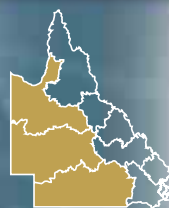


Western Queensland



Premier's Message

My Government is continuing our investment to ensure a positive future for all Queenslanders.

We are committed to work with all to ensure we create opportunities for our regions and to continue building on the Smart State's strong and stable foundations. This Regional Budget Statement outlines the Government's ongoing investment in the Western Queensland region and its delivery on key election commitments for 2004-05.

The Government is meeting the needs of the people of Western Queensland through these initiatives and by improving services, especially in the areas of health, employment, education and child safety.

In 2004-05, our Smart State initiatives in education and training will enable the region to harness the creativity and talent within the community. This Statement demonstrates a significant commitment to a strong and prosperous Western Queensland region.

My Government will work with the people of Western Queensland to continue creating opportunities for all Queenslanders to grow and enjoy a better quality of life.

Delivering on our election commitments for the Western Queensland region, the 2004-05 State Budget highlights include:

- \$3.23 million for apprenticeship and traineeship incentives to provide jobs in crucial, skills-shortage industries and the public sector
- \$2.2 million for road works on the Hughenden to Winton section of the Kennedy Developmental Road, as part of a total Government contribution of \$2.72 million
- \$1.6 million for government employee housing in the Western Region
- \$1.23 million to widen and seal between Boundary and Nonda Creeks on the Richmond to Julia Creek section of the Flinders Highway
- \$250,000 for works on the Normanton to Dimbulah section of the Burke Developmental Road, in Carpentaria Shire
- \$2 million for stage two of Drive Tourism, which includes the Great Inland Way and Capricorn Highway
- \$100,000 to fund a paramedic trainer to provide rural and remote health training for paramedics
- \$148,000 for LiveScan fingerprinting technology for the Mount Isa Watchhouse
- \$93,000, including \$8,000 for fit out, to complete a \$140,000 major classroom upgrade to support science initiatives at Aramac State School
- \$47,000, including \$4,000 for fit out, to complete a \$135,000 upgrade to support information communication technologies at Hughenden State School
- \$77,000, including \$7,000 for fit out, to complete a \$145,000 classroom upgrade to support science initiatives at Richmond State School.



Queensland Government

Western Quee

This Regional Budget Statement for Western Queensland outlines the Government's State Budget 2004-05 spending commitment to this region and its people. As a Government, we recognise the regions' valuable contributions to making Queensland the Smart State and home for over 3.8 million people. In this Budget we have allocated 60% of capital works funding for regions outside Brisbane.

The Western Queensland region covers almost 60% of the State. It is home to 73,664 Queenslanders, including 10.4% of the State's Indigenous population. The population density is very low at 0.07 people per square kilometre. This region is primarily agricultural, and has the highest level of agricultural holdings in the State. Oil, gas and mining bring economic growth and strength to Western Queensland and there are several emerging industries adding diversity to the region's potential. The Carpentaria – Mount Isa Minerals Province has extensive mineral reserves and gas from the region supplies key centres within Queensland and interstate.

Improving health care and strengthening services to the community

We are committed to providing better hospitals, services and health care for all Queenslanders. Our commitment to improving the standard and accessibility of hospital and health services in Western Queensland includes spending in 2004-05 on key initiatives such as:

- \$7.07 million for construction of a 40 bed nursing home on the existing

hospital/nursing home site in Roma

- \$3.89 million to implement a hearing screening program for new-born babies in Western and Far Northern Queensland, under the Healthy Hearing program
- approximately \$600,000 for the replacement of the Dirranbandi Ambulance Station and the construction of the Mornington Island joint emergency facility.

In 2004-05, \$100,000 will fund the appointment of a paramedic trainer to the Mount Isa Centre for Rural and Remote Health to provide rural and remote health training for paramedics.

We have committed \$1.32 million to support people with disabilities and their carers in Western Queensland. This includes approximately \$67,000 for respite care, \$178,000 to support school leavers with a disability make the transition from school to adult life and \$237,000 to assist adults with a disability.

We are working to support low-income families and individuals through providing housing and housing related services. Spending in the region in 2004-05 includes:

- \$12.43 million for new construction, upgrades and maintenance of public housing and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Housing
- \$3.4 million for community housing projects and services including \$1.7 million as part of the Long-Term Community Housing Program.



