includes:

- ◆ approximately **\$2.9 million** to complete the construction of the **Wentworth Area Health Service detoxification unit**;
- ◆ **\$2 million** for continued expansion of the places in the **pharmacotherapy treatment services** and for case management of additional patients in treatment with methadone and buprenorphine;
- ◆ a new **drug treatment and mental health service** is being established in the Fairfield area as part of the Government's Cabramatta Anti-Drug Strategy (**\$1.7 million recurrent** and **\$1.2 million capital expenditure**);

- ◆ the three Area Health Services in Western Sydney have received Drug Summit funds to appoint a Service Access and Data Co-ordinator in each Area **to improve information relating to access and the provision of drug treatment services. (\$180,000)**;
- ◆ the three Area Health Services will be funded for a **General Practitioner liaison position (\$540,000)**; and
- ◆ the **Youth Drug Court** is funded through the Diversion Program, a Commonwealth/State initiative. NSW Health has responsibility for implementing a range of services. The South Western Sydney Area Health Service has carriage of the project. The service components are: a stabilisation residential unit, 5 “day” programs, and support for the inter-agency assessment team. NSW Health's operating costs are **\$1.55 million** per year. The services are provided by non-government organisations (3 of the “day” program providers) and by the Area Health Services (South Western Sydney, Western Sydney and Wentworth).

On 27 March 2001 the Premier announced a further 3-stage plan to address drug and crime problems in Cabramatta. An additional \$12.3 million over 4 years has been allocated for the plan. Key elements include:

- ◆ enhanced police powers in relation to drug houses and searches;
- ◆ establishment of a City Watch program to bring local businesses and police together to develop solutions to local crime;
- ◆ compulsory treatment for drug users arrested in Cabramatta and expansion of drug rehabilitation and treatment services in South Western Sydney; and
- ◆ expanded early intervention and prevention programs, including community drug education.

The implementation of the majority of these initiatives will commence on 1 July 2001.

The 1999 Drug Summit recognised the need to supplement the existing range of services for young people with drug and alcohol issues within the **Department of Juvenile Justice**, including initiatives directed towards prevention, early intervention, detoxification, rehabilitation and follow-up and support services. Departmental initiatives in 2001-2002 in Western Sydney, which reflect the recommendations of the Drug Summit include:

- ◆ **Diversionary Drug Counselling** to provide young people with alcohol and other drug issues that relate to their offending behaviour - **\$79,000**;
- ◆ **Pre-employment Skills Training and Mentor Support Program** is conducted in Penrith, Blacktown, Parramatta and Fairfield and provides assistance to young people in obtaining and staying in employment, training and/or returning to school - **\$160,000**;
- ◆ **Detoxification Services** is a four-year initiative to enhance and expand the existing detoxification facilities for adolescents within Cobham Juvenile Justice Centre - **\$266,000**;
- ◆ **Drug and Alcohol Counselling** is a four-year initiative to expand alcohol and other drug counselling for detainees at Cobham Juvenile Justice Centre - **\$73,000**; and

- ◆ **Youth Drug Court** is a four-year initiative to provide diversionary programs to assist young offenders in South Western Sydney who are eligible for Youth Drug Court participation and who have been charged with offences related to their alcohol and other drug use. The funding will provide additional positions of Counsellors and Juvenile Justice Officers to work in an inter-departmental team that includes NSW Health, the Department of Education and Training and the Department of Community Services - **\$750,000**.

The **Department of Community Services** will allocate **\$662,000** in 2001-2002 for the following services in Western Sydney that focus on implementing strategies from the Drug Summit:

- ◆ Youth Drug Court Case Management Program in south west Sydney (\$275,000); and
- ◆ *Getting it Together Scheme* Program in Cabramatta and Campbelltown (\$245,000) and Penrith and Mt Druitt (\$142,000).

In addition, the Department will be providing **\$70,000** in 2001-2002 and in the following 2 years for the **employment of an additional Youth Support Worker** within its Cumberland/Prospect Area, to be available primarily to vulnerable young people in the 12-17 age range and their families. The worker will actively cater to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander youths and young people from both disadvantaged communities and non-English speaking backgrounds. Young people targeted will be those at risk of homelessness, those experiencing violence, those with drug and alcohol dependencies, and those in the care of the Department of Community Services.

State-wide, \$3.09 million is being provided by the Department of Community Services over a three year period to provide innovative **case management and brokerage services** for vulnerable young people. In Western Sydney these services are provided at Blacktown, Camden, Campbelltown, Mt Druitt and Wollondilly. The Department has also allocated **\$1.03 million** in 2001-2002 for additional **support services for the Youth Drug Court and the extension of the Young Offenders Act**.

In 2001-2002, the Legal Aid Commission will be funding **legal aid representation in Parramatta Drug Court matters**.

The Police Service's **Management of Alcohol Related Crime course** includes recent amendments to legislation and is under review by the NSW Police Training College Academic Board for accreditation purposes. The course will be conducted in 2001 for officers from Local Area Commands in Western Sydney. The aim of the course is to reduce alcohol related crime and social disorder by teaching and promoting integrated, intelligence driven policing. The NSW Police Service is also trialing the **Cannabis Cautioning Scheme** throughout the State, including within Western Sydney. **Liquor Licensing Accords** operate in Windsor, Bankstown, Blue Mountains and Castle Hill. Liquor Licensing Accords are inter-sectoral, community-based collaborations between licensees, police, local councils, health services and transport services aimed at reducing the incidence of alcohol related crime, social disorder and disruption to public amenity.

Education and Training

The Department of Education and Training co-ordinates the delivery of education and training services across New South Wales, with responsibilities for: Early Childhood and Primary Education; Secondary Education; Vocational Education and Training; Higher Education; and Adult and Community Education.

Quality education programs and student services are provided in Western Sydney for 135,000 students in government primary schools and 88,000 secondary students and through 18 TAFE NSW Western Sydney colleges. New South Wales government schools and TAFE NSW, Australia's leading vocational education and training provider, offer relevant and flexible courses of study that meet students' needs and help prepare them for a secure future. In 2001-2002, the Department of Education and Training estimates that in Western Sydney it will commit:

- ◆ approximately **\$1.53 billion** in **operating costs** for primary and secondary schools;
- ◆ over **\$68 million** on major **school capital works** projects;
- ◆ **\$32 million** on **school building maintenance**;
- ◆ approximately **\$270 million operating costs** for the three **TAFE Institutes** in Western Sydney; and
- ◆ **\$13.5 million** for the **development and refurbishment of TAFE facilities**.

The Department will continue to implement its **Computers in Schools Program**, which to-date has provided schools in Western Sydney with more than \$38.7 million worth of computer equipment. Some **\$5 million** will be made available under this program in 2001-2002. Schools in Western Sydney will be provided with a **Computer Co-ordinator's Grant** of **\$5.4 million** and a **Technology Grant** of **\$4 million**. Over **\$1.6 million** will be allocated to the **Technology in Learning and Teaching Program** to provide training to teachers working in Western Sydney.

An estimated **\$1.6 million** will be provided to schools and TAFE colleges in Western Sydney during 2001-2002 for the provision of e-mail and a range of other services for students and teachers. This includes remote access from home for students and teachers to filtered Internet services, web hosting facilities, helpdesk to support these services and other added value services for the community.

Over **\$17 million** will be made available for the **Back-to-School Allowance** payments to families in Western Sydney in 2001-2002 to assist them in meeting the costs of schooling their children. Over **\$34 million** will be provided for literacy and numeracy strategies in schools throughout Western Sydney as part of the **State Literacy and Numeracy Plan**, of which a significant component is the Reading Recovery Program.

\$14 million will be provided in 2001-2002 for the new Chifley College, part of the **Mount Druitt multi-campus college**. This institution provides excellent school education, TAFE and university opportunities and presently consists of Dunheved, Mt Druitt and Shalvey High Schools for Years 7 to 10, Bidwell High School/Primary School for Preschool to Year 12 and Whalan High School for Years 11 and 12.

In 2001-2002, **\$5.6 million** will be provided to socio-economically disadvantaged schools in Western Sydney, in which an additional 116 teachers are employed to support this program. The **Student Assistance Scheme** provides financial support to those students in greatest need. It is expected that over **\$1.4 million** will be distributed under the scheme to Western Sydney schools in 2001-2002.

