

2000–01 report Priorities in Progress

A report to all Queenslanders

on outcomes under the
Charter of Social and Fiscal
Responsibility



Queensland
Government

Priorities

- 1 More jobs for Queensland**
 - skills and innovation
 - the Smart State

- 2 Safer and more supportive communities**

- 3 Community engagement and a better quality of life**

- 4 Valuing the environment**

- 5 Building Queensland's regions**

Fiscal objectives

Accountability

Foreword



Last year, my Government's Priorities in Progress report began an important dialogue with the community, reporting for the first time on the outcomes being achieved under the *Charter of Social and Fiscal Responsibility*.

The report for 2000-01 is an even more meaningful resource, providing the community and the Government with improved information on the outcomes being achieved for Queenslanders.

In addition, my Government has refined its priorities to provide a sharper focus for our second term. There are now five priorities, which focus on securing Queensland's place as a dynamic, tolerant and mature community that is optimistic about its future.

- More jobs for Queensland - skills and innovation - the Smart State
- Safer and more supportive communities
- Community engagement and a better quality of life
- Valuing the environment
- Building Queensland's regions.

This summary provides a snapshot of the key findings of the 2000-01 report for your easy reference. It highlights where Queensland is performing well against these priorities and identifies opportunities for improvement. It also details how the Government is moving forward.

It is important to note that the Priorities in Progress report does not discuss every outcome achieved for the community, nor every activity the Government undertakes. Rather, it reports on the areas of most significance to our priorities and the key strategies and activities the Government is pursuing to progress them.

I commend this report to all Queenslanders and invite you to share in this important dialogue.

The Honourable Peter Beattie MP
Premier and Minister for Trade



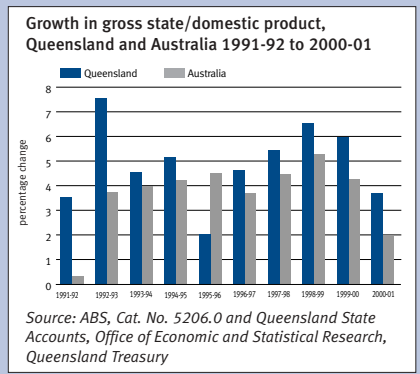
1 priority

More jobs for Queensland – skills and innovation – the Smart State

How have we performed?

- Queensland’s economy grew 3.7% in 2000-01, almost double the growth in Australia’s economy. This was driven by overseas exports, which increased in volume by 10.5%.
- 29,600 jobs were created, increasing employment by 1.8%. Over the past decade, Queensland has consistently outperformed the rest of Australia in creating jobs.
- The Government’s \$5.3 billion capital works program supported some 61,000 full-time jobs in 2000-01.
- The number of days lost due to work stoppages remains below the Australian average.
- Queensland TAFE graduates are more successful than most interstate counterparts in finding employment.
- Queensland businesses are more likely to use computers than others around the nation. Three in five households had access to a computer in 2001, up 20%.
- More than 77% of Queensland students remained at school to Year 12 in 2000, higher than the Australian average of 72.3%.

Economic growth



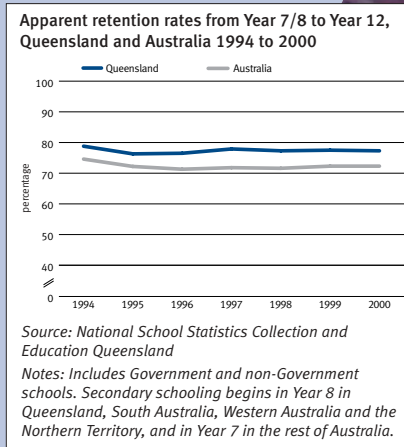
Opportunities for improvement

- While literacy and numeracy results remained constant, work is being done to improve Year 5 reading levels, educational outcomes for students in non-urban areas and increase the proportion of boys remaining at school to Year 12.
- A key focus is improving educational outcomes for Indigenous students, who have lower literacy and numeracy skills and are less likely to complete school.
- Investment by Queensland firms on research and development has grown almost twice as fast as nationally in the last decade, but further spending is required.
- The percentage of Queenslanders with post-secondary education qualifications remains slightly below the Australian average.

