The 2007-08 State Budget reinforces our Government’s commitment to investing in infrastructure and providing services to support the State’s strong economy and maximise the quality of life of all Queenslanders. This Regional Budget Statement highlights the Darling Downs and West Moreton region’s contribution to the State’s dynamic economy and presents the Government’s key investments in the region for the next financial year.

The Budget maintains the State’s strong fiscal position and will underpin continued economic growth substantially above the national average as well as maintaining low unemployment. The Government’s economic achievements have provided the platform for this year’s record $14 billion capital budget. This investment focuses on the Government’s key infrastructure priorities of water, transport, energy, health and education. To ensure all Queenslanders can share in the State’s economic prosperity, more than 50% of the capital investment is allocated outside Brisbane.

The Budget also ensures continued high quality service provision in all Queensland regions, with key commitments to human capital development, health care, community safety, the environment, community services and jobs creation.

State Budget highlights for the Darling Downs and West Moreton region in 2007-08 include:

- $118.3 million to complete and commission the $1.16 billion Kogan Creek Power Station
- $19.8 million to redevelop and upgrade hospitals in the region, including upgrading the medical ward at Toowoomba Hospital
- $18 million for improvements to the New England Highway between Toowoomba and Crows Nest
- $7.8 million to continue developing the Centre for Advanced Animal Science in Gatton
- $2 million towards the cost of redeveloping Clive Berghofer Stadium in Toowoomba
- $1.4 million to replace Oakey Ambulance Station
- $181,000 for the Dalby Business District Revitalisation Project
- $6.6 million for upgrading sections of the Roma-Taroom Road.

Peter Beattie MP
Premier and Minister for Trade

Anna Bligh MP
Deputy Premier, Treasurer and Minister for Infrastructure
A key centre in Queensland’s expanding wine industry, the Darling Downs and West Moreton region covers almost 6% of the State and is home to 282,298 Queenslanders. Livestock, broadacre crops and horticulture, as well as commerce, education, tourism, oil, gas and minerals join the wine industry in the region’s diverse economic base.

As a Government, we recognise the valuable contribution of the Darling Downs and West Moreton region to the Smart State’s economy. With over 50% of the budgeted infrastructure investment outside Brisbane, this Regional Budget Statement for the Darling Downs and West Moreton highlights the Government’s commitment to the region and its people.

Improving health care and strengthening services to the community

An investment in healthy lifestyles is an investment in our future. System reform is underway to provide safe, sustainable and accountable services to give Queenslanders access to the best possible treatment and care. Across the State, the Government will provide:

- $215.4 million to improve recruitment, retention and preparation of the health workforce
- $25.4 million to meet the increasing costs of aeromedical and inter-facility transfers and retrievals
- $20.1 million to enhance the clinical education and training of new doctors and nurses.

In 2007-08, spending on healthy living, health care, hospitals and other infrastructure in the Darling Downs and West Moreton region will include:

- $19.8 million to redevelop and upgrade hospitals in the region, including upgrading the medical ward at Toowoomba Hospital
- $1.4 million to replace Oakey Ambulance Station.

The Darling Downs and West Moreton region will also benefit from increased funding of almost $50 million for the Queensland Ambulance Service to meet growing demand for services. This includes funding for an additional 250 ambulance officers and the upgrade of critical ambulance equipment and facilities across the State, and is on top of the more than 220 extra staff employed in 2006-07.

In addition to the Water Grid, the strong State financial position achieved by the Government has enabled us to commit to other major infrastructure including $691 million allocated to continue the Gateway Arterial Upgrade Project, $179.7 million (with the Australian Government) to continue the Tugun Bypass and $133.7 million for works on the Sunshine Motorway.

Polocrosse World Cup, Warwick

With a growing population and the worst drought in recorded history, South East Queensland is facing unprecedented challenges. The 2007-08 Budget signals the Government’s commitment to sustainable economic development with a record capital works budget for Queensland of over $14 billion.

More than half of this capital program will be spent in South East Queensland on major infrastructure for better transport, energy and water supply as well as better social infrastructure for all residents of the region.

The centrepiece of our commitment to the south east is our $9 billion Water Grid. The Water Grid connects the major bulk water sources in South East Queensland and comprises the Western Corridor Recycled Water Project (the largest in the Southern Hemisphere), the Gold Coast Desalination Plant at Tugun, the Traveston and Wyaralong Dams, 400 kilometres of pipeline including the Southern Regional Water Pipeline, the Northern and Eastern Pipeline interconnectors and several other significant water projects.

In addition to the Water Grid, the strong State financial position achieved by the Government has enabled us to commit to other major infrastructure including $691 million allocated to continue the Gateway Arterial Upgrade Project, $179.7 million (with the Australian Government) to continue the Tugun Bypass and $133.7 million for works on the Sunshine Motorway.

Redevelopments and upgrades are continuing at key hospitals across the south east, including The Prince Charles, Gold Coast and Toowoomba Hospitals.

Polocrosse World Cup, Warwick
The Government is continuing its support for frail older people, people with a disability and their carers with commitments in the Darling Downs and West Moreton region including:

- $11.6 million for the Home and Community Care initiative to provide personal care, home maintenance and modification, meals, respite care, transport and community-based nursing services for frail older people and young people with moderate-to-severe disabilities
- $9.2 million to support people with a disability and their families through a range of programs
- $1.5 million for accommodation specifically tailored to meet the needs of people with a disability.