Image courtesy Queensland Tourism

Funding of \$250,000 is provided for the complete upgrade of facilities at Lake Moondarra Water and Recreation Reserve.

Realising the Smart State through education, skills and innovation

Participation in the Smart State means we encourage and reward ideas, innovation, entrepreneurship and hard work across all sectors of the Queensland community, industry and Government.

We are investing in school infrastructure across Western Queensland, for the benefit of the region's young people and their education. In 2004-05, funding includes:

- \$129,000, including \$10,000 for fit out, to complete a \$320,000 upgrade at Pormpuraaw State School, including airconditioning under the Cooler Schools program
- \$170,000, including \$15,000 for fit out, to complete a \$285,000 project to support science initiatives at Aramac and Richmond State Schools
- \$600,000, including \$54,000 for fit out, to upgrade the library of Longreach State School

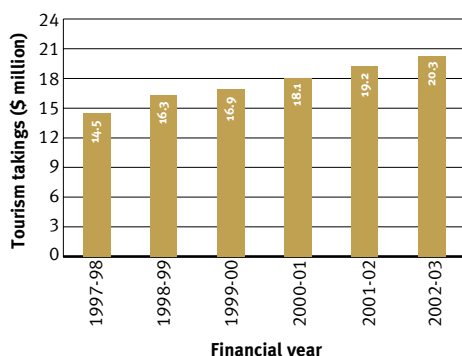


Image courtesy Queensland Tourism

The Gulflander journeys through the Gulf country from Croyden to Normanton.

Tourism takings (\$ million)

Western Queensland, 1997-98 to 2002-03



Source: ABS, Tourist Accommodation, Queensland (8635.3.40.001 and 8635.3)

- \$585,000, including \$292,000 for fit out, to complete stage two of the \$650,000 Senior Campus of Spinifex State College in Mount Isa
- \$360,000, including \$180,000 for fit out, to complete stage two of the \$400,000 Spinifex State College Junior Campus.

This is in addition to the \$606,000 provided for the Triple R program, which will provide repainting, reticulation and re-roofing for 15 local schools, including repainting at Aramac and Muckadilla State Schools.

We are promoting lifelong learning and skilling the workforce to meet the needs of industries central to the Smart State vision and Queensland's economic growth. In 2004-05, approximately \$32 million will be invested in creating around 8,000 training places in the region.

Protecting our children and enhancing community safety

The Government is intent on reforming the child protection system. We are increasing the recurrent funding for child protection to at least \$109 million in 2004-05 and at least \$214 million by 2006-07 to build a new, radically improved system for safeguarding the welfare of Queensland children. The Western Queensland region will benefit from new funding for State-wide initiatives that include:

- an additional 518 service delivery and support staff who will be employed

over the next three years with 318 of these to start in 2004-05 and \$11.74 million for additional frontline staff in 2004-05

- 23 new or expanded Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander child care agencies by 2006-07 and the establishment of a new Indigenous Support Branch
- therapeutic services such as counselling and support for children with a disability
- 134 new alternative care places in 2004-05 for young people who are not suited to conventional foster care
- \$4.17 million in 2004-05 to further support our foster carers
- \$4.19 million for new places and improvements to residential care.

Approximately \$593,000 is allocated under the Local Justice Initiative program to assist Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities and organisations develop local, community-based strategies for dealing with justice issues.

Building Queensland's regions

Efficient and integrated transport networks are important for the ongoing development of regional Queensland. In the Western Queensland region the Government is allocating \$71.86 million for roads throughout the region. This includes:

- \$24.95 million, funded by the Australian Government, to upgrade

Thargomindah - the solar town



Western Queensland's solar energy resources are greater than those of any area in Australia. The Queensland Government's Solar Towns project aims to replace energy from diesel generators in small rural towns to renewable energy sources. Bulloo Shire Council's renewable energy initiatives mean that Thargomindah is fast becoming Australia's first solar town. A pilot project will initially help three other communities to follow Thargomindah's lead and embrace alternative energy generation.



Above: Thargomindah leads the renewable energy charge ... hot Artesian bore water has provided hydro-electric power since 1893, and now the community is embracing solar power.

Left: Solar hot water at a Thargomindah home.

Below: Bulloo Shire Council leads by example, with solar panels lining the administration centre's roof to generate electricity.