An additional **\$320,000** will be allocated for the **TAFE Youth at Risk Program** in Western Sydney in 2001-2002. The program aims to provide support for the most disadvantaged young people in the community, to engage them in education and training and to provide pathways to further education or employment. An estimated **\$420,000** will be provided direct to schools in Western Sydney to enable Year 9 to 12 students to develop **individual school to work plans**.

The **TAFE NSW Scholarship Scheme** will support further study to all young people who have successfully completed vocational education and training courses as part of their HSC over Years 11 and 12. 20,000 students are expected to meet entry requirements under the new HSC and scholarship numbers have been capped at 5,000. Results will be known in October 2001.

In 2001-2002, funding of **\$125,000** will be available to students in government secondary schools in Western Sydney to undertake the **study of languages overseas**.

Approximately **\$3.1 million** will be expended by schools in Western Sydney under the **Vocational Education and Training in Schools Program** for the provision of vocational training by both TAFE and private providers.

Women

The Government continues to work towards improving opportunities for women in Western Sydney. The Department for Women plays an important role in information delivery and community education by promoting the position of women in all aspects of society and challenging stereotypes of women. The Department, from its operational budget of approximately \$5 million in 2001-2002, will provide the following services which incorporate benefits for the women of Western Sydney:

- ◆ Women's information referral service, providing an 1800 call centre for women where referral can be made for a large variety of women's needs;
- ◆ Website www.women.nsw.gov.au providing information on current activities of the Department as well as access to publications available from the agency; and
- ◆ Women's Gateway, a portal recently launched to complement the 1800 call centre by enabling women to access information for their needs 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, via the Internet.

Approximately **\$90,000** has been allocated by the Department in 2001-2002 to support its **Western Sydney project**, a joint initiative with the Office of Western Sydney. The project will involve a number of innovative initiatives aimed at increasing women's participation in the economic, social and cultural life of Western Sydney, and at ensuring that the benefits of development in the region are equitably distributed. The initiatives are:

- ◆ Social Atlas of Women in Western Sydney;
- ◆ Narrative Profile of Women in Western Sydney;
- ◆ IT as a community development/capacity building tool for women in communities – IT hubs/incubators;
- ◆ IT as a tool for community renewal – Macarthur seminar and pilot project;
- ◆ Women's Committee for Western Sydney; and
- ◆ Supporting women's participation and representation in economic development.

In 2001-2002, the Department for Women has been allocated \$1 million under the **Women's Grants Program** and it is anticipated that a significant portion of this will be allocated to key projects in Western Sydney.

The New South Wales Department of Health will provide significant funds for **Women's Health Services** in Western Sydney during 2001-2002. BreastScreen NSW will continue its **breast screening and assessment service** at a cost of **\$4 million** which will enable 65,000 screening mammograms to be carried out on women over 40 years of age in Western Sydney. **\$300,000** will be allocated for projects to encourage women in Western Sydney to have **regular pap smears** including activities for General Practitioners, peer education programs for older women and partnership activities with BreastScreen NSW. In addition, **\$1.4 million** is being expended on a range of other women's health services, including **\$162,000** to Aboriginal Medical Services, (non-government organisations in the Wentworth and South Western Sydney Area Health Services); to support **improving birthing outcomes for Aboriginal women**; and **\$685,000** to Area Health Services and **\$500,000** to non-government organisations to support programs which will improve the health of women through **ethnic obstetrics and health promotion including smoking prevention**.

The Department of Community Services will continue to provide joint Commonwealth/State funding for services to meet the needs of Western Sydney women in 2001-2002. The NSW Government contributes 48 per cent of funding for this program. Significant initiatives will include **\$5.4 million** for 18 refuges for **women escaping domestic violence** and **\$1 million** for 6 **Women's Housing Programs** funded through the Supported Accommodation Assistance Program.

In the past 10 years, Australia has witnessed a gender revolution in small business. According to the Department of State and Regional Development, women now own 35 per cent of small businesses and jointly own 60 per cent of small businesses in NSW. The number of women owning and operating small enterprises is increasing at three times the rate of men each year. If this ownership trend continues, it is estimated the majority of small businesses will be run by women by 2010. In 2001-2002, the Department of State and Regional Development will conduct two **Women in Business Mentor Programs** and four **Women in Business Growth Strategy Workshops** in Western Sydney at a total cost of **\$30,000**.

The Legal Aid Commission funds the **Women's Domestic Violence Court Assistance Scheme** in Western Sydney. This scheme provides support for women, victims of domestic violence, during the process of applying for an apprehended violence order. Schemes operate at Bankstown, Blacktown, Campbelltown, Liverpool/Fairfield, Parramatta, Penrith/Mt Druitt and Windsor. Funding of **\$725,000** has been allocated for these Western Sydney schemes in 2001-2002.

Services for children and families

The goal of the **Department of Community Services** is to assist the empowerment of families, individuals and disadvantaged communities under stress, who require assistance, guidance or protection to enable them to participate in the community. The Department has three offices in Western Sydney and in 2001-2002 their **operating expenditures** will be: **Penrith \$1.338 million; Parramatta \$1.456 million; and Campbelltown \$1.760 million.**

The Department manages 13 Community Services Centres, 3 Joint Investigation Teams and 2 Intensive Support Services across Western Sydney. Community Services Centres and specialist units such as the Joint Investigation Teams and Intensive Support Services employ caseworkers to provide a range of child protection services and services to children and young people in care. The goal is to reconcile and strengthen family relationships, wherever possible, except where this would jeopardise the safety of the child concerned.

Community Services Centres are located in the following areas and the 2001-2002 expenditure for these centres will be **\$32.515 million** covering: Mt Druitt (\$3.1 million); Penrith (\$2.8 million); Katoomba (\$1.3 million); St Marys (\$3.3 million); Richmond (\$1.7 million); Auburn (\$2.1 million); Parramatta (\$3.1 million); Blacktown (\$3.8 million); Bankstown (\$2.1 million); Campbelltown (\$2.6 million); Fairfield (\$2.6 million); Liverpool (\$2 million); and Ingleburn (\$1.7 million).

In 2001-2002, the total allocation for the **Joint Investigation Teams** in Western Sydney is almost **\$857,000**. The Teams are located at Penrith (\$275,000), Parramatta (\$290,000) and Liverpool (\$291,000). **Intensive Support Services** have been allocated **\$1.084 million** in 2001-2002 and are located at Nepean (\$374,000) and Bradbury in Campbelltown (\$710,000).

The Department of Community Services is a Child Protection agency. It investigates allegations of abuse and neglect and works with families and the Children's Court to either keep a child at home safely, or to remove the child. The Department's Helpline is a State-wide centralised Intake Centre. It is located in Western Sydney and commenced operation in December 2000. The Helpline operates 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. The aim of the Helpline is to have faster, better and easier access to Departmental services for all members of the community, for Community Partners, and mandatory reporters such as police and medical professionals. In 2001-2002, funding of **\$12.5 million** is available for the **operation of the Helpline** and **\$644,000** is available for **capital costs** of Service 2001, which includes the Helpline. The establishment of the Helpline has released staff at Community Services Centres in the region from the task of Intake and allowed them to focus on casework management.

The priorities of the Department of Community Services and its funded programs include: child protection, out-of-home care, adoption, family support, children's services, provision of community resources, the Supported Accommodation Assistance Program, and the *Families First* Strategy.

The **Supported Accommodation Assistance Program** is a joint Commonwealth/State Program of some \$77 million. The NSW Government contributes 48 per cent of funding. The program aims to provide transitional supported accommodation and related support services in order to help people who are homeless to achieve the maximum possible degree of self-reliance and independence. The goals are to resolve crises, re-establish family links where appropriate, and re-establish a capacity to live independently of the program. The Supported Accommodation Assistance Program Agreement describes a person as homeless if he/she has inadequate access to safe and secure housing. It also includes people who are in crisis or experiencing domestic violence and are at imminent risk of becoming homeless. Family breakdown is often a critical reason why people become homeless. Building sustainable families and communities is part of the core business of the Department of Community Services and the Supported Accommodation Assistance Program facilitates this objective.

The Department of Community Services will provide a range of services through the **Community Services Grants Program** in 2001-2002. This program provides some \$53 million to community services that assist and support disadvantaged people to maintain their independence and enhance their quality of life. Funded organisations assist clients and groups in the following broad areas: child protection, family and individual support, community development and youth services. Services include: community information, sexual assault counselling, the building of social capital, support to families in crisis and social support to young people.