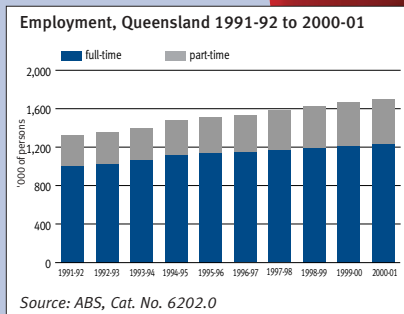
Moving forward

- The *Export Solutions* trade strategy aims to increase the number of Queensland exporters by 20% over five years.
- Queensland will continue to be promoted as an ideal location for major projects, such as Comalco's \$1.5 billion aluminium refinery, Aldoga's \$3 billion aluminum smelter and the \$1.3 billion Australian Magnesium Corporation project.
- The \$100 million Smart State Research Facility Fund will invest in research and development infrastructure, supporting knowledge industries such as biotechnology, aviation and advanced manufacturing, and innovation in traditional industries.
- *Queensland State Education – 2010* aims to increase the percentage of students completing Year 12 or equivalent to 88% by 2010. Literacy strategies and school-based management will be pursued to enhance students' learning outcomes.
- *Partners for Success* links schools, parents and communities in partnerships to improve educational and employment outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders.
- *Skilling Queensland* provides Queenslanders of all ages with greater options to gain skills for current and emerging job opportunities.

Apparent retention rates



Employment



- The *Private Sector Employment Initiative* will create 20,000 additional apprenticeships and traineeships over six years.



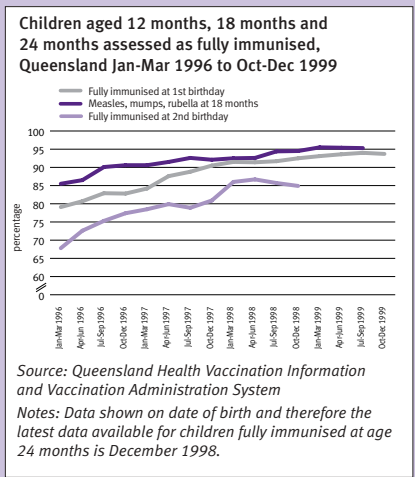
2 priority

Safer and more supportive communities

How have we performed?

- Crime rates in Queensland were significantly lower than national rates in 2000.
- Our courts generally resolved criminal and civil cases faster than the Australian average.
- There have been no escapes from secure custody in the last three years.
- Fatalities from fires and transport accidents are in line with national rates and are falling.
- Our immunisation rates are rising and match or exceed other States and Territories. In September 1999, 95% of children aged 18 months were fully immunised.
- The number of youths in detention fell 24% in 2000-01. The rate of Indigenous young people in detention also fell.
- The percentage of Queensland children under the age of 15 living in a family where no parent is employed declined in 2000.
- Queensland is a relatively tolerant society, with most adults reporting that they had not directly experienced negative cultural attitudes.

Immunisation



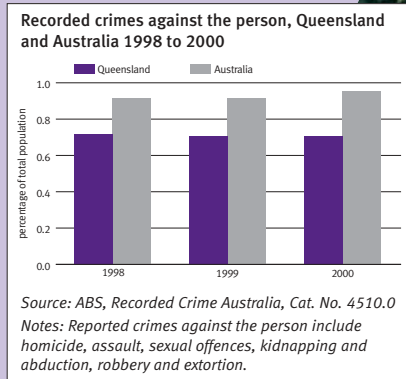
Opportunities for improvement

- While suicide rates among young males are falling, this needs to continue.
- Imprisonment rates fell 7%, but remain higher than the national average.
- The over-representation of Indigenous Queenslanders in the criminal justice system needs to be further decreased.
- More work needs to be done to prevent offenders committing further crimes following their release from the corrective services system.

