

State Budget Highlights

Budget summary

Growing the economy

- Queensland's economy is forecast to strengthen in 2002-03 to 4 $\frac{1}{4}$ %, again exceeding national growth of 3 $\frac{3}{4}$ %.
- Business investment is forecast to reach an historical peak of almost \$13 billion in real terms.

Creating new jobs

- Queensland is creating jobs much faster than the national average. Over the 12 months to May 2002, Queensland created more than 30% of all jobs created in Australia and almost 80% of national full-time jobs.
- This strong performance is forecast to continue in 2002-03, with year-average growth in employment of 2 $\frac{1}{2}$ %, or about 43,000 new jobs.
- The unemployment rate is forecast to fall to a year-average 7 $\frac{1}{2}$ %, the lowest in a decade.

Sound finances

- A net operating surplus of \$23 million and a cash surplus of \$354 million are budgeted for the General Government sector in 2002-03, with surpluses over the forward estimates period.
- The State's net worth is expected to continue to grow, reaching \$58.5 billion by 30 June 2003.

Building Queensland's infrastructure

- A capital works program of \$4.8 billion will support some 45,100 full-time jobs.

Competitive taxes

- Payroll tax will be reduced to 4.75% from 1 July 2002.
- Queenslanders will be taxed on average \$1,321 in 2002-03, significantly lower than the average tax burden in other States and Territories of \$1,757 per capita.

Delivering on our priorities

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

- The new Education and Training Reforms for the Future package provides \$158.3 million over four years to provide our young people with more opportunities to access high quality education and training.
- The new Queensland BioCapital Fund will invest \$100 million in venture capital in biotechnology projects that have potential for high commercial returns for the Smart State.
- The Breaking the Unemployment Cycle initiative has been funded an additional \$10 million over two years.

Safer and more supportive communities

- New funding of \$148 million is provided over four years for the delivery of a range of initiatives aimed at achieving better outcomes for children, young people and families. This funding is in addition to the final instalment of funding (\$40 million over four years) committed as a result of the Forde Inquiry and brings the Government's additional funding commitment in this area to \$188 million over four years (\$42 million in 2002-03).
- An additional 307 police will be appointed across the State.

Community engagement and better quality of life

- The health budget will be allocated approximately \$13.3 million for acute inpatient services and up to \$7.3 million for improvements to Home and Community Care services.
- More than \$150 million is provided for public rental housing and \$6.5 million for crisis accommodation.

Valuing the environment

- A further 60 rangers will be employed, as part of the Protecting Our Natural Assets election commitment of \$10 million per annum to fund up to 140 new park rangers and improve facilities.

Building Queensland's regions

- 55.8% of the capital works budget is allocated for outside the Brisbane Statistical Division, reflecting the Government's strong commitment to the regions.



Cannonvale

Clermont

Collinsville

Mackay

Middlemount

Moranbah

Sarina

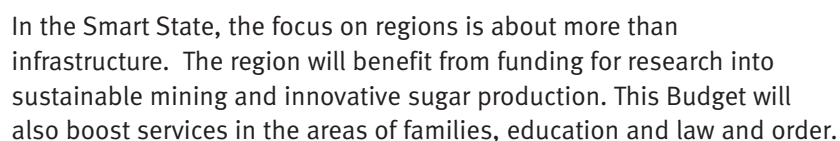
Mirani

Queensland
Government



The importance of Queensland's regions to the economic and social life of our State is evident in the Government's 2002-03 Budget.

- \$110 million for transport and main roads projects, such as upgrading the Rockhampton–Townsville–Cairns railway track and the Mackay and Hay Point ports;
- \$11.5 million for public and community housing projects, including Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander housing;
- \$10 million towards a multi-purpose centre in Mackay; and
- \$5.7 million to upgrade coal fleet infrastructure.