In the 1999-2000 budget, the Government announced an allocation of \$3.4 million for four new **After School Youth Services** to provide safe and supportive places for young people after school. Two of these are in Western Sydney at Mt Druitt and Bankstown. The Mt Druitt service will be allocated **\$200,000** in 2001-2002. An existing youth service at Penrith, *Fusion*, will receive **\$150,000** per annum for a total of 4 years under this initiative.

Out-of-Home Care is the provision of essential foster and residential care services to support and care for children and young people who are no longer able to live at home with their families. State-wide funding in 2001-2002 for this program will be around \$27 million.

Funding through the **Children's Services Program** assists communities to provide child care and related services. The Department of Community Services does not directly provide child care but licenses and monitors child care services to make sure they comply with the NSW *Children and Young Persons (Care and Protection) Act 1998*. It also plans and funds a range of services, either alone or in partnership with the Commonwealth, including preschools, long day care centres, occasional care centres, vacation care, mobile preschools, mobile child care services and early childhood services. In 2001-2002, the Department will provide **\$19.8 million** in funding for 441 Children's Services projects in Western Sydney to include:

- ◆ \$16.556 million on 362 early childhood services (pre-school, long day care, occasional care, supported playgroups, toy libraries, support and resource sources);
- ◆ \$2.678 million on assistance for children with a disability, Aboriginal children and children from a non-English speaking background; and
- ◆ \$588,000 for 79 vacation care services.

Commenced in July 1999, the **Families First Strategy** is designed to increase the support available to parents with children under eight years of age by developing a network of support services that families can access. Families First includes a number of key features such as: outreach and home visiting by midwives and early childhood nurses; providing parenting information and support for parents and carers; support for families with more complex needs; and community development activities to connect families with other families for support. The strategy involves NSW Health, the Department of Community Services, the Department of Housing, the Department of Ageing, Disability and Home Care and the Department of Education and Training. The Office of Children and Young People within The Cabinet Office is responsible for the development and ongoing evaluation of Families First.

In 2001-2002, **\$5.53 million** has been allocated to the strategy for prevention and early intervention services to support families in South Western Sydney and the Nepean area. Of this amount, \$4.48 million will be spent in South West Sydney (including Bankstown) for projects including:

- ◆ continued funding to **Volunteer Home Visiting** and **Family Work** services in the Macarthur area, Liverpool and Fairfield;
- ◆ an additional \$520,000 for **support for families who are caring for an infant or young child**, including funding to supported playgroup services;
- ◆ funding of \$620,000 for strategies to strengthen the links between families and their communities, including **Schools as Community Centres** projects to support parents raising children and develop local support networks; and
- ◆ funding to **assist families from non-English speaking backgrounds** (\$140,000) and **Aboriginal families** (\$100,000).

\$860,000 has also been allocated to expand support services for families in Nepean. The funds available for Families First in Nepean will grow to \$2.06 million in 2003-2004.

The **Commission for Children and Young People** will continue to co-ordinate the process of conducting employment screening on people who will be working with children and young people. The screening includes a national criminal records check and a check on all relevant completed disciplinary actions during the last five years. In 2001-2002, screening will be extended to include relevant Apprehended Violence Orders. Research into issues for monitoring the safety, welfare and well-being of children will continue in 2001-2002. The Commission will also be releasing a "Participatory Model" kit which it has developed to assist organisations increase the level of participation of children and young people in their activities and decision-making. The kit will be distributed for general use within the government and community sectors to benefit children and young people by facilitating their increased participation in groups that represent them.

In its 2001-2002 budget, the **Department of Juvenile Justice** has allocated the following funds to ensure the continuation of its core business initiatives in Western Sydney:

- ◆ **Juvenile Justice Centres** (Cobham at Werrington and Reiby at Airds in Campbelltown) - **\$16.33 million**. Juvenile Justice Centres implement court ordered detention for juvenile offenders. Courts can also remand young people in custody whilst they are awaiting court appearances. These two centres have a combined capacity for 111 young people and offer various developmental programs including access to education and training, life skills development, specialist counselling and pre-release support services;
- ◆ **Juvenile Justice Community Services** at Blacktown, Campbelltown and Fairfield provide the courts with sentencing alternatives to custody - **\$3.447 million**;
- ◆ **Intensive Programs Unit** at Blacktown provides specialist counselling and development programs as an alternative to detention - **\$1.044 million**; and
- ◆ **Community Based Support Services** - the Department funds a number of community organisations to provide appropriate services to its clients, their families and the community in Western Sydney - **\$800,000**.
- ◆ **Detoxification Services** is a four-year initiative to enhance and expand the existing services for adolescents within Cobham Juvenile Justice Centre - **\$266,000**;
- ◆ **Youth Drug Court Pilot Program** based at Liverpool is a four-year initiative to provide diversionary programs to assist young offenders in South Western Sydney who are eligible for Youth Drug Court participation and who have been charged with offences related to their alcohol and other drug use. The funding will provide additional positions of counsellors and Juvenile Justice Officers to work in an inter-departmental team that includes NSW Health, the Department of Education and Training and the Department of Community Services - **\$750,000**;
- ◆ **Metropolitan Regional Office** based at **Werrington** co-ordinates all Department of Juvenile Justice Services in the metropolitan area - **\$1.438 million**.

As part of the Government's **Graffiti Solutions Program**, the Department of Juvenile Justice, in partnership with local councils, has established supervised "clean up teams" to engage young people on community service orders in graffiti removal. Young people involved in this initiative are working on sites that have been identified by local councils including council properties, private residences, bus shelters, shopping centres, parks, playgrounds and court facilities. This initiative has progressed substantially in Western Sydney with teams operating in Blacktown, the Blue Mountains, Cobham Children's Court, Campbelltown, Penrith and Fairfield.

Funding of the **Schools as Community Centres Program** will be continued in 2001-2002 by the Department of Education and Training, with approximately **\$190,000** to be expended in Western Sydney.

The **School Student Transport Scheme** provides subsidised travel to and from school for eligible students on government and private bus, rail and ferry services. The estimate for 2001-2002 for the carriage of school children living in Western Sydney is **\$57.1 million**.

Services for older people and people with disabilities

In 2001-2002, **Home and Community Care Program** recurrent funding for Western Sydney will be approximately **\$2.7 million** (Nepean \$686,000; Cumberland/Prospect \$896,000; and South West Sydney \$1.134 million). Funding will be allocated in accordance with the regional plans of the Department of Ageing, Disability and Home Care. It is anticipated that funding will be used to develop and expand a range of services to meet the needs of frail older people, younger people with a disability and their carers. The services may include respite, transport, home care, food services and social support services.

Recurrent funding for services in Western Sydney under the **Disability Services Program** will total around **\$67 million** in 2001-2002 (Nepean \$13 million; Cumberland/Prospect \$31 million; and South West Sydney \$23 million).

Government funding for a wide range of **transport concessions** will be provided to both public and private transport operators to ensure that pensioners, retired senior citizens, veterans and welfare recipients have equal access to services and facilities. In 2001-2002, a total of \$196.8 million has been allocated to subsidise pensioner concession travel on CityRail and State Transit services. This funding includes \$169 million towards **Pensioner Excursion Tickets** for unlimited pensioner travel on all CityRail and most State Transit Authority services on the day of purchase. Additionally, \$42 million has been allocated in 2001-2002 to Countrylink for the provision of subsidised **pensioner travel on Countrylink services**.

Services provided by private transport operators have been allocated \$34.1 million in 2001-2002 towards **subsidised pensioner concession travel**.

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. \$12.6 million has been allocated for TTSS in 2001-2002.

\$14.4 million has been allocated to community transport operators in NSW in 2001-2002 through the **Home and Community Care Transport Sub-program**, the **NSW Community Transport Program** and the **Area Assistance Scheme**. Community transport aims to address specific transport needs of frail aged, people with disabilities and their carers, and transport disadvantaged people.

The Department of Local Government expects to pay **\$12.2 million** to the fourteen Western Sydney councils in 2001-2002 under the **Subsidies for Pensioner Concessions Program** for rate rebates to pensioners.

Aboriginal People

The Department of Aboriginal Affairs' **Aboriginal Communities Development Program** aims to raise the health and living standards of a number of selected Aboriginal communities that have an identified, major environmental health need. The Department's **Major Grants Program**, with grants of up to \$45,000, provides financial assistance to Indigenous people and organisations that wish to implement innovative programs that will address the socio-economic disadvantage of members of the Aboriginal community. Funds from the Grants Program are allocated to projects that reflect the NSW Government's, and the Department of Aboriginal Affairs', social justice priorities and have the potential to deliver long term benefits.