Moving forward

- Drug Courts are being trialled to address the impact of drug addiction on crime, imprisonment and repeat offending. The Courts offer eligible drug-addicted offenders intensive rehabilitation instead of prison.
- The State Penalties Enforcement Registry proactively collects fines instead of jailing defaulters.
- The *Queensland Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Justice Agreement*, signed in December 2000, aims to halve the rate of Indigenous people in the criminal justice system by 2011.
- The *Local Justice Initiatives Program* funds 34 Indigenous community justice groups to prevent crime, particularly by youth.
- *Putting Families First* focuses on giving children the best possible start in life, valuing and supporting families and creating safer and supportive communities.
- The recommendations of the Forde Inquiry into Abuse of Children in Queensland Institutions will continue to be implemented, building on improvements to juvenile justice and the establishment of the Commission for Children and Young People.

Recorded crimes against the person



- The *Community Renewal* program will be expanded in 2002 to promote safe, healthy and confident communities and find long-term solutions to local issues.
- A new suicide prevention five-year strategic plan is being developed.
- Smoking by young people will be combated with stronger legislation to prevent the supply of tobacco to children and an anti-smoking advertising campaign.
- Anti-discrimination legislation was amended in June 2001 to strengthen protection against acts of racial and religious hatred.



3

priority

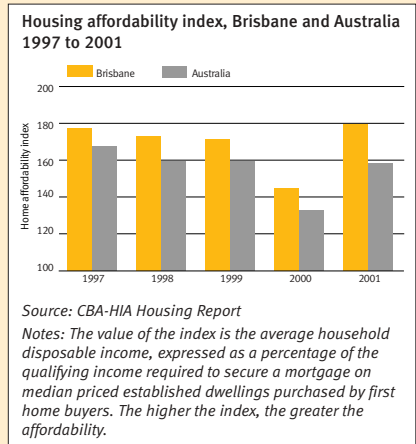
Community engagement and a better quality of life

How have we performed?

- We enjoy a quality of life ranked among the best in the world.
- Our life expectancy is high and is increasing. In 1999, females and males could expect to live almost 82 years and 76 years respectively.
- The average disposable income of Queenslanders rose, rents are lower and home ownership is more achievable than in the nation generally.
- Public housing continued to assist people whose needs could not be met in the private housing market, with almost 94% of new tenants on very low incomes or with special needs.
- The number of people with disabilities accessing support services has increased in recent years, improving their participation in everyday life.
- Improvements in disease prevention, screening and treatment in the last 15 years has resulted in a fall in deaths from heart disease (44%), cervical cancer (38%) and lung cancer in males (16%).
- One in five Queenslanders contacted their local councillor last year and nearly 15% contacted a Member of Parliament to influence government decision making.

- Nearly one in two Queenslanders was a member of a public library and our most popular pastimes were attending the cinema, sporting events and botanical gardens.

Home purchase affordability



Opportunities for improvement

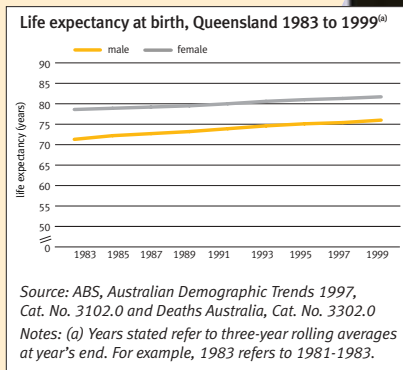
- Indigenous Queenslanders have a significantly lower life expectancy than non-Indigenous Queenslanders, reflecting patterns across Australia. Suicide, perinatal deaths and diseases, including breast and cervical cancer and diabetes, are significant issues for Indigenous communities.

- Smoking rates remain a concern, particularly among young women. This is reflected in a 43% increase in lung cancer mortality rates among women over the last 15 years.

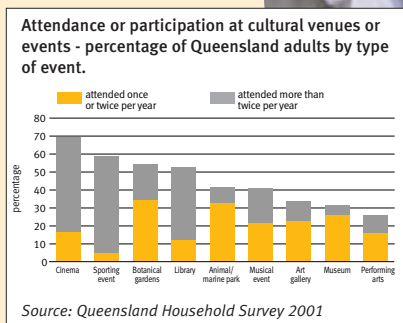
Moving forward

- The *Smart State Health 2020* project aims to ensure high quality health care is delivered to Queenslanders during the next 20 years, particularly as the population ages.
- The Government is committed to further reducing waiting times for elective surgery, addressing shortages in specialist nurses and is targeting priority health issues such as heart disease and cancer prevention.
- The Government is committed to improving the quality of life of Indigenous Queenslanders through collaborative partnerships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities, such as the *Cape York Partnership*.
- Initiatives to address violence and disadvantage in Indigenous communities will be implemented following the *Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Women's Task Force on Violence Report* and Justice Tony Fitzgerald's *Cape York Justice Study*.
- A long-term strategy is being developed to improve disability support services.