This statement highlights initiatives within your region that have been developed in response to individual community concerns. It shows the Government is passionate about listening to the community. In fact, we spend more time than any other Government listening to thousands of people at community engagement events such as Community Cabinet and Ministerial Regional Community Forums. We have responded to your call for individual solutions for each community – not a ‘one size fits all’ approach.

The Government is working with you and for you, to build employment and lifestyle opportunities. We are committed to expanding export markets, encouraging value-adding industries and building the regions' competitive advantages.

This means focusing on a workforce that is more highly skilled, educated and in demand. It also means improving social infrastructure, so community life flourishes.

The Queensland Government is committed to building partnerships with the regions because active communities are central to us achieving the Smart State vision. Together, we can forge a better future for our communities.

Peter Beattie MP
Premier and Minister for Trade



(right)
Whitehaven Beach,
Whitsunday Island

• Introduction

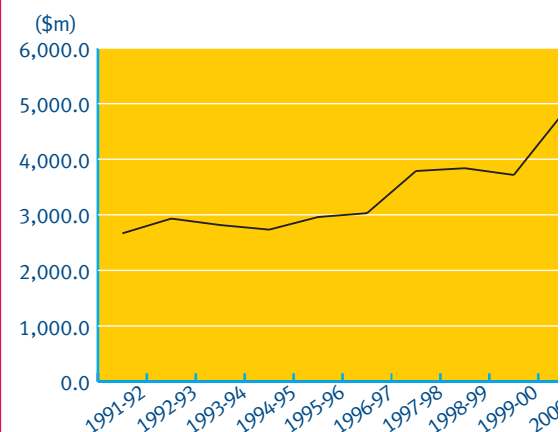
The infrastructure and services funded in the 2002-03 State Budget and outlined in this statement demonstrate the Queensland Government's commitment to working with the Mackay-Whitsunday region to promote economic development and job creation, stronger community networks and a prosperous future.

The Mackay-Whitsunday region covers 90,340 square kilometres or 5.2% of Queensland. It includes Mackay city and the shires of Belyando, Broomsound, Bowen, Mirani, Nebo, Sarina and Whitsunday.

The region is home to 142,063 people or 3.9% of all Queenslanders. The population is projected to grow by almost a quarter by 2021 to 175,839 people.

The region includes the coal-mining belt of the Bowen Basin and the largest single coal mining area in Australia. Exports of coal from ports within the region have risen significantly in value in recent years to \$4.8 billion in 2000-01. Agriculture, particularly sugar, and the manufacturing industry are also major contributors to the region's economy. Tourists to the region spent \$107 million on accommodation alone during their stays in 2001.

Exports of coal from Mackay-Whitsunday, 1991-92 to 2000-01



Source: ABS, Foreign Trade (unpublished data)

Building Queensland's regions

The Government is working with Queenslanders in the Mackay-Whitsunday region to drive economic development and ensure that the region prospers.

The region will benefit significantly from the development of the CH₄ coal seam methane field near Moranbah to supply the gas-fired base load power station in Townsville. This gas field will be developed by CH₄ Pty Ltd as part of a \$500 million investment by the public and private sectors in the Central and North Queensland energy industries.

As a stimulus to the central business district of Mackay, \$10 million is provided this financial year for a multi-purpose centre, as part of a commitment of up to \$38 million for the development.

Water and its efficient use is a key requirement for the development of the Mackay-Whitsunday region. The Government is continuing pre-feasibility studies to assess the viability of the Urannah Project. The proposal includes constructing a major dam on the Broken River, 100 kilometres west of Mackay, and developing up to 20,000 hectares of new irrigated agriculture around Collinsville.

To assist the local tourism industry, this Budget provides ongoing funding of \$200,000 each to the Mackay Tourism and Development Bureau and Tourism Whitsundays to market the region to visitors.



A safe and efficient transport network promotes industry competitiveness and economic development. Queensland Rail will provide more than \$64 million within this region to continue upgrading the Rockhampton–Townsville–Cairns railway track.