The **NSW Aboriginal Housing Office** administers the **Aboriginal Housing Program** to provide housing assistance to Aboriginal communities. In Western Sydney in 2001-2002, expenditure of more than **\$2.8 million** has been allocated for the provision of **new housing** in Parramatta, Blacktown and Wattlegrove. A total of 147 properties owned by the Aboriginal Housing Office in Western Sydney will be **upgraded** in 2001-2002 at a cost of around **\$2.9 million**. In the Sydney Region, including Western Sydney, almost \$1.2 million will be spent on backlog repairs and maintenance of existing housing stock and a further \$36,000 has been allocated for community and organisational development.

Aboriginal Health Services will be allocated **\$1.7 million** in 2001-2002. **Non-Government Organisation grants** of approximately **\$1 million** will also be made to Aboriginal Health Services.

The Casino Community Benefit Fund

Services to counter gambling-related problems in the Western Sydney community will be continued in 2001-2002 through the provision of more than **\$1 million** in grants from this fund. Estimated grants will include:

- ◆ a further \$315,000 for the joint Community Relations Commission of NSW and the Western Sydney Area Health Service project for a multicultural problem gambling counselling and treatment service;
- ◆ \$180,000 to Wesley Gambling Counselling Services (Penrith) for counselling for problem gamblers and their families;
- ◆ \$147,000 for Centacare Catholic Family Services (Parramatta) for a counselling service for problem gamblers and their families; and
- ◆ \$39,000 to Creditline Macarthur for a gambling counselling service.

Housing

It is anticipated that due to the population growth of Western Sydney over the next twenty five years, more than 150,000 additional households will need to be accommodated. Apart from the **Department of Housing's** capital allocation in 2001-2002 for the provision of new housing stock and improvements to existing housing stock, **\$530,000** has been allocated for 460 **new short and long term leased properties**. The Department estimates that 5,400 households will be newly assisted in public housing and some 9,500 households in Western Sydney will be assisted with some of the costs of private rental. This includes private rental subsidies to approximately 330 people with specific needs such as those with disabilities and people with HIV/AIDS.

The **Department of Urban Affairs and Planning** has allocated **\$1 million** under the **Urban Improvement Program** in 2001-2002 for projects in Bonnyrigg, Revesby, Merrylands, Kingswood/South Werrington and Narellan. The projects will assist to revitalise commercial and residential areas. The program achieves greater housing choice in the specific project areas by revising existing planning controls and working with developers and the community to agree on appropriate density of new housing development. Improved access is achieved in the town centres and other places where the projects operate, through public domain improvement works and better designed developments.

Sport and Recreation

In 2001-2002, **\$585,000** has been allocated to the Western Sydney and South Western Sydney Regional Academies of Sport and the NSW Institute of Sport. In addition, the **Department of Sport and Recreation** will spend **\$530,000** on programs and services in Western Sydney. These will include: the **Swimsafe Program** for learning to swim (\$105,000); the **Youth in Sport Program** (Youth at Risk) in conjunction with the Police and Community Youth Clubs to expand the range of sports and to continue working with high profile sporting teams (\$60,000); the **Introductory Opportunities** to a sport or activity program (\$55,000); the **Coach Education and Leadership Program** (\$50,000); the **Vacation Sports Program** for children (\$50,000); the **Sports Development Programs** to assist coaches, officials, players and parents in many aspects of sport (\$45,000); and **Aquafitness** (\$25,000).

Around **\$850,000** has been allocated by the Department of Sport and Recreation in 2001-2002 for the **development of sporting facilities** in Western Sydney under the Capital Assistance Program and the Regional Sports Facility Program.

Public Safety

The **Police Service's** fourteen Local Area Commands in Western Sydney will have a combined budget in 2001-2002 of around **\$220 million**. This includes recurrent funding for police salaries and capital and minor works expenditure.

In addition to Police programs mentioned elsewhere in this Statement, initiatives which will have an impact in Western Sydney include:

- ◆ the **Workplace Training Program** which builds an inventory of police/practitioner experiences in servicing the needs of culturally diverse client groups; and
- ◆ the **Police and Community Program**, a crime reduction initiative which brings together police, youth and community groups in jointly facilitated sessions to identify innovative strategies, enhance stakeholder awareness of policing and provide training opportunities.

In 2001-2002, **State Rail** will expend approximately **\$30 million** on the provision of **contract security guards on trains** between 7 pm and 3 am daily across its network. In addition, State Rail is deploying other contract security guards onto stations where a risk to the safety of its customers has been identified and on some services from 2 pm each weekday. Other crime prevention initiatives include closed circuit television of stations and improved lighting.

Work is continuing with a number of councils in Western Sydney to support **Crime Prevention Plans**. \$260,000 has been provided by the **Attorney General's Department** over two years for Fairfield City Council and Bankstown City Council. A two-year grant of \$142,000 from 2000-2001 provides for the implementation of components of Hawkesbury City Council's Crime Prevention Plan.

The **Motor Accidents Authority** is a statutory corporation established in 1989 to administer the NSW Motor Accidents Scheme. This is the Compulsory Third Party personal injury insurance scheme for motor vehicles registered in NSW. An integral part of the Scheme is a commitment to supporting injury prevention and effective injury management. As part of this commitment the Authority provides support and funding for both road safety and rehabilitation projects through the Grants Program. In 2001-2002, the Authority will provide funding for the following **rehabilitation projects** in Western Sydney:

- ◆ investigating the management and outcomes for **people with lower limb fractures and joint injury** caused by motor vehicle accidents in Western Sydney (\$150,000 over 2 years to the Centre for Epidemiology, Western Sydney Area Health Service);

- ◆ Booklets providing information about brain injury for families and carers of **children with an acquired brain injury** (\$13,750);
- ◆ **Training of 100 Occupational Therapists** in the State to search for and appraise research evidence (\$54,500 over 18 months to the University of Western Sydney); and
- ◆ A research project into **chronic whiplash associated disorders** (\$350,000 over 3 years to the University of Sydney).

The Motor Accidents Authority is a member of a joint taskforce, with the Roads and Traffic Authority and the NSW Police Service, which is developing **road safety initiatives for Western Sydney**, primarily focusing on young people. The Authority has allocated up to **\$250,000** for these initiatives.

Corrective Services

The **Department of Corrective Services** will allocate approximately **\$132.2 million** in recurrent expenditure in 2001-2002 in Western Sydney for the **containment and care of inmates**, for the **Probation and Parole Service** and for **Attendance Centres**.

Supporting Cultural Diversity

In 2001-2002, the **Community Relations Commission for a Multicultural NSW** will continue to provide grants to community groups with funds met from the **Community Development Grants Program**.

The Community Relations Commission established the **Western Sydney Regional Advisory Council**. Its role includes advising the Commission on matters relating to the Commission's functions, to exchange information, discussion and promote joint action on local community relations issues and to monitor the effectiveness of Commission initiatives in Western Sydney. During 2001-2002, the focus of the council will be aligned with the objectives and functions of the Community Relations Commission and the *Principles of Multiculturalism Act, 2000*.

The Commission works closely with the NSW Police Service in the development and implementation of the **Police and Community Training Programs**. A number of projects are planned for 2001-2002. The Commission is also part of the **Joint Justice Video Conferencing Pilot** that will result in an increase in the accessibility of interpreting and translating services for the people of Western Sydney. **\$12,000** has been allocated in 2001-2002 for this pilot.

In 2001-2002, some \$85 million will be spent State-wide by the **Department of Education and Training** under the **Non-English Speaking Background (NESB) Program** and over **\$3.8 million** will be provided for the **Multicultural Education Plan**. Major proportions of these programs will be implemented in Western Sydney.

Arts

Funding for the Government's *A Strategy for the Arts in Western Sydney* increases significantly from **\$400,000** to **\$900,000** per annum from 2001-2002. The strategy is a joint initiative of the Ministry for the Arts and the Office of Western Sydney. The Government's goals set out in the strategy are to:

- ◆ encourage arts and cultural activity that is locally determined and helps communities to grow;
- ◆ assist artists in Western Sydney achieve their full potential;
- ◆ increase participation in the arts by people in Western Sydney;

- ◆ support and nurture the arts industry in Western Sydney; and
- ◆ encourage regional cultural development.

A critical plank of this strategy is the Local Government Arts Incentive Fund which provides support to local councils for arts projects.