Pictures left and below reproduced with the permission of the Environmental Protection Agency © Copyright the State of Queensland

sections of the Barkly Highway between Mount Isa and Camooweal

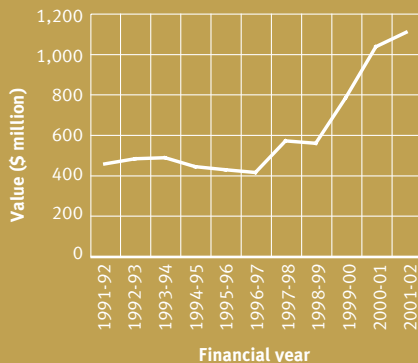
- \$7.07 million to upgrade the Flinders Highway between Hughenden and Cloncurry, including \$2 million to widen and rehabilitate the section between Sloanes and Namoi Creek
- \$3.04 million to widen and seal sections of the Carnarvon Highway between Roma and Injune
- \$313,000 to reseal an 11 kilometre section of the Barcardine to Aramac Road
- \$1 million to pave and seal the Wills Developmental Road between Burketown and the Doomadgee turn-off
- \$1.35 million out of a total \$2.3 million funded by the Australian Government, to upgrade floodways on the Warrego Highway between Roma and Mitchell

ing from Carpentaria shire in
Aramac shire in the central-west.
ama Aboriginal Councils.



Agricultural production - Total value of livestock slaughtering (\$ million)

Western Queensland, 1991-92 to 2001-02



Source: ABS, Agriculture, Queensland (unpublished data)

- \$1.7 million to widen and rehabilitate sections of the Kennedy Developmental Road between Winton and Boulia.

Funding for major transport and infrastructure initiatives also includes \$4.97 million for continuing upgrades to the Surat Basin rail track.

To help ensure reliability of power supply within the region, CS Energy is spending \$15.88 million on the Mica Creek Power Station. Enertrade is also spending \$1 million on the Barcaldine Power Station, and Ergon Energy is spending \$1.42 million for the new station at Camooweal.

The Government is providing funding to build on the economic strengths of the Western Queensland region. In 2004-05 this includes:

- \$522,500 funding support for key industry and economic development initiatives through the Remote Area Boards and the Queensland Regional Business Advisory Service
- \$301,000 for destination-based marketing of the region
- an additional \$50,000 for the indoor sports hall at Boulia, bringing the total Government contribution to this project to over \$950,000, and another \$50,000 for the swimming pool in Cloncurry

- \$250,000 for the complete upgrade of facilities at Lake Moondarra Water and Recreation Reserve.

The Queensland Events Regional Events Program will be bolstered with an extra \$1.4 million a year, expanding the program to \$2.4 million a year for the next two years and including two new innovative schemes.

Protecting the environment for a sustainable future

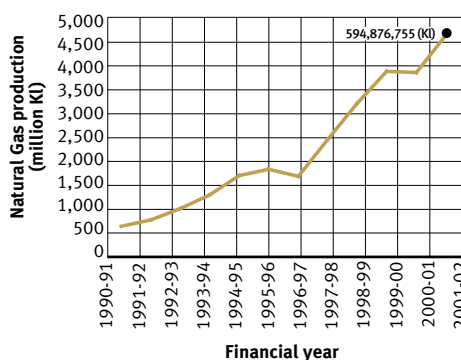
The Western Queensland region has a unique natural and cultural heritage of value to all Queenslanders. The Government will continue to manage protected areas within the region, including spending an estimated \$397,000 for fire management and weed and feral animal management. We are spending an estimated \$322,000 to improve visitor amenities and facilities, including around \$147,000 for the Wild Dog Dreaming viewing platform at Boodjamulla in Lawn Hill National Park.

The region will also benefit from:

- \$2.31 million State-wide to enhance water resource monitoring programs
- approximately \$512,000 to assist pastoral producers in Western Queensland develop on-farm environmental management systems
- \$300,000 to support the development of best management guidelines for soil, water and crop rotations as part

Natural Gas production (million Kl)

South West Queensland, 1990-91 to 2001-02



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



The Julia Creek Dunnart Bush Festival

of research into sustainable farming systems.

The Government will provide \$2.82 million towards the Great Artesian Basin Sustainability Initiative to complement previously approved funding. A further \$7 million over four years is provided for reforms and implementation of Resource Operation Plans.

Growing a diverse economy and creating jobs

The Government continues to work in partnership with the people of Western Queensland to build the region's social and economic options. The Western Queensland region will receive around \$4.1 million to create an estimated 488 jobs during 2004-05 through the Government's Breaking the Unemployment Cycle initiative. This includes \$871,000 allocated to community employment programs and \$3.23 million for apprenticeship and traineeship incentives to provide jobs in crucial, skills-shortage industries and the public sector.

