

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.



Aramac

Augathella

Barcaldine

Bedourie

Birdsville

Blackall

Boulia

Camooweal

Cunnamulla

Dirranbandi

Hughenden

Injune

Isisford

Julia Creek

lundah

Mount Isa

Mitchell

Normanton

Richmond

Roma

St George

Surat

Thargomindah

Windorah

Winton

Courthouse
59 Vindex Street
Winton QLD 4735
Phone: 4657 1536
Monday–Friday 8.30am–4.30pm





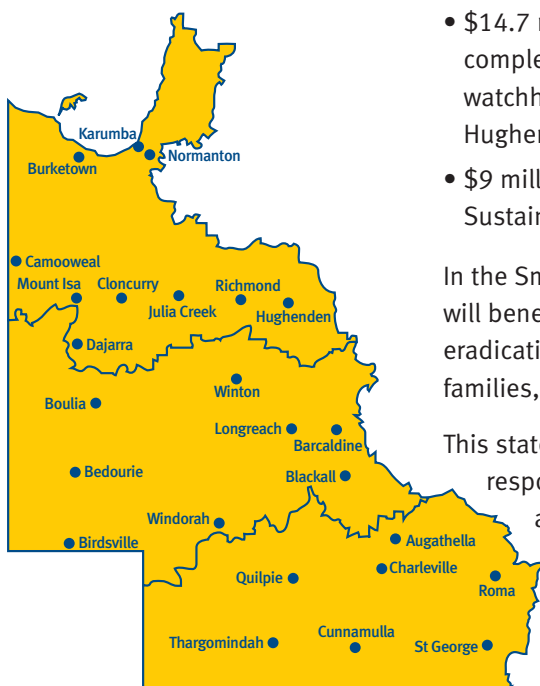
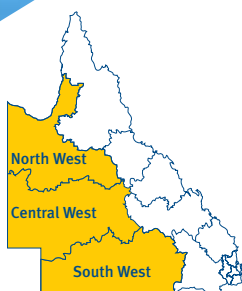
The importance of Queensland's regions to the economic and social life of our State is evident in the Government's 2002-03 Budget.

- \$75.6 million for main roads and transport projects, such as upgrading the Barkley and Flinders Highways, the Carnarvon Development Road and the Port of Karumba;
- \$14.7 million for emergency services facilities, including funds to complete work on the Mount Isa police district headquarters and watchhouse, the Roma watchhouse and ambulance stations at Hughenden, Longreach, Dirranbandi and Kowanyama; and
- \$9 million over two years for the state-wide Great Artesian Basin Sustainability Initiative, jointly funded with the Commonwealth and

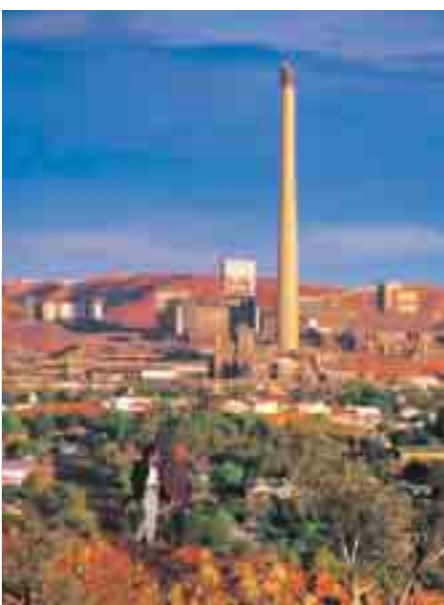


This statement highlights initiatives within your region that have been developed in response to individual community concerns. It shows the Government is passionate about listening to the community. In fact, we spend more time than any other Government listening to thousands of people at community engagement 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 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.



(below) View over Mount Isa



Queensland
Government



• Introduction

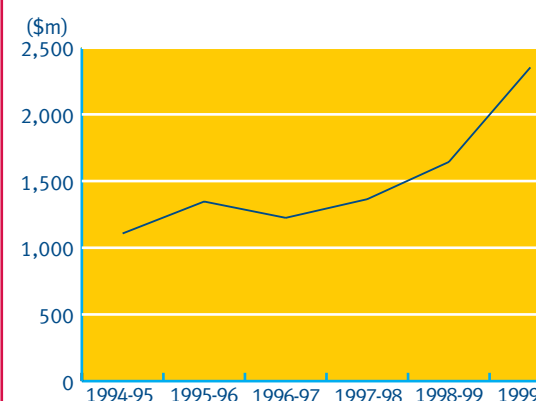
The infrastructure and services funded in the 2002-03 State Budget and outlined in this statement demonstrate the Queensland Government's commitment to working with Western Queensland to promote economic development and job creation, stronger community networks and a prosperous future.