The additional \$500,000 per annum from 2001-2002 creates a new **Western Sydney Arts Infrastructure Fund** to assist the development of the region's arts and cultural venues supporting professional arts activities. The Ministry for the Arts will work closely with local councils, the Local Government and Shires Associations, the Western Sydney Regional Organisation of Councils and arts and cultural organisations to identify priorities for arts infrastructure development in the region.

A grant of \$4.5 million will be made over 3 years to the **Joan Sutherland Performing Arts Centre** at Penrith.

Community Development

The level of funding in 2001-2002 for grants by the **Department of Urban Affairs and Planning** to community organisations for social and community development projects under the **Western Sydney and Macarthur Area Assistance Schemes** is expected to be approximately **\$4.4 million**. Projects under the schemes will assist councils and the community address the impacts of urban growth and change.

3.3 PROTECTING THE ENVIRONMENT

Western Sydney's population in the next ten years is forecast to grow from the present 1.7 million people to more than 2 million people. The challenge is how to accommodate this growth in a way that is sustainable. Land must be used wisely by encouraging more housing in existing established areas. Only 30 per cent of Sydney's new housing needs is now met by green fields development. This has fallen from around 40 per cent over the past few years. Containing the sprawl has saved more than 8,500 hectares of bushland and market gardens in Sydney's west and south west.

Vehicle exhaust fumes from the growing number of cars on Sydney's roads are a major threat to air quality. The Government is giving close attention to improving planning for new urban release areas for housing to ensure that future residents have adequate access to public transport and human services.

In 2001-2002, the operating budgets in Western Sydney for the **Environment Protection Authority** and the **Department of Land and Water Conservation** will be **\$15.3 million** and **\$7 million**, respectively. Other agencies which have a role in protecting the Western Sydney environment include NSW Agriculture, the National Parks and Wildlife Service, the Department of Urban Affairs and Planning, the Sydney Water Corporation, the Sydney Catchment Authority, the Healthy Rivers Commission, Waste Service of NSW, the Western Sydney Waste Board, the Macarthur Waste Board, the Sustainable Energy Development Authority and the Office of Western Sydney.

NSW Agriculture is playing an important role in the achievement of agricultural best management practices in Western Sydney. It is implementing water reforms and soil best management practices and is providing assistance to Wollondilly, Camden, Blacktown, Penrith, Hawkesbury, Baulkham Hills and Liverpool Councils to undertake rural land use studies. These councils are seeking to retain sustainable agriculture as a land use and industry within their respective local government areas. NSW Agriculture is also working with all stakeholders in Western Sydney to achieve security of tenure and social equity, two essential factors in meeting the needs of the community.

Western Sydney Environment Strategy

The Government's Western Sydney Environment Strategy was developed to provide an integrated approach to the region's environment. It will help maximise the effectiveness of existing programs and encourage government, industry, researchers and the community to work together for the good of the environment in Western Sydney. The Strategy is an important step towards improving the quality of the region's natural resources, conserving its biodiversity and ensuring the sustainable use of the region's environmental resources. The Strategy can be found at website www.westernsydney.nsw.gov.au.

Western Sydney Environment Week is a regional showcase of environmental initiatives and achievements of industry, local businesses, Western Sydney Councils, State and Commonwealth government agencies, schools and community organisations. Western Sydney Environment Week 2001 comprises over 90 events. The art competition for the **2002 Western Sydney Environment Calendar**, which features art from Western Sydney school children on environmental themes, will be launched during Western Sydney Environment Week, which commences on 3 June 2001.

The **Western Sydney Environment Taskforce** was established by the Minister for Western Sydney in September 2000. Its key role is to drive an integrated approach to environmental issues in the region and lead the implementation of strategic initiatives to deliver improved environmental outcomes in Western Sydney. The Taskforce has developed a broad environmental program for 2001 through formal Working Groups for: Salinity, led by the Department of Land and Water Conservation; Energy, led by the Sustainable Energy Development Authority (SEDA), Integral Energy and the Office of Western Sydney; Waste Management, led jointly by the Western Sydney Waste Board and the Macarthur Waste Board; and Industry Environmental Initiatives, led by Walter Construction Group; plus two informal working groups for water-related issues. The Office of Western Sydney provides executive support and facilitates strategic outcomes.

Planned initiatives in 2001, endorsed by the Western Sydney Environment Taskforce, include:

The **Western Sydney Sustainable Energy Plan**, the first regional energy plan in Australia, is being developed with the support of SEDA, Integral Energy and the Office of Western Sydney. SEDA and Integral Energy are providing development funding. The aim of the plan is to integrate energy management on a regional basis, reduce greenhouse gas emissions and stimulate "green" jobs and investment in sustainable industries.

Key pilot **waste management initiatives** to reduce the amount of waste going to land fill include:

- ◆ effective resource re-utilisation and recovery within the electronics/IT industries, a pilot project with the Western Sydney Waste Board, the Macarthur Waste Board and leading information technology industry associations and companies. An outcome of this initiative will be an electronics waste recovery facility in Western Sydney, the first of its kind in NSW, and a model for other industry sectors; and
- ◆ extension of Clean Up Australia's successful *Waste Reduction Accreditation Program for Retailers* (WRAPR), with Coles Pty Ltd, to other major retail organisations in the region, to be led by Clean Up Australia.

Industry Environmental Initiatives which can be used by businesses to reduce their impact on the environment. These are: a pilot industry environmental management initiative to be established within a specific industry sector, involving an integrated approach by businesses to their environmental management of waste, energy and water; and the development of an Industry Sustainability Index which would be a framework for Western Sydney industry environmental sustainability.

The **Western Sydney Salinity Strategy** is one of the top priorities and focuses on identifying salinity hazard areas and providing an integrated approach to addressing salinity issues in the region. Salinity mapping and monitoring projects, which are consistent with the Department of Land and Water Conservation's NSW Salinity Strategy, have been funded to the extent of **\$172,000** by the Department.

Clean Air and Clean Waterways

In 2001-2002, it is estimated **\$480,000** will be expended on the **Air Quality Monitoring Program** in Western Sydney by the Environment Protection Authority.

The Environment Protection Authority will allocate a further round of Stormwater Trust grants in 2001-2002 totalling **\$3.28 million** to the fourteen councils in Western Sydney. The grants will be for **stormwater remediation** and associated projects. The Authority will continue with the **Blue Mountains Urban Run-off Control Program** in 2001-2002 with an allocation of **\$1 million** to control stormwater impacts and to address environmental concerns such as soil erosion, siltation, seed disbursement and pollution of the natural water course.

In 2001-2002, the **Sydney Catchment Authority** will allocate **\$9.4 million** in operational expenditure to provide bulk water to Sydney Water and other customers. The Authority will also spend **\$7.8 million** maintaining the integrity of the special areas surrounding Warragamba Dam **to protect catchment areas**. A further **\$9.8 million** will be allocated for **operational expenditure** for regulatory, technical advice and management support at the Authority's Penrith headquarters.

The Department of Land and Water Conservation will continue funding initiatives for the Hawkesbury-Nepean River under the Government's **Water Reform Agenda** in 2001-2002 to the extent of some **\$470,000**. In addition, the Department will spend **\$83,000** for the provision of **investigation and management tools for salinity** in Western Sydney and **\$15,000** to investigate South Creek water quality issues.

The **Hawkesbury Nepean Riverbank Management Program** is an ongoing National Heritage Trust funded program that commenced in 1996. It is an initiative of the Department of Land and Water Conservation and is aimed to improve government and community management of the river corridor between Penrith and Wiseman's Ferry. Initiatives include community education and field days, advisory services, re-vegetation programs, and establishment of demonstration sites in co-operation with landholders showing best management practices for riparian zone management. Estimated funding in 2001-2002 is **\$100,000**.

Around **\$60,000** will be allocated in 2001-2002 by the Department of Land and Water Conservation on **blue-algae management** in marine and estuarine areas as well as freshwater areas. Regular algal monitoring and weekly algal alerts are issued and an algal information line has been implemented to report on current algal blooms.

During 2001-2002 the Waterways Authority will spend **\$500,000** towards the **remediation of the eastern side of Homebush Bay** as a first stage in removing dioxin-contaminated sediments. This will involve completion of the Environmental Impact Statement, the Development Application and the establishment of the contractor on site. It is expected that work will commence in 2002-2003.

In 2001-2002, NSW Fisheries will continue its initiatives on the **Fisheries Habitat Protection Plan** for the Hawkesbury-Nepean River System and the **Fisheries Aquatic Habitat Management and Fish Conservation Policy and Guidelines**.

