

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.



• Government services in your region

For information on Government services in your region, contact the following offices of the Queensland Government Agent Program (QGAP), Department of State Development or Regional Communities.

Agnes Water

QGAP

3 Captain Cook Drive

Agnes Water QLD 4677

Phone: 4902 1555

Monday–Friday 9am–4.30pm

Eidsvold

QGAP

32 Moreton Street

Eidsvold QLD 4627

Phone: 4165 1063

Monday–Friday 8.30am–4.30pm

Monto

QGAP

53 Newton Street

Monto QLD 4630

Phone: 4166 1350

Monday–Friday 9am–4.30pm

Blackbutt

QGAP

69 Hart Street

Blackbutt QLD 4306

Phone: 4163 0030

Monday–Friday 8am–12pm &
1pm–4.30pm

Hervey Bay

State Development Centre

Brendan Hansen Building

Main Street

Pialba QLD 4655

Phone: 4125 9270

Monday–Friday 8:30am–5pm

Mundubbera

QGAP

51 Lyons Street

Mundubbera QLD 4626

Phone: 4165 4948

Monday–Friday 8.30am–5pm

Bundaberg

Wide Bay Regional Communities Office

**Community Engagement Division
Department of the Premier and
Cabinet**

16 Quay Street

Bundaberg Qld 4670

Phone: 4151 9748

State Development Centre

205 Bourbong Street

Bundaberg QLD 4670

Phone: 4151 9700

Monday–Friday 8:30am–5pm

Kilkivan

QGAP

26 Bligh Street

Kilkivan QLD 4600

Phone: 5484 1068

Monday–Friday 8.30am–4.30pm

Murgon

QGAP

48 Stephens Street West

Murgon QLD 4605

Phone: 4168 1801

Monday–Friday 9am–4.30pm

Maryborough

State Development Centre

Floor 2, Ergon Energy Building

97-99 Adelaide Street

Maryborough QLD 4650

Phone: 4121 1780

Monday–Friday 8:30am–5pm





Wide Bay–Burnett Regional Budget Statement 2002-03

• Premier's Message

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

In capital works alone, 55.8% of spending is allocated for regions outside the Brisbane Statistical Division. In the Wide Bay–Burnett region in 2002-03, the Government will spend \$410.2 million on capital works, including:

- \$60.7 million for transport and main roads projects, including a new tilt train and carriages to be manufactured at Walker's workshops in Maryborough;
- \$35.3 million towards the \$209.2 million Burnett Water Infrastructure Project, including a major dam and four weirs on the Burnett River;
- \$24.4 million to complete and commission the new \$97 million Maryborough Correctional Centre; and
- \$4 million towards the development of the Bundaberg Industrial Park.

In the Smart State, the focus on regions is about more than infrastructure. This Budget will boost services in the areas of families, education and law and order.

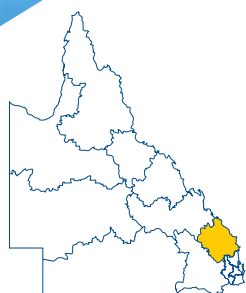
This statement highlights initiatives within your region that have been developed in response to individual community concerns. It shows the Government is passionate about listening to the community. In fact, we spend more time than any other Government listening to thousands of people at community engagement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



• Introduction

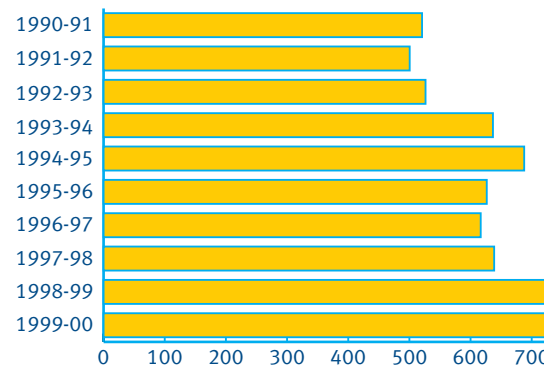
The infrastructure and services funded in the 2002-03 State Budget and outlined in this statement demonstrate the Queensland Government's commitment to working with the Wide Bay–Burnett region to promote economic development and job creation, stronger community networks and a prosperous future.

The Wide Bay–Burnett region covers 52,382 square kilometres or 3% of the State. It includes the cities of Bundaberg, Maryborough and Hervey Bay and the shires of Biggenden, Burnett, Cooloola, Eidsvold, Gayndah, Isis, Kilkivan, Kingaroy, Kolan, Miriam Vale, Monto, Mundubbera, Murgon, Nanango, Perry, Tiaro, Wondai and Woocoo.