Life expectancy



Cultural events participation



- More flexible public housing options are being developed.
- Community Cabinet meetings will continue and Parliament will hold a sitting in Townsville in 2002.
- The *Millennium Arts Project* will upgrade our arts facilities to among the best in Australia.



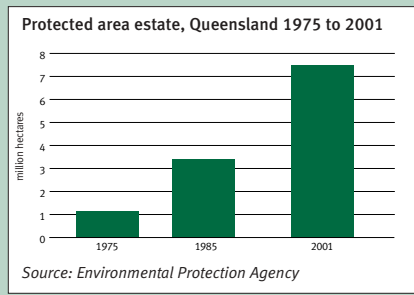
4 priority

Valuing the environment

How have we performed?

- Queensland is Australia's most naturally diverse State. It has 13 terrestrial and 14 marine bioregions, which support more than 1,000 ecosystem types.
- Queensland is home to approximately 65% of Australia's known frog, reptile, bird and mammal species and 47% of its plant species.
- Protected areas of the State more than doubled in the last 15 years and now include 7.5 million hectares of land and 5.1 million hectares of State tidal lands and waters.
- Approximately 70% of Queensland's ecosystem diversity is contained in conservation areas.
- More timber is sourced from plantations than from native forests, increasing from 51% to 76% of production over the last decade.
- The aquaculture industry is reducing pressure on wild fisheries resources.
- South East Queensland's air quality generally meets national standards.
- The extent of Queensland's mineral, coal, gas and oil reserves vary. Active exploration and development will add to these reserves.

Protected area estate



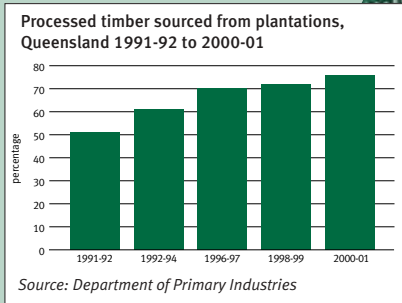
Opportunities for improvement

- A significant proportion of Queensland's rivers and streams reflect good water quality conditions. However, rural land use and urban run-off are impacting on lower catchment sites.
- Population growth and economic development are placing pressure on our land. Salinity, declining fertility, erosion and noxious weeds are significant land quality issues for Queensland.
- Queensland's relative abundance of fossil fuels and primary production causes relatively high levels of greenhouse gas emissions.
- While the rate of land clearing is significantly lower than in earlier decades, it has increased since the early 1990s.

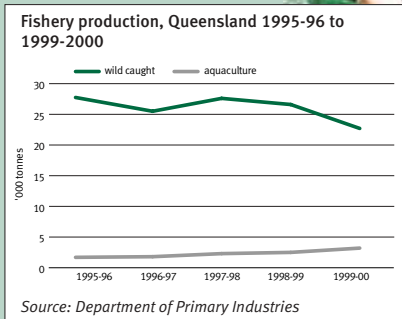
Moving forward

- Protected areas of the State will be increased to include 80% of Queensland's biodiversity.
- The 25-year *South East Queensland Forests Agreement* will protect a further 781,000 hectares of native forest from logging.
- The *East Coast Trawl Management Plan* is reducing pressure on fish stocks and the Great Barrier Reef, and will produce a more sustainable future for the fishing industry.
- Queensland's coastal zone will be protected under the *State Coastal Management Plan*, an integrated approach to planning and managing development, ports and recreational and tourism activities. The Plan will be implemented in early 2002.
- Water Resource Plans have been implemented or are being developed for 13 river basins, covering 45% of the State's land area.
- All levels of government will work with the community to address salinity and water quality through sustainable management of land and water resources, including the Great Barrier Reef.
- The Government will work with industry and the community to develop a comprehensive *Queensland Greenhouse Response Strategy*.