The Sustainable Energy Development Authority was established by the Government to reduce the level of greenhouse gas emissions in New South Wales by investing in the commercialisation and use of sustainable energy technologies. The Authority has found that most factories, office buildings, clubs, hotels and shopping centres could reduce their energy consumption by at least 20 per cent by investing in the latest energy efficient equipment, resulting in cost-effective energy savings. Similarly, the residential energy efficient program has the potential to reduce household energy consumption by up to 40 per cent. The program for Government includes: helping local councils with energy efficient housing policies; assisting public and community housing managers to install energy and water saving devices; and helping Government agencies to undertake energy saving measures and reduce their energy consumption by 25 per cent by 2005. Anticipated expenditure in 2001-2002 by the Authority in Western Sydney is **\$500,000**, principally through the **Energy Smart Business** and **Energy Smart Homes** programs.

The Ministry of Energy and Utilities is funding **\$73,000** in 2001-2002, through the Sustainable Energy Research and Development Fund, for a project to develop a prototype device **to test the integrity of natural gas cylinders used by buses and cars**. The project is being undertaken by Metacoustics Pty Ltd at Blacktown. Total funding for the project is \$185,000.

Parks, Gardens, Reserves and Forests

The Premier announced in January 2001 that the Sydney Olympic Park Authority will be established from 1 July 2001 to promote, manage and develop the **740 hectares in the Homebush Bay precinct**. All Government owned lands in that precinct including the lands of the State Sports Centre and Bicentennial Park will be vested in the new Authority. The production of a revised Master Plan and development guidelines will facilitate and guide the next stage of the precinct's development. Detailed Master Planning will be conducted to ensure that the future development of the Homebush Bay site is integrated and successful. The planning process will be consultative, meet all statutory requirements and ensure co-ordination with planning and development generally within the "Parramatta Corridor".

Millennium Parklands is a major community legacy provided to the people of NSW from the remediation and development of the Homebush Bay site. **\$4.5 million** has been allocated in 2001-2002 to provide **essential infrastructure and facilities** for the public to experience and utilise the parklands. Millennium Parklands together with Bicentennial Park, will provide 450 hectares of environmentally and culturally significant parklands for the people of NSW. The **water recycling system** at Sydney Olympic Park will be extended for use into Millennium Parklands. This initiative will further improve one of the significant environmental legacies of the Games. **\$1.1 million** has been allocated for this project in 2001-2002.

With the establishment this year of the **Parramatta Park Trust** under its own legislation, funding to the Park has been increased to more than **\$2.3 million** in 2001-2002 (\$1.1 million recurrent and \$1.228 million for capital and upgrade projects). The legislation acknowledges the Park's national heritage significance. It is already a major recreation and leisure outlet. The new Trust will provide for improved financial and fundraising opportunities. That means better resources and facilities for the Park, including expanded cultural and community programs for the people of Western Sydney.

The National Parks and Wildlife Service will allocate **\$300,000** in 2001-2002 to its on-going program of biodiversity surveys and threatened species recovery planning and protection in Western Sydney.

In 2001-2002, the Government will commit around **\$8 million** to **Regional Parks, National Parks and Nature Reserves** in the region. These facilities are for the use and enjoyment by the Western Sydney community and include:

- ◆ **Western Sydney Regional Park, Horsley Park, \$480,000** for completion of internal roads, visitor facilities and landscape development. Cumberland woodland protection is also a priority;

- ◆ **Parramatta Regional Park, \$1.1 million** for bush regeneration, riverine restoration and facilities maintenance;
- ◆ **Rouse Hill Regional Park, \$200,000** for additional car parking facilities and maintenance to meet visitor demand;
- ◆ **Leacock Regional Park, Casula, \$585,000** for restoration of natural vegetation, extension of recreational facility and construction of a new entry;
- ◆ **William Howe Regional Park, Narellan Vale, \$580,000** for extension of circuit trails, cycleways, footpaths and viewing areas;
- ◆ **Lower Prospect Canal, \$2.4 million** for continued construction of the cycleway along the old canal path;
- ◆ **Yellomundee Regional Park, \$350,000** for the development and maintenance of access to existing recreational facilities;
- ◆ **Blue Mountains National Park, Lower Mountains \$300,000** for the on-going program of improvements to recreational facilities and heritage protection (fire, weed and pest management) to protect and preserve this world heritage area;
- ◆ **Blue Mountains National Parks and Nature Reserves, \$1.5 million** for an on-going program of improvements to recreation facilities, heritage protection (fire, weed and pest management) to protect and preserve this world heritage area;
- ◆ an additional 70 hectares will be added to the **Mulgoa Nature Reserve** as added protection for one of the largest remaining Cumberland Plain Woodland endangered community; and
- ◆ **Cumberland Plain National Parks and Nature Reserves, \$500,000** for an ongoing heritage program to protect and preserve the natural values whilst providing opportunities for people to enjoy recreational opportunities in unspoilt and undeveloped areas.

The Minister for Urban Affairs and Planning has approved the Regional Environment Plan for the ADI site at St Marys, which achieves the right balance between conservation and development. The joint venture will transfer 630 hectares of regional parkland to the National Parks and Wildlife Service, an area equivalent to 7 Parramatta Parks. The joint venture will also transfer 48 hectares of regional open space to the Department of Urban Affairs and Planning. It will see a contribution of \$200,000 for the preparation of a Plan of Management for the new regional park and the 2,000 hectares of existing regional open space land along South and Ropes Creeks; \$2 million for capital works within the parklands; a further \$3.5 million in staged contributions; and \$500,000 over 3 years for the establishment and administration of a Park Management Trust.

In 2001-2002, State Forests of NSW will spend some **\$646,000** on operations and services provided to the community at the **Cumberland State Forest** at West Pennant Hills, a recreation and forestry educational facility. Also located at West Pennant Hills is **State Forests' Research and Development Division** which, in 2001-2002, will have an annual budget of **\$7 million**. The Division's library is available to the community. The Research Division has a research focus on forest management and improvement, wildlife and habitat protection, forest carbon dynamics, biomass and bio-energy, mine site rehabilitation and water catchment health and re-forestation to address environmental problems like soil and water salinity. In addition, the **Cumberland retail nursery and State Forests' Nurseries Management Unit** will spend **\$850,000** in 2001-2002.

The Department of Urban Affairs and Planning owns approximately **2,000 hectares of Regional Open Space land within the Campbelltown City Council area** adjacent to the western side of the Georges River. A Management Study of the land, completed in 1998, identified a range of problems such as dumping, illegal access, damage to fences and roads plus other anti social activities. It is anticipated that in 2001-2002, the Department will offer Council a \$100,000 grant for a joint management program to address issues impacting on the land.

In 2001-2002, the **Bicentennial Park Trust**, which is responsible for the management of Bicentennial Park at Homebush Bay, has a **recurrent allocation of \$2.9 million** and a **capital program allocation of \$2 million**. This expenditure will benefit Western Sydney residents as well as promote the region to wider Sydney and New South Wales. Specifically the Trust facilitates environmental education, eco tourism, events and retail services that support local business and provides a high quality site which adds to the Greater Western Sydney tourism, leisure and education services. The Trust will continue to protect significant conservation and natural heritage values in Western Sydney, particularly along the waterways of Homebush Bay and Parramatta River.

In 2001-2002, the Royal Botanic Gardens and Domain Trust will allocate **\$300,000** to the **Mount Annan Botanic Garden** and **\$100,000** to the **Mount Tomah Botanic Garden**, for infrastructure enhancements.