Other major transport projects in the Mackay–Whitsunday region include:

- \$5.7 million to upgrade coal fleet infrastructure;
- \$6.4 million for the ports of Mackay and Hay Point;
- almost \$4 million to complete the South Walker Creek rail spur to facilitate mining an additional 550,000 tonnes of coal a year from South Walker Mine;
- \$2.1 million to complete the Mackay Harbour Road upgrade from Vines Creek to Slade Point Roundabout;
- \$1.8 million to finish widening the Fitzroy Development Road; and
- \$1.6 million for work at Mackay Airport.

We are also assisting local government in the region with:

- almost \$9 million for reliable water supply and sewerage services; and
- \$1 million to continue repairing damage from the November 2000 floods.

Government-owned Powerlink has allocated \$7.7 million to establish a substation in Mirani. Ergon Energy will join with Mackay City Council to remove overhead power lines from Shakespeare Street and place them underground. Ergon has also allocated \$1.9 million to enhance the quality and reliability of electricity supply in the region.

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

The Government is positioning Queensland as the Smart State with a strategy that supports a diversified economy through major investment in new industries.

It's also vital that we add value to our traditional industries. The Mackay–Whitsunday region will benefit from the following Smart State initiatives in 2002-03:

- \$5.3 million for the Institute for Sustainable Mining, a partnership between the Queensland Government and the University of Queensland, for ongoing research into information technology, safety, efficiency and rehabilitation of mine sites; and
- a \$3.8 million grant to the Bureau of Sugar Experiment Station to develop innovative planting systems, improved pest and disease management, and soil and water management on sugar cane farms.

These investments create 21st century jobs. Through the Breaking the Unemployment Cycle initiatives, it's anticipated that approximately \$11.3 million will be spent in Mackay–Whitsunday in 2002-03 for employment programs targeted at the long-term unemployed, mature-age job seekers, trainees and apprentices, young people, including young offenders, prisoners ready for release and Indigenous people.

The region will also benefit from the \$2 million Central Queensland Training Strategy to ensure workers have the skills demanded by the growth of manufacturing and minerals processing in the region.

Investing in the Smart State means investing in education.

This Budget provides \$158.3 million over four years state-wide to fund an innovative package of education and training reforms for the future.

In 2002-03, the Mackay–Whitsunday region will share in:

- an additional \$22.7 million for information and communication technologies (ICT) in classrooms and ICT training for teachers; and
- 382 additional teachers to provide for growth and other needs, including 158 teachers as part of the Government's election commitment to employ 800 additional teachers over four years.

Highlights in education funding for the region include:

- \$2.6 million to modernise Mackay North State High School;
- \$1.4 million to upgrade Cannonvale State School;
- \$399,000 to complete Glenella preschool;
- \$200,000 to Pioneer State High School as one of eight Technology, Maths and Science Centres of Excellence across Queensland;
- \$96,000 to continue the New Basics initiative at Mackay Central State School and Mackay State High School to equip students with critical thinking, problem solving and lifelong learning skills; and
- \$86,000 to support the Learning and Development Centre for gifted and talented students at Mackay North State High School.

To enhance life-long learning opportunities, \$605,000 has been allocated to public libraries in the region.

Safer and more supportive communities

Queenslanders want to live in communities where they are protected from harm and where they are treated with fairness and dignity.

Families are the foundation of our communities and to support them, we are this year funding a package of \$188 million over four years (\$42 million in 2002-03) for delivery of a range of initiatives aimed at achieving better outcomes for children, young people and families. This comprises new funding of \$148 million over four years, in addition to the final instalment of funding (\$40 million over four years) committed as a result of the Forde Inquiry. This funding will be allocated across all regions of the State.

Smarter policing and crime prevention are vital for ensuring our communities are safe. To assist this focus, 12 additional police officers will be appointed to the Mackay District over the next three years.

(far right) Overburden removal in an open-cut coal mine

In addition, a Tactical Crime Squad with seven officers will commence operations in Mackay in July 2002 to target crime hotspots and drug offenders.