Timber



Fisheries



- The *Cleaner Energy Strategy* is forecast to reduce emissions by more than 30 million tonnes over 10 years. The Government is also promoting renewable energy sources.
- The *South East Queensland Regional Air Quality Strategy* acts to safeguard air quality as the population and industry grows.



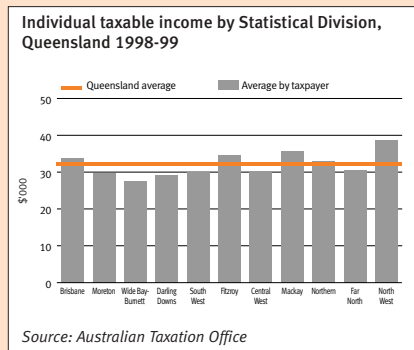
5 priority

Building Queensland's regions

How have we performed?

- Thirty-five percent of Queenslanders live in the regions outside the south east corner of the State. The population in regional Queensland grew 1% in 1999-2000, in line with the rest of Australia.
- Most of Queensland's exports originate in our regions. The value of overseas exports of goods from ports, other than Brisbane, increased by 32.5% to \$13.3 billion in 2000-01.
- Visitors to Queensland in 1999 stayed at least a third of their holiday in the regions, where they spent \$4.96 billion, or around 42% of their total expenditure in the State.
- Queensland has a growing reputation for settling native title issues, with 18 of 24 consent determinations settled by agreement and issued by the Federal Court.
- The average taxable income for Queenslanders was \$32,400. Outside Brisbane, higher than average incomes were recorded in Fitzroy, Mackay, Northern and North West statistical divisions.
- In 1999, retail prices compared to Brisbane were least expensive in the south east of the State and highest in the north and west of the State, reflecting higher transport costs.

Income



Opportunities for improvement

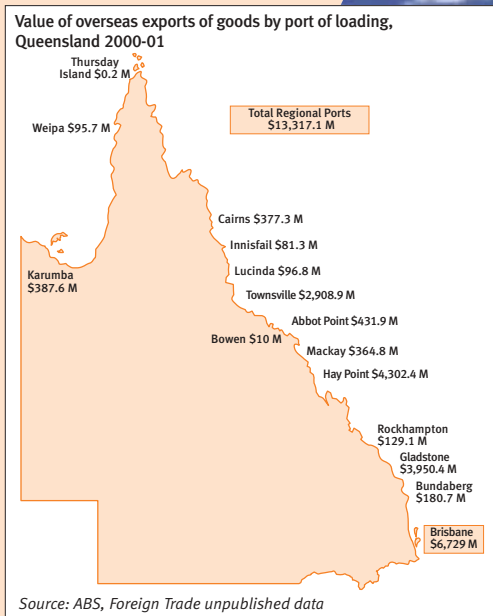
- Following strong growth in 1999-2000, regional employment eased in 2000-01 as a result of lower private building activity and reduced crop production.
- Support will be provided to the tourism industry following the recent international terrorism attacks and Ansett's collapse, including a low interest loan scheme and a domestic marketing campaign.

Moving forward

- Funding will be provided to organisations in regional and rural communities to build their capacity to progress local economic development opportunities in conjunction with the private sector.

- The Government will reduce the backlog in mining exploration applications by offering Indigenous Land Use Agreements to native title claimants and processing mining tenures through native title provisions of the *Mineral Resources Act 1989*.
- The food processing industry is being encouraged to become more competitive and innovative through the *Food Smart* grant, and investment in the aquaculture industry is being promoted.
- Small businesses, which create regional employment, will be assisted through the *Queensland Regional Business Development Scheme* and the *Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Business Development Scheme*.
- To provide vital infrastructure to the regions the Government has budgeted to spend \$2.4 billion, or 46.4% of the State's 2001-02 capital program, in the regions outside Brisbane and Moreton. The *State Infrastructure Plan* identifies the infrastructure each region needs to achieve its full potential.
- The *Reef Network* high-speed fibre optic cable network along the Brisbane to Cairns rail corridor significantly increases communication capacity and Internet access, and reduces cost.