Heritage

The NSW Heritage Office will provide funds in 2001-2002 for a number of conservation projects in Western Sydney, including:

- ◆ **\$20,000** on a dollar-for-dollar basis to Campbelltown City Council for an **Aboriginal Heritage Sites Study** to enable the Aboriginal community and Council to determine planning mechanisms to ensure appropriate future management.
- ◆ work on the **Former Hawkesbury Hospital**, a \$1 million project, following the recommendations of *the Hawkesbury Hospital Windsor Conservation Plan & Planning Assessment*, with \$300,000 in NSW Government grants over three years. The site is an important and attractive area within the town of Windsor and while it has considerable constraints in terms of its heritage conservation, provides a unique opportunity for development for both community and commercial purposes.
- ◆ **\$32,000** grant for **Collingwood House, Liverpool**. Collingwood House was built by American whaling captain, Eber Bunker, who arrived in the colony in 1791 as master of the Third Fleet convict ship *the William and Ann*. The house was acquired by Liverpool City Council in the 1970s. Collingwood House has operated as a house museum since its restoration and official opening in September 1975.
- ◆ the **Harris Park Landscape Masterplan Project**. Works to be undertaken include walkways, garden planting, a hardwood fence to Hambleton Cottage, sandstone path markers, seating, pedestrian bridge, earthworks, archaeological investigation and a wombat crossing. Harris Park is associated with early contact and settlement since 1788. It has existing and enormous future potential to provide opportunity for interpretation, education, heritage promotion and to encourage a positive attitude to the community involvement in heritage protection. The Heritage Office is contributing **\$400,000** towards the project cost of \$1.28 million.
- ◆ the **Female Orphanage at Rydalmere** is a \$1.5 million conservation project with the Government providing \$1 million over three years. The property of 22 hectares, now owned by the University of Western Sydney, is subject to an extensive conservation order which has identified 28 buildings on the site as having low, medium or high heritage significance. The most significant building is the Female Orphan School, Australia's oldest three-storey masonry building, and in 1813, a major development project for the young colony.

- ◆ the Heritage Office will relocate to the **former Kings School, Parramatta** in 2002. The building will be restored to provide a cost effective and publicly accessible long-term accommodation for the Heritage Office and the Heritage Council of NSW. The restoration work will involve expenditure of **\$4 million** in 2001-2002.

The Minister for Urban Affairs and Planning provided a grant of \$500,000 to Campbelltown City Council in May 2000 for **conservation works to “Glenalvon” Campbelltown**, a significant historic building, owned by the Department of Urban Affairs and Planning. The property has been transferred to the care, control and management of the council and the works will be completed in late 2001.

Waste Management

In 2001-2002, funding for Western Sydney waste and recycling programs will be significantly increased from the 2000-2001 level of \$2.3 million. This will result from the next wave of government waste management reforms and the implementation of regional plans. Details are expected to be announced in the second half of 2001.

The Environment Protection Authority will make **\$1 million** available in 2001-2002 for **Community Waste Reduction Grants** to the commercial and industrial sectors for waste avoidance and/or re-use projects.

Mine Rehabilitation

In 1999, an audit by the CSIRO of the Sydney Catchment Authority, identified factors which contribute to the quality of Sydney’s drinking water. The Government is funding a survey and investigation of derelict mines in the Sydney catchment through the **Derelict Mined Lands Rehabilitation Program** to identify derelict mines that may pose a risk to Sydney’s water quality. The survey will cost **\$100,000** and will make recommendations on rehabilitation of these sites to ensure there is no adverse impact on our waterways.

During 2000 the NSW Government, through the Derelict Mined Lands Rehabilitation Committee, the Sydney Catchment Authority and the National Parks and Wildlife Service, undertook rehabilitation work involving expenditure of \$30,000 in the Yerranderie Silver Mining Field. The work was designed to prevent sediment from a number of derelict sites from entering the Tonalli River. The Government also spent \$52,870 on an environmental site assessment and remediation action plan for the Yerranderie site which identified areas of environmental and safety concerns. The site assessment resulted in a NSW Government’s Environmental Trust grant of \$631,320. This is to be used over the next three years on **environmental and safety improvements at the Yerranderie mine site**. These will include the treatment of soil and water, placing gates over shafts and closing shafts that pose a safety risk. Remediation technologies to provide permanent environmental solutions to the problem of acid mine drainage will also be trialed as part of this project.

Following the closure of the **Oakdale Colliery** in 1999, the NSW Government has undertaken rehabilitation of the mine site. Funded by the mine owner’s security deposit and supplementary funds from the State Government’s Derelict Mined Lands Rehabilitation Program, the aim is to protect the local environment and restore the former mine site. A contract has been awarded for cleaning up, securing and rehabilitating the site to environmentally acceptable standards. Improved safety at the mine will be subject to a separate contract involving expenditure of approximately \$500,000 to fill and seal the mine shafts.

3.4 BETTER GOVERNMENT SERVICES

Additional agencies delivering government services within the region include, the Premier's Department, the Department of Fair Trading, the Attorney General's Department, the Rural Fire Service, NSW Fire Brigades and the Department of Industrial Relations.

Premier's Department

Regional Co-ordinators lead and support projects that require cross-agency co-ordination that have demonstrable benefit for the people, the economy, the infrastructure and/or the environment of the region. In 2001-2002, the **Western Sydney Regional Co-ordinator** will continue working with government agencies and key stakeholders on multi-faceted issues and projects including:

- ◆ the development of major employment lands under the State Environmental Planning Policy 59 – “*Central Western Sydney Economic and Employment Area*”;
- ◆ Parramatta Government Property Strategy and Accommodation Strategy;
- ◆ Parramatta major developments forum;
- ◆ travel access and promotion partnership pilot (in partnership with the Department of Urban Affairs and Planning, the Department of Transport and local councils);
- ◆ contributing integrated transport and planning initiatives;
- ◆ the “Social Exclusion” factors research project and pilots (partnership with the University of Western Sydney and the Department of Housing);
- ◆ implementation of Stage 2 of “Job Rich- Job Poor” travel access pilot project; and
- ◆ *Strengthening Local Communities* project development in Western Sydney.

During 2001-2002 the **South Western Sydney Regional Co-ordinator** will:

- ◆ work in partnership with the Department of Housing on the Airs Community Renewal project which has been funded by *Strengthening Local Communities Strategy* (SLCS) for \$50,000. A further **\$25,000** will be available in 2001-2002;
- ◆ facilitate active partnerships to improve the employment outcomes for youth;
- ◆ review proposals for the South Western Sydney Outdoor Recreation Strategy;
- ◆ continue to support the ‘place-managed’ projects in Cabramatta and Canterbury-Bankstown; and
- ◆ participate in regional/local government forums in transport infrastructure development and urban release planning.

In 2001-2002, stage 2 of the **Cabramatta Project** will be implemented, with actions covering strategic issues. The Government has announced a further package of initiatives, the Cabramatta Anti-Drug Strategy, to tackle the incidence and impacts of illicit drugs on the Cabramatta and Fairfield community. This builds on previous initiatives and achievements, and addresses needs for improvements in policing powers, compulsory treatment and extra treatment places, and early intervention, education and prevention.

An extra \$12.3 million over four years has been made available to:

- ◆ establish 500 extra drug treatment places and 8 new transitional rehabilitation beds;
- ◆ provide 3 acute care beds and 4 additional mental health beds;
- ◆ set up Health Court Liaison and Assessment Teams;
- ◆ provide access to ten additional interpreters;
- ◆ implement new police powers in relation to drug searches, drug houses and firearms;
- ◆ support a new City Watch Forum involving the Police Service, the Community Relations Commission and local stakeholders;
- ◆ train local police in basic non-English language skills;
- ◆ establish 47 extra crisis accommodation places;
- ◆ establish a Mobile Child Care Team and expanded Family Counselling Services for a further 350 families each year;
- ◆ establish a 6 person-24 hour Street Team in Cabramatta to work with young people at risk;
- ◆ implement the Gateways Program to work with at-risk young people in thirteen schools across the Fairfield district;
- ◆ fund an additional Drug Education Consultant for schools in the Fairfield District;
- ◆ resource a community multicultural drug education initiative; and
- ◆ fund a Youth Action Team to ensure linkages and collaboration across the many youth services and initiatives in the area.

Canterbury-Bankstown Project. The Regional Co-ordinator for South West Sydney convenes regular meetings of area managers of State agencies, local government and non-government organisations to oversee progress with implementation of the Government Action Plan on Youth/Community issues in Canterbury-Bankstown. These meetings address youth and family support issues such as crime prevention, vocational training and employment, sporting and cultural facilities, case management and co-ordination. In 2001-2002 this project will build upon the success of the Action Plan, by setting future priorities for a co-ordinated government approach. A priority will be to further build leadership and collaborative structures among key government and non-government agencies.

Fair Trading and Consumer Protection

In 2001-2002, the **Residential Tribunal** will be funded to the extent of **\$960,000** in Western Sydney and will continue to hear applications in Penrith, Blacktown, Campbelltown, Liverpool and Katoomba. The Tribunal's Electronic Service Delivery pilot will operate from the Penrith Registry.