Other projects include:

- \$4.1 million towards the \$11.4 million extension and refurbishment of the Mackay Courthouse;
- almost \$800,000 to buy land and commence construction of a new \$2 million, 24-hour police station at Mackay North;
- \$420,000 to commence the \$1.5 million joint fire and ambulance facility which will service North Mackay and the Northern Beaches;
- \$250,000 to buy land and commence the replacement ambulance station at Mackay South;
- \$200,000 to complete the replacement ambulance station at Calen; and
- \$100,000 to refurbish Mackay Central fire station.

Ergon Energy will spend \$1 million in 2002-03 in North Queensland to improve the reliability of high-risk electricity assets in cyclone prone areas, including Bowen, Pioneer Valley, Sarina and Proserpine.

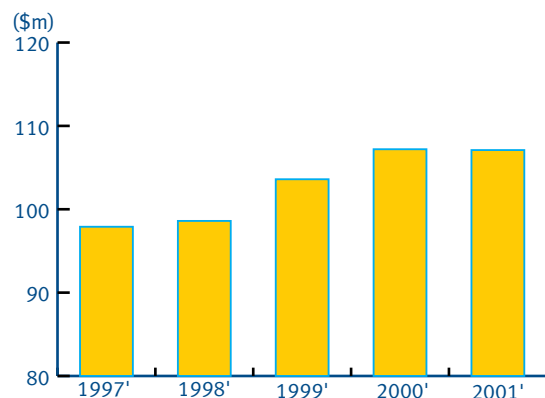
Community engagement and a better quality of life

All Queenslanders are encouraged to take part in the rich cultural, social and economic life of the State. The Queensland Government is working to ensure equality of opportunity and equitable access to high standards of health, housing and family services through greater participation in the choices made by Government.

Initiatives to improve health, well-being and quality of life in the region include:

- \$1.3 million towards establishing the Mackay Regional Botanic Gardens on the Lagoons site;
- \$655,000 to improve disabled access to rail services;

Takings from accommodation, Mackay–Whitsunday, 1997 to 2001



Source: ABS, Tourist Accommodation, Queensland (8635.3)



- \$450,000 towards a multi-purpose indoor sporting facility at Whitsunday Sports Park at Airlie Beach;
- \$385,000 for the Home Assist Secure Schemes to assist elderly people in the region to remain longer in their own homes, with improved safety, independence and quality of life;
- \$300,000 to commence a \$1.8 million outpatients facility at Mackay Hospital; and
- \$27,000 for skate bowl facilities at Middlemount and Dysart.

We have also allocated \$10.4 million for public and community housing projects and \$1.1 million for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander housing.

Queensland's regions have a rich cultural heritage, which we are preserving and promoting through the Queensland Heritage Trails Network, in partnership with the Commonwealth and local governments. In the Mackay–Whitsunday region, \$2.6 million is allocated to the multi-purpose Arts Space Mackay project. The Millennium Arts Regional Program provides \$100,000 for Stage 2 of the Proserpine Historical Museum.

To enable regional Queenslanders to have greater participation in Government decision-making, a Community Engagement Division has been formed in the Department of the Premier and Cabinet. The Division maintains the Regional Communities program comprising a network of regional offices, including one in Mackay.

Valuing the environment

The Government is committed to protecting the environment and biodiversity of the Mackay–Whitsunday region for current and future generations.

Ten new rangers will be appointed in the Mackay, Airlie Beach and Clermont areas in 2002-03.

The region will also share in a further \$350,000 to eradicate the Crown of Thorns starfish from important tourism sites on the Great Barrier Reef.

Other initiatives include:

- \$970,000 for two Great Walks of Queensland;
- \$700,000 for a marine base complex at Abel Point;
- \$349,000 for improvements to Eungella and Epping Forest National Parks and Mackay District Parks; and
- \$300,000 for voluntary acquisition of environmentally sensitive coastal and riparian land.