Exports by port

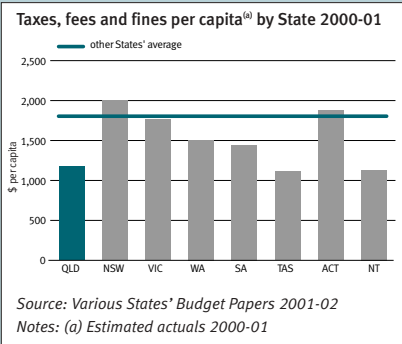


- The *Heritage Trails Network* consists of 32 regional projects to preserve and exhibit Queensland's cultural heritage, generating jobs and stimulating tourism.
- The *Access Queensland* initiative will improve access to Government services.



Fiscal objectives

Taxes, fees and fines

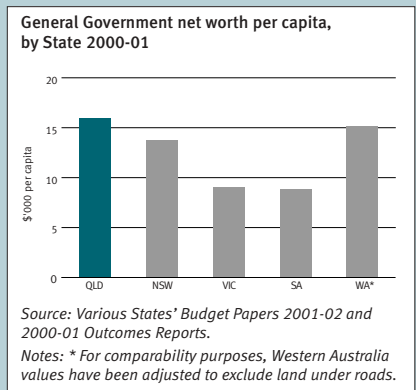


- The tax burden on Queenslanders was significantly lower than the average of the other States in 2000-01.
- Ratings agencies confirmed Queensland's AAA local currency credit rating, the highest available. This means that the Government can borrow money at a lower cost, reducing the cost of providing infrastructure.
- The Government is committed to ensuring that its level of service provision is sustainable by maintaining an operating surplus in the General Government sector. In cash terms, the surplus in 2000-01 was \$534 million.

Taking into account the collapse of HIH Insurance, lower than expected interest income and the transfer of assets from the State to local government, the accrual operating result was a deficit of \$858 million.

- The State's net financial assets are a measure of financial strength. A positive net asset position means that the State has enough financial assets to cover its existing and accruing liabilities. At 30 June 2001, Queensland had net financial assets of \$14.025 billion in the General Government sector.
- The Government's objective is to maintain or increase total State net worth. This is the amount by which the State's total assets exceed its total liabilities. In other words, it is the value of the investment held on behalf of the Queensland people by the Government.
- The State's net worth at 30 June 2001 increased to \$57.6 billion, or \$16,022 for every Queenslanders.

Net worth



Accountability

- The Government ensures its business is conducted in a fair and equitable manner by providing avenues for public scrutiny.
- The Parliamentary Commissioner for Administrative Investigations (known as the Ombudsman) considers complaints made by the public against State and local government agencies. Complaints increased by 4.5% last year and 4,879 complaints were finalised. Legislation dealing with the work of the Ombudsman will be modernised and improved in the coming year to make the Ombudsman more accessible to all Queenslanders.
- The number of Freedom of Information (FOI) applications received by State Government agencies in 1999–2000 increased by more than a quarter to 9,286. A total of 7,747 were finalised by 30 June 2000.
- In 2000–01, the Information Commissioner received 376 new applications to review FOI decisions and 396 appeals were finalised. Two-thirds of appeals were resolved, wholly or partly, in favour of the applicant.
- The Criminal Justice Commission (CJC) is responsible for investigating complaints of official misconduct and ensuring that appropriate action is taken. In 2000–01, the CJC received 3,148 complaints and conducted 347 investigations. As a result, the CJC recommended 299 charges be laid.
- The Queensland Audit Office is responsible for independently ensuring that public sector entities meet their financial management requirements, including for probity and efficient stewardship. In 2000–01, the Office performed 671 audits and produced three audit reports for Parliament.



Further information

If you would like to find out more about Queensland Government initiatives and services, please visit our website www.qld.gov.au.

A copy of the full 2000–01 Priorities in Progress report is available online at www.treasury.qld.gov.au.

We welcome your feedback on this publication.
If you have any comments or queries, please send them to:

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