The **Fair Trading Tribunal** operations in Western Sydney in 2001-2002 are estimated to cost **\$2.1 million** to conduct hearings at Parramatta, Penrith and Liverpool. A Community Education and Information Service Program is being developed with particular attention to the needs of Western Sydney. New listing practices are being piloted at Parramatta, Penrith and Blacktown.

The 2001-2002 operating budget for the **Fair Trading Centres** located in Western Sydney at Penrith, Liverpool, Blacktown and Parramatta, is almost **\$4.2 million**. These centres provide information and assistance on the full range of services offered by the Department of Fair Trading. These include: consumer information and complaint handling relating to fair trading; home building; tenancy; and motor vehicles. The centres also provide access to business names registration, building licenses, lodgement of Fair Trading Tribunal and Residential Tribunal applications and Register of Encumbered Vehicles services.

In 2001-2002, the Department of Fair Trading will allocate in excess of **\$400,000** to the **Tenants Advice and Advocacy Program** in Western Sydney. Tenancy services will continue to be funded at Liverpool and Harris Park to provide free advice and advocacy support to low income tenants, including special needs groups such as Aboriginal people and people of non-English speaking background.

The Department will also provide grants through the **Property Services Grants Program** for projects which enhance the relationship between the property services industry and their customers and which aim to raise the professional standards of the industry. It is expected that approximately \$500,000 will be allocated State-wide to the program. A further \$350,000 will also be allocated in 2001-2002 to the **Home Building Grants Program**. This program, commenced in 1999, provides funding to education and training initiatives or research projects which enhance relationships between home builders and consumers, enhance the professionalism of the industry, or provide support to apprentices. A number of successful funding applications are received from Western Sydney.

Financial counselling services in Western Sydney will continue to be funded in 2001-2002 through the Department's **Credit Counselling Program** and the **Financial Counselling Trust Fund**, at an estimated cost of **\$320,000**. Services provided include financial counselling and consumer credit legal advice. The Trust funds are derived from monetary penalties imposed on credit providers by the Fair Trading Tribunal. Interest earned on the Trust Fund is allocated for the provision of financial counselling, training of people in financial counselling and for education in personal finance management.

Emergency Services

The Department of Land and Water Conservation will continue to co-ordinate Western Sydney floodplain management projects through the **Hawkesbury-Nepean Floodplain Management Strategy** in 2001-2002, to the extent of **\$18.5 million**. The Strategy allows for the better management of the flood risk between Warragamba Dam and Broken Bay and provides for the improvement in public education and flood warning systems. In addition, a further **\$3.5 million** will be expended on various floodplain management projects in Western Sydney under the Government's **Western Sydney Floodplain Management Program**.

The **State Emergency Service** will allocate **\$140,000** in 2001-2002 for the provision of personal protective clothing and safety equipment to volunteers in Western Sydney. Best quality clothing and equipment are essential in order to meet occupational health and safety standards. In addition, **\$70,000** will be spent on major equipment, including flood boats and emergency lighting sets for the region, to enable effective and timely relief of personal distress at times of natural and man-made disasters.

The **NSW Rural Fire Service**, in concert with Local Councils, is responsible for the management of the State's Rural Fire Brigades. In 2001-2002, the Rural Fire Service will have a budget of \$114.9 million of which Western Sydney will receive more than **\$9 million**. Allocations will be made to the local government areas of Baulkham Hills, Blacktown, Blue Mountains, Camden, Campbelltown, Fairfield, Hawkesbury, Penrith and Wollondilly. This funding will provide for, among other things, new fire tankers, protective clothing, fire blankets and other necessary fire fighting equipment to ensure that volunteer firefighters are well equipped. This will also facilitate the transfer of district fire control staff from local government employment to employees of the Rural Fire Service from 1 July 2001, thereby simplifying the reporting lines for Fire Control Officers, making the service a more effective and cohesive emergency service.

Industrial Relations

During 2001-2002, the Department of Industrial Relations will continue to provide assistance to thousands of individual employers and employees with workplace difficulties or inquiries through both its **Western Sydney Contact Centre at Parramatta** and **South Western Sydney Contact Centre at Bankstown**. The centres will increasingly undertake targeted activities in key industries and occupations in Western Sydney through award education and compliance campaigns. Hospitality will be one of the targeted industries. The Department will also continue its involvement with the clothing industry to further alleviate the exploitation of clothing outworkers. These are often women from non-English speaking backgrounds, living and working in Western Sydney.

The Department has successfully established within the Western Sydney Contact Centre an **Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Workplace Services Unit**. This Unit assists Aboriginal people and Torres Strait Islanders in NSW, especially the sizeable Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community in Western Sydney, to understand their rights and responsibilities as employees, managers and employers. The Unit also assists Aboriginal people and Torres Strait Islanders in NSW to obtain information on all Departmental services and employment related issues.

The Department's **Business Advice Unit** is increasingly designing its services for employers in Western Sydney to include the provision of educative activities and best employment practice advice.

In 2001-2002, the Department of Industrial Relations has allocated **\$2.24 million** in **recurrent funding** to support its services in Western Sydney.

Justice and Legal Aid

Community Justice Centres continue to contribute to the safety and harmony of the communities of Western Sydney by improving individual, group and community responses to resolution of conflict, particularly cases referred from the Children's Courts and the Department of Community Services. The Attorney General's Department employs a Community Justice Centres Co-ordinator and two interviewing staff. In addition there is a panel of approximately 70 community based mediators accredited by the Attorney General's Department. Mediation services are provided in the local government areas of Penrith, Hawkesbury, Blacktown and Blue Mountains.

Legal aid services to Western Sydney are provided through a network of legal aid offices, situated at Bankstown, Blacktown, Campbelltown, Fairfield, Liverpool, Parramatta and Penrith. Through these offices, the Legal Aid Commission assists socially and economically disadvantaged people from Western Sydney with legal problems in the criminal, family and civil jurisdictions. The Commission has allocated **\$12.4 million** to the regional offices located in Western Sydney and to the private legal profession providing some services through those regional offices. This amount does not include grants of legal aid made through the Sydney head office of the Legal Aid Commission to people who live in

Western Sydney, many of whom are dealt with through the Legal Aid head office because of the nature of their legal problems.

Programs in the criminal area, including the Committals Program, have contributed to a significant decrease in the length of time people charged with criminal offences have to wait before their matters are heard in court. The Legal Aid Commission's participation in the **court delay reduction program**, including the committals program, will result in savings of up to \$6 million across the justice system. Programs commenced in 2000-2001, which will continue into 2001-2002, include the adult drug court at Parramatta and the Children's Drug Courts at Campbelltown and Penrith.

Major initiatives currently underway in the family and civil program areas include a significant increase in the use of **alternative dispute resolution measures** in an attempt to conciliate matters under family law before they reach litigation, and the implementation of the *Children and Young Persons (Care and Protection) Act 1998*.

Community Legal Centres provide accessible community-based legal services in both generalist and specialised legal areas. The centres, funded jointly by the Commonwealth and NSW Governments, undertake community legal education, take part in law reform activities to redress social and legal injustices and provide information, advice and casework for the socially and economically disadvantaged. The services of the centres are a vital adjunct to the services provided by the Legal Aid Commission. Western Sydney locations for the centres are: Domestic Violence Advocacy Service, Harris Park; Hawkesbury Community Legal Centre, Richmond; Macarthur Legal Centre, Campbelltown; Macquarie Legal Centre, Harris Park; and South West Sydney Legal Centre, Liverpool. The 2001-2002 allocation for the centres in Western Sydney is **\$1 million**.

Survey Services

The Department of Information Technology and Management's Land and Property Information NSW will allocate a further **\$700,000** in 2001-2002 for the completion of **new edition topographic maps and digital information** for Western Sydney. In addition, **\$760,000** will be allocated to the **Digital Cadastral Database** maintenance involving digital subdivision and boundary mapping in Western Sydney, as part of an ongoing program that will facilitate planning and land management in Western Sydney.

WorkCover

WorkCover NSW has offices at Blacktown, Londonderry, Parramatta and Liverpool. The Parramatta office serves as the Administrative Centre for WorkCover's Construction Industry Team while Liverpool is the Administrative Centre for the Manufacturing Industry Team. The locations of these offices as Administrative Centres for Industry Teams reflect the major industry activity in those areas. WorkCover's Occupational Health and Safety Education Unit, which provides training to industry on all occupational health and safety matters, is also located at Parramatta. WorkCover NSW estimates that its expenditure in Western Sydney in 2001-2002 will be **\$9.19 million**, a 50 per cent increase from the previous year.