Western Queensland covers more than a million square kilometres, or about 58% of the State. It includes 29 local government areas, ranging from Carpentaria shire in the north-west, down to Bulloo shire in the south-west and out to Aramac shire in the central-west.

Western Queensland is home to about 2% of all Queenslanders and almost 12% of the region's residents are of Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander descent.

Western Queensland's economy is underpinned by agriculture, forestry and fishing, mining and the retail trade. These three industries combined are the biggest employers in the region. Since 1996-97, the value of mineral production has almost doubled to \$2.4 billion. The gross value of agricultural production has also risen steadily, to almost \$1.2 billion in 1999-2000.

Value of mineral production, Western Queensland, 1994-95 to 1999-2000



Source: Department of Natural Resources and Mines (unpublished data)

• Building Queensland's regions

The Government is working with Western Queensland to drive economic development and ensure that the region prospers. In 2002-03, we will continue to fund regional planning and development boards to support key industry and economic development initiatives, including:

- \$100,000 for the Mount Isa Townsville Economic Zone Ltd;
- \$100,000 for the Central Western Queensland Remote Area Planning and Development Board;
- \$100,000 for the South West Regional Development Authority; and
- \$52,500 for the Maranoa Rural Management Centre.

The Government is not able to meet the demand for business support services in rural centres on its own, so we work in partnership with local organisations to facilitate these services. In 2002-03, we will provide \$60,000 each to the South West Regional Development Authority and the Julia Creek Sporting Association.

Water is a precious resource in Western Queensland. The Queensland Government will contribute \$9 million over two years to the state-wide Great Artesian Basin Sustainability Initiative, jointly funded with the Commonwealth and landowners. The initiative funds bore rehabilitation, bore drain replacement and education and scientific programs and aims to halt the decline of, and where possible, restore water pressure within the Basin.





We will also spend an additional \$9.5 million over four years state-wide for water reform, including completing Water Resource Plans and implementing them through Resource Operation Plans.

In the Year of the Outback, \$300,000 is provided to market Western Queensland as a tourism destination. We are also making it easier for tourists to navigate the region by providing more than \$3 million to improve highway and road signage on:

- the Savannah Way Adventure Drive from Cairns to the Northern Territory border;
- the Overlander's Way from Townsville to Tennant Creek;
- the Matilda Highway from Cunnamulla to Karumba; and
- the Warrego Highway from Ipswich to Charleville.

A safe and efficient transport network promotes industry competitiveness and economic development. Major projects in Western Queensland in 2002-03 include:

- \$18.4 million for the Barkley Highway as part of a \$76.8 million project;
- \$11.7 million to continue renewing rail track on the Miles-Roma-Muckadilla line;
- \$6.2 million for work on the Flinders Highway between Richmond and Cloncurry;
- \$3.8 million to complete the \$5.5 million sealing and widening of Carnarvon Development Road between Roma and Injune, and \$620,000 to complete work on the Carnarvon Highway between St George and Surat;
- \$2 million for the Port of Karumba and to continue upgrading Karumba airstrip; and
- \$957,000 for work on the Isisford to Blackall Road.

Western Queensland will also benefit from the Government's efforts to maintain appropriate air and long distance bus services to remote and rural communities.

We have allocated \$9.7 million to improve roads into Aboriginal communities in the State's north, including Burke and Carpentaria shires, and to train Indigenous people in roadworks activities. The region's Aboriginal and Torres Strait Island councils will also share in a \$19 million state-wide allocation to assist them to deliver local government services. New council chambers will be built at Doomadgee.

Other projects include:

- \$7.6 million to continue work on the new gas-fired generating unit for the Mica Creek Power Station near Mount Isa to meet growth in demand;
- \$7.2 million for Ergon Energy's projects to ensure reliable energy supply throughout the region;
- \$7 million to repair damage caused by the 2000 floods in North and Central Queensland;
- \$4.3 million for water and sewerage services; and
- \$1.3 million towards the Mount Isa CBD upgrade and \$54,000 towards the Mitchell CBD Streetscape Revitalisation Project.

• 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 investment in traditional and new industries.

Primary industries are the backbone of Western Queensland's economy. Smart State initiatives to add value to production include:

- \$2.1 million for research to improve the eating quality of sheep meat and the attributes of wool;
- \$766,000 for the Central Queensland and Western Queensland Farming Systems Projects, with CSIRO and the Grains Research Development Corporation, to manage production and environmental sustainability through practical solutions at a catchment level; and
- \$260,000 for research into silver leaf whitefly, which causes significant damage to the quality and yield of cotton crops, with the Cotton Research and Development Corporation.

Through the Breaking the Unemployment Cycle initiatives, it's anticipated that \$5.1 million will be spent in Western Queensland in 2002-03 for employment programs targeted at the long-term unemployed, mature-age job seekers, trainees, apprentices, young people and Indigenous people.