The region is home to 6.6% of Queenslanders, including almost 6% of the State's Indigenous community. Over the next 20 years, the region's population is projected to grow by more than 37% to 326,769 people.

Manufacturing and agriculture, forestry and fishing contribute more than 20% to Wide Bay–Burnett's gross regional product, with the gross value of agriculture rising steadily in recent years. The region is the gateway to World Heritage-listed Fraser Island and in 2001, tourists spent almost \$31 million on accommodation during their stay in Wide Bay–Burnett.

Gross value of agricultural production (\$ million)
Wide Bay–Burnett region



Source: ABS, Agriculture, Queensland (unpublished data)

• Building Queensland's regions

The Government is working with Queenslanders in the Wide Bay–Burnett region to drive economic development and ensure that the region prospers.

Water, and its efficient use, is fundamental to the development of the region. We are committed to ensuring there are enough water allocations to secure the future of existing industries and underpin regional diversification. To do this, we have allocated \$35.3 million in 2002-03 to the design and construction of a major dam on the Burnett River. The \$209.2 million Burnett Water Infrastructure Project also includes two new weirs and increased capacity at two others.

Tourism is a key industry in the region and initiatives funded in this Budget include:

- \$2.8 million to continue the development of a Turtle Interpretive Centre in Bundaberg. The eco-tourism attraction will focus on the threatened loggerhead turtle that nests annually on the region's beaches; and
- ongoing funding of \$200,000 each for the Bundaberg District Tourism and Development Board and the Fraser Coast South Burnett Regional Tourism Board to market the region to visitors.



A safe and efficient transport network promotes industry competitiveness and economic development. Major transport projects in the Wide Bay–Burnett region include:

- \$6.6 million to complete the \$10.8 million replacement of bridges on the Deep Creek section of Tin Can Bay Road;
- \$3.5 million to complete the \$7.7 million widening of the Goomboorian Range section of Tin Can Bay Road;
- \$3.3 million to continue the development of a reclamation area at the Urangan Boat Harbour for the disposal of dredge material;
- \$2.3 million to upgrade the Wide Bay Highway; and
- \$1.7 million for work at the Bundaberg Port and to construct a TAFE Marine Centre.

This Budget also provides \$17.3 million for a new diesel powered tilt train, rail carriages and inter-urban units, which will be manufactured at Walker's workshops in Maryborough.

Funding for local councils in the region includes:

- \$7.8 million for water and sewerage infrastructure;
- \$947,000 to Hervey Bay City Council to develop infrastructure and community facilities under the Access Hervey Bay 2000 initiative; and
- \$500,000 for the Gympie City Centre Project, which will breathe new life into Gympie's CBD.

A reliable energy supply is critical to growth and the Government's energy corporations will invest significantly in the region in 2002-03.

- Tarong Energy will spend \$160.6 million, including \$130.6 million to complete the \$650 million coal-fired Tarong North Power Station in early 2003.
- Ergon Energy has allocated \$22.5 million to enhance the quality and reliability of electricity supply in the region. Ergon will also work with Maryborough and Bundaberg City Councils to remove selected overhead powerlines and place them underground.
- Energex will spend \$6 million to ensure reliability of supply in the Gympie area.

The Government will also continue its \$240,000 commitment towards redeveloping the Palace Memorial Building, in memory of the backpackers who lost their lives in the Childers Backpackers Hostel fire in June 2000.

• More jobs for Queenslanders – 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.

To add greater value to the region's primary produce, the Government is supporting the development of a food processing industry in the Wide Bay–Burnett. Almost \$4 million is provided in 2002-03 to develop a

\$4.5 million Bundaberg Industrial Park on the former Bundaberg Abattoir site. The aim of the development is to form a food processing cluster, enabling more effective marketing of the region's produce.

Investment in new industries creates 21st century jobs.

The Government is creating new employment opportunities and improving workforce skills through the Breaking the Unemployment Cycle initiatives. In the Wide Bay–Burnett region in 2002-03, it's anticipated that approximately \$9.9 million will be spent on 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.