Delivering responsive government

The Government continues to engage with local communities and businesses to better coordinate service delivery and identify solutions to local issues, including through the regular Ministerial Regional Community Forums and Community Cabinets.

Budget summary

Sustained economic growth and strong employment conditions

- Queensland is expected to continue to outperform the rest of Australia in both 2003-04 and 2004-05 with economic growth of 4% and 4¼%.
- Employment growth remains substantially higher than the rest of Australia, with growth of 2¼% forecast for 2004-05.
- The State's year-average unemployment rate is 6¼%, the lowest level in more than two decades.

Strong finances

- A General Government net operating surplus of \$646 million and a cash surplus of \$1.059 billion are forecast in 2004-05, following a record estimated actual net operating surplus of \$2.374 billion for 2003-04.
- The State's net worth is budgeted to grow from \$69.4 billion at 30 June 2004, to in excess of \$80 billion by 30 June 2008.

Competitive taxes

- Queensland's competitive tax status has been maintained, with taxpayers in other States and Territories paying on average 27% more state tax than Queenslanders in 2004-05.
- From 1 August 2004, credit card duty will be abolished and the general insurance duty rate will be reduced from 8.5% to 7.5%. In addition, debits tax will be abolished from 1 July 2005.
- From 1 August 2004, the threshold for the principal place of residence transfer duty concession will be increased from \$250,000 to \$300,000, providing home buyers with a saving of up to \$1,250.

Delivering on our priorities

Improving health care and strengthening services to the community

- The Budget includes \$90 million over three years to cut elective surgery waiting lists.
- An additional \$220 million over four years is provided to support people with a disability, their families and carers.

Realising the Smart State through education, skills and innovation

- The three year, \$1 billion, SmartVET strategy will introduce a number of new training initiatives and the expansion of high priority programs.
- Funding is provided for the Education and Training Reforms for the Future package including more than \$135 million in 2004-05 and rising to more than \$307 million in 2006-07.

Protecting our children and enhancing community safety

- Full implementation of child safety reforms will involve additional funding of at least \$214 million per annum by 2006-07.
- Funding of \$35.9 million over three years will employ 240 additional paramedics to address growth in demand, maintain emergency response times and improve services.

Managing urban growth and building Queensland's regions

- Capital spending will be boosted to over \$6 billion, the first time the capital works program has exceeded that benchmark.
- An additional \$200 million is allocated over four years for the Busway network and \$571 million over four years for a new Arterial Roads Infrastructure Package.

Protecting the environment for a sustainable future

- An additional \$75 million is allocated over four years, beyond the existing \$75 million commitment, to end the broadscale clearing of remnant native vegetation in Queensland by 2006.
- Funding of \$12.5 million is provided over three years for the acquisition of the strategic parcels of land of high conservation value to add to the protected estate in Cape York and the Daintree.

Growing a diverse economy and creating jobs

- The Breaking the Unemployment Cycle initiative will be extended for another three years at a cost of up to \$278 million.
- A \$20 million State contribution is provided towards construction of the \$60 million Queensland Brain Research facility, located at the University.

Government services in your region

Western Queensland QGAP offices

Aramac

Gordon Street
Aramac QLD 4726
Telephone 4651 3014
Facsimile 4651 3323
Opening hours: Monday,
Wednesday, Thursday - 10am
to 4:45pm; Tuesday - 9am to
1pm; Friday - 9am to 4:45pm

Augathella

Augathella Visitors Centre
98 Main Street,
Augathella QLD 4477
Telephone 4654 5007
Facsimile 4654 5009
Opening hours: Monday to
Thursday - 9:30am to 3:30pm;
Friday - 9:30am to 4pm

Barcaldine

Barcaldine Court House
Ash Street,
Barcaldine QLD 4725
Telephone 4651 1191
Facsimile 4651 2021
Opening hours: Monday to
Friday - 9am to 4:30pm

Bedourie

Police Station
Merri Street,
Bedourie QLD 4829
Telephone 4746 1128
Facsimile 4746 1266
Opening hours: Monday and
Wednesday - 9am to 12pm;
Tuesday and Thursday - 2pm to
5pm; Friday - 9am to 1pm