Investing in the Smart State means investing in training and 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.

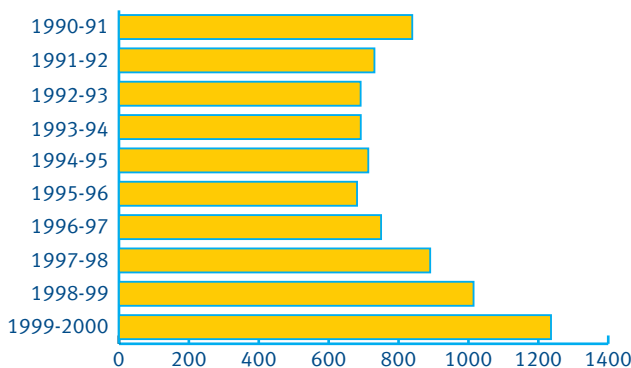
In 2002-03, Western Queensland will share in:

- 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.

Education and training funding for the region includes:

- \$571,430 for Learning and Development Centres (Technology) at Charleville State High School and Townview State School;

Gross value of agricultural production (\$ million) Western Queensland, 1990-91 to 1999-2000



Source: ABS, Agriculture, Queensland (unpublished data)

(right) Waltzing Matilda Centre, Winton

- \$200,000 for Sunset State School, which is a Technology, Maths and Science Centre of Excellence;
- \$80,000 to advance the Information Technology Platform at Mount Isa Institute of TAFE; and
- \$41,000 for the New Basics initiative at Healy State School.

• Safer and more supportive communities

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 to keep our communities safe. North West Queensland will share in the \$3.5 million Diversion from Custody Program to accommodate people who are intoxicated in public places, helping to improve quality of life for residents, businesses and tourists.

A new Community Conferencing Service will be introduced in Central West Queensland to bring together young offenders and their families and the victim of the offence to agree on the most suitable way to repair the damage caused.

Other projects include:

- \$4.6 million to finish upgrading Mount Isa police district headquarters and stage 2 of the watchhouse;
- \$800,000 to complete replacement ambulance stations at Hughenden, Longreach and Dirranbandi;
- \$163,000 to complete the refurbishment of the Roma police watchhouse as part of a \$3.5 million project, including new district headquarters; and
- \$300,000 for new ambulance facilities at Kowanyama.

• 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.

Health and well-being initiatives in the region include:

- \$753,000 for an undercover multi-purpose area and rodeo grounds at Doomadgee;
- \$535,000 to establish public health units in Charleville, Longreach and Mount Isa;
- \$515,000 to redevelop Cunnamulla cinema as a sport and recreation centre, subject to a feasibility study;
- \$400,000 for air-conditioning at Longreach Hospital;



- \$312,500 to implement the Better Health Outcomes Project at Doomadgee and Mornington;
- \$310,000 towards extending Winton's pool; and
- \$225,000 to continue renovating the Roma Neighbourhood Centre.

The Government has allocated \$12.8 million for housing projects in Western Queensland in 2002-03. We will also fund \$507,000 for Home Assist Secure Schemes to assist elderly people in the region to remain in their homes longer.

Disability services will be boosted through:

- \$350,000 to improve access to rail services; and
- \$9,000 to improve access at Mount Isa's Civic Centre.

Local shows play an important role in bringing together communities in regional Queensland, so \$207,000 is provided for showground improvements in the Mount Isa, Murweh, Winton and Balonne and Roma areas.

Queensland's regions have a rich cultural heritage and in Western Queensland in 2002-03 we will fund:

- \$2.3 million to complete upgrading the Lark Quarry conservation park;
- \$2 million to expand and transform the Skywatch facility in Charleville into the Cosmos Centre;
- \$520,000 to complete the Waltzing Matilda Centre's displays; and
- \$385,000 to finish the \$3 million Mount Isa Mining Heritage Centre.

The \$1.7 million redevelopment of the Australian Workers and Heritage Centre in Barcaldine, including the History of Working Women, will be completed and the new Great North West Discovery Centre at Cloncurry will be opened later this year.

• Valuing the environment

The Government is committed to protecting the environment and biodiversity of Western Queensland through:

- \$1.4 million to upgrade Diamantina, Lochern, Lark Quarry, Lawn Hill, Porcupine Gorge, Camooweal Caves, Carnarvon Gorge and Currawinya National Parks;
- \$1.2 million for nine new rangers in the Mount Isa, Riversleigh, Longreach, Simpson Desert, St George, Roma and Charleville areas; and
- \$780,000 for vegetation mapping in the Mulga Lands, Northwest Highlands and Gulf Plains bio-regions.