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, the Wide Bay–Burnett region will share in:

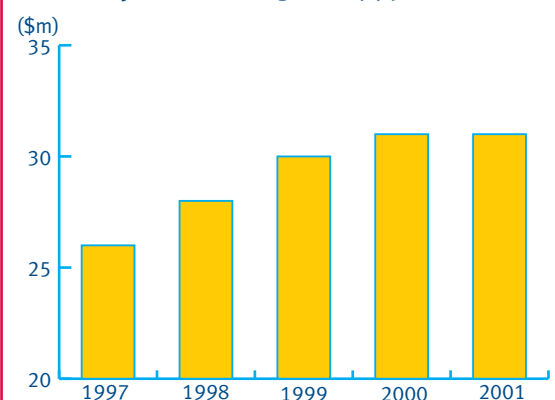
- an additional \$22.7 million for information and communication technologies (ICT) in classrooms and ICT training for teachers; and
- 382 additional teachers to provide for growth and other needs, including 158 teachers as part of the Government's election commitment to employ 800 additional teachers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

Highlights in education and training funding for the region include:

- \$3.8 million for Wide Bay Institute of TAFE, including for a new engineering technology building, a new tourism and hospitality facility, and improvements to the Information Technology Platform;
- \$450,000 for the new Moore Park State School;
- \$286,000 for the Learning and Development Centre (Technology) at Kawungan State School; and
- \$105,000 for the New Basics initiative at Maryborough Special School and Thabeban and Taabinga State Schools to equip students with critical thinking, problem solving and lifelong learning skills.

To enhance life-long learning opportunities, \$1.1 million has been allocated to public libraries in the region.

**Takings from accommodation,
Wide Bay–Burnett region, 1997 to 2001**



Source: ABS, Tourist Accommodation, Queensland (8635.3)

million)

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• 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 for ensuring our communities are safe. To assist this focus, 14 additional police officers will be appointed to the region over the next three years.

Major projects include:

- \$24.4 million to complete and commission the new \$97 million prison at Maryborough, which will open by mid-2003;
- \$1.1 million to complete the new Howard and Burnett Coast ambulance stations;
- \$1.1 million to complete the new police station and residences at Fraser Island; and
- \$200,000 for the design of the new \$6.7 million police district headquarters and watchhouse at Gympie, adjacent to the courthouse and \$400,000 to commence Stage 2 of the Hervey Bay police station.

• 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 initiatives in the Wide Bay-Burnett region include:

- \$500,000 to commence redeveloping Gympie Hospital;
- \$300,000 to rebuild facilities at the Maryborough and Hervey Bay Nursing Homes; and
- \$156,250 to implement the Better Health Outcomes Project in Cherbourg.

Services for people with a disability and their families will be boosted through:

- \$4.4 million to improve disabled access to rail services;
- approximately \$600,000 for new and enhanced family support and respite services; and
- \$250,000 to purchase and renovate a group home for people with a disability who have high support needs.

The Government has allocated \$9.8 million for housing projects in Wide Bay–Burnett in 2002-03. We will also fund \$983,000 for Home Assist Secure Schemes to assist elderly people in the region to remain in their own homes longer, with improved safety and quality of life.

Another key feature of Queensland's regions is their rich cultural heritage which the Government is preserving and promoting through the \$15 million Millennium Arts Regional Program. The Program will fund:

- \$529,000 to upgrade Cooloola Shire Public Gallery; and
- \$20,000 to commence planning for a \$485,000 Bert Hinkler Aviation Museum in Bundaberg.

The Woodworks Forestry Museum at Gympie will receive \$38,000 in a joint initiative between the Department of Primary Industries and the Queensland Museum.

We will provide \$500,000 to the RSPCA to establish a new refuge in Gympie, as part of a \$2.5 million three-year commitment to the Society's capital works program.

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 Bundaberg.

• Valuing the environment

Queensland is Australia's most naturally diverse State and the Government is committed to protecting our environment and its biodiversity for future generations.

As part of the South East Queensland Forests Agreement, we will provide \$4.3 million in 2002-03 for the Hardwood Plantation Program, which aims to establish 5,000 hectares of hardwood plantation in the region by mid-2003. These plantations will enable publicly owned native forests to be protected from harvesting by 2025.

Other initiatives in the Wide Bay–Burnett region include:

- \$2.6 million for 25 new rangers in the Cooloola and Fraser Island sections of the Great Sandy National Parks and in the Bundaberg and Maryborough areas;
- \$906,000 for a Great Walk of Queensland at Great Sandy National Park on Fraser Island; and
- \$669,000 to improve facilities at the Great Sandy National Park, Kroombit Tops National Park and Joseph Banks (Round Hill Head) Conservation Park.