Birdsville

Birdsville Police Station
McDonald Street,
Birdsville QLD 4482
Telephone 4656 3310
Facsimile 4656 3312
Opening hours: Monday and
Thursday - 1pm to 4pm;
Tuesday - 10am to 2pm;
Wednesday and Friday - 10am
to 1pm

Blackall

Shamrock Street,
Blackall QLD 4472
Telephone 4657 4233
Facsimile 4657 4908
Opening hours: Monday to
Friday - 9am to 4:30pm

Boulia

Boulia Police Station
Herbert Street,
Boulia QLD 4829
Telephone 4746 3043
Facsimile 4746 3338
Opening hours: Monday to
Thursday - 8:30am to 12:30pm

Camooweal

Barkly Street,
Camooweal QLD 4828
Telephone 4748 2025
Facsimile 4748 2026
Opening hours: Monday to
Friday - 9am to 5pm; Saturday
- 9am to 12pm

Cunnamulla

5 Stockyard Street,
Cunnamulla QLD 4490
Telephone 4655 1131
Facsimile 4655 1687
Opening hours: Monday to
Friday - 9am to 1pm,
2pm to 5pm

Dirranbandi

35-37 Railway Street
Dirranbandi QLD 4486
Telephone 4625 8411
Facsimile 4625 8433
Opening hours: Monday and
Friday - 10am to 12:30pm,
1:30pm to 4pm

Hughenden

65 Brodie Street,
Hughenden QLD 4821
Telephone 4741 1735
Facsimile 4741 1412
Opening hours: Monday to
Friday - 8am to 5pm

Injune

C/- Injune Library
Hutton Street, Injune QLD 4454
Telephone 4626 1546
Facsimile 4626 1099
Opening hours: Monday to
Tuesday - 1:30pm to 5pm;
Wednesday - 9am to 1pm;
Thursday - 11:30am to 5pm;
Friday - 11am to 5pm

Isisford

Isisford Police Station
St Mary Street,
Isisford QLD 4731
Telephone 4658 8153
Facsimile 4658 8183
Opening hours: Wednesday
and Friday - 9am to 5pm

Julia Creek

Burke Street,
Julia Creek QLD 4823
Telephone 4746 7162
Facsimile 4746 7338
Opening hours: Monday,
Tuesday, Friday - 9am to
4:30pm; Wednesday and
Thursday - 9am to 12:30pm,
1:30pm to 4:30pm

Jundah

Dickson Street,
Jundah QLD 4736
Telephone 4658 6193
Facsimile 4658 6180
Opening hours: Monday and
Wednesday - 9am to 1:30pm;
Friday - 9am to 12:30pm,
1pm to 4:30pm

Mitchell

Cnr Mary & Dublin Streets
Mitchell QLD 4465
Telephone 4623 1106
Facsimile 4623 1510
Opening hours: Monday to
Friday - 9am to 12:30pm,
1:30pm to 4:30pm

Normanton

Haig Street,
Normanton QLD 4890
Telephone 4745 1177
Facsimile 4745 1393
Opening hours:
Monday to Friday - 9am to
1pm; 2pm to 4:45pm

Richmond

Goldring Street,
Richmond QLD 4822
Telephone 4741 3227
Facsimile 4741 3721
Opening hours: Monday to
Friday - 9am to 12:30pm,
1:30pm to 4:30pm

St George

The Terrace,
St George QLD 4487
Telephone 4625 3266
Facsimile 4625 3180
Opening hours: Monday to
Friday - 9am to 4:30pm

Surat

72 Burrows Street,
Surat QLD 4417
Telephone 4626 5046
Facsimile 4626 5507
Opening hours: Monday to
Thursday - 1pm to 4:30pm;
Friday - 10:30am to 12pm,
12:30pm to 5:30pm

Thargomindah

Dowling Street,
Thargomindah QLD 4492
Telephone 4655 3291
Facsimile 4655 3224
Opening hours: Monday to
Thursday - 10am to 1pm;
Friday - 9am to 1pm

Windorah

Windorah Police Station
Victoria Street,
Windorah QLD 4481
Telephone 4656 3171
Facsimile 4656 3172
Opening hours:
Monday - 8am to 11am;
Tuesday - 2pm to 5pm;
Wednesday - 8am to 11am

Winton

Winton Courthouse
59 Vindex Street,
Winton QLD 4735
Telephone 4657 1536
Facsimile 4657 1583
Opening hours: Monday to
Friday - 8:30am to 4:30pm