We are providing ongoing housing and housing-related services to support low-income families and individuals in the Darling Downs and West Moreton region in 2007-08, including $12.8 million for public housing, community, crisis, transitional and long-term housing needs.

Initiatives to encourage healthy, active individuals and communities in the region include:

- $2 million towards the cost of redeveloping Clive Berghofer Stadium
- $136,000 to construct Stage 3 of the Highfields Outdoor Sports Centre.

Realising the Smart State through education, skills and innovation

Queensland is already enjoying a strong national and international reputation for education, skills and innovation. We are maintaining our enviable economic climate, prosperity and quality of life by making a serious commitment to education, innovation and skills.

To equip teachers for modern teaching environments, the Government will invest $70 million over four years to provide State school and TAFE teachers with computers. Funding will start with $10 million in 2007-08 and increase to $20 million per year thereafter.

Our investment in Darling Downs and West Moreton’s contribution to the Smart State will also include:

- $68.6 million for vocational education and training
- $7.8 million to continue developing the Centre for Advanced Animal Science in Gatton
- $6.1 million for a specialist block and amenities at Lockeroy District State High School
- $1.5 million for a four-space general learning area block at Fernvale State School
- a share in an additional $1.25 million for the Queensland Music Festival to expand its program to more regional centres, including Toowoomba and Jimbour
- $450,000 for an additional amenities block at Minden State School.

* The Australian Government may also contribute to these projects.

Protecting our children and enhancing community safety

Strong, healthy young lives today mean safe, supportive communities tomorrow. Although significant progress has been made to reform Queensland’s child protection system, it remains a key priority of this Government.

We are continuing the most significant reform agenda in Queensland’s child protection history with a record operating budget of $551.3 million, triple the amount spent before the Crime and Misconduct Commission Inquiry, and a $36.4 million State-wide capital program which includes $1.2 million for developing a residential care facility to address placement needs on the Darling Downs.

The Darling Downs and West Moreton region will also benefit from a State-wide allocation of $49.2 million over four years for additional front-line staff.

In 2007-08, $7.5 million will be provided across Queensland to continue to implement the Early Years Strategy to enhance services and support for children up to eight years old and their families for community-based early childhood services.

This will include building four new Early Years Centres around the State. $12.2 million will also be provided to establish early childhood education and care services through acquiring and refurbishing six decommissioned pre-school sites.

In 2007-08, other initiatives in the Darling Downs and West Moreton region include:

- $2.5 million to support homeless and at-risk people
- $1.9 million for community support and youth development services.

Community safety will also be enhanced through a major funding boost to the State’s police service. An extra 200 officers will be employed in 2007-08 across the State, which will bring the total number of sworn officers employed in Queensland to 9,928 by October 2008. This again meets our election commitment to maintain police numbers at or above the national average police-to-population ratio.

The Government is providing funding for services and infrastructure to enhance community safety in the Darling Downs and West Moreton region in 2007-08, including $3.45 million for preliminary development of a prison precinct near Gatton.

Funding for emergency services initiatives in the Darling Downs and West Moreton region includes:

- $950,000 to replace Goondiwindi and Highfields Auxiliary Fire Stations
- $500,000 to redevelop Toowoomba’s Kitchener Road Fire Station.

Managing urban growth and building Queensland’s regions

As part of Australia’s fastest growing area, the Darling Downs and West Moreton region depends on planned, integrated infrastructure, water and transport networks to achieve sustainable economic and urban growth.

In 2007-08, our commitments to Darling Downs and West Moreton’s growth include:

- $118.3 million to complete and commission the $1.16 billion Kogan Creek Power Station
- $40.1 million to construct a new power transmission line between Middle Ridge and Greenbank Substations
- $18 million for improvements to the New England Highway between Toowoomba and Crows Nest
- $10.6 million for improvements to Ruthven Street in Toowoomba
- $6.6 million for upgrading sections of the Roma-Taroom Road
- $1.6 million for safety-enhancing stabilisation of the Toowoomba Range railway line and new railway signalling equipment at Toowoomba
- $1.25 million for the Arts and Cultural Centre in Gatton Shire (under the Q150 program)
- $181,000 for the Dalby Business District Revitalisation Project.
Protecting the environment for a sustainable future

To safeguard our heritage for future generations, the region will share in $18 million across the State for acquiring rainforest and green land to enhance biodiversity.

The region will benefit from the following State-wide initiatives:

- $81 million for the South East Queensland Home WaterWise Rebate Scheme to help residents install water-saving devices in their homes
- $20 million in additional funding for the Vegetation Management Structural Adjustment Package
- $18 million to complete water resource planning across the State
- $1.5 million to encourage irrigators to adopt more efficient water use practices.

In the Darling Downs and West Moreton region, we are also committing $3.2 million for the National Action Plan for Salinity and Water Quality – a joint Australian and Queensland Government commitment to secure reliable water supplies for homes, industry and the environment.

Growing a diverse economy and creating jobs

A healthy, diverse economy like Queensland’s needs a skilled workforce. Our record low unemployment raises the challenge of shortages of skilled labour.

In 2007-08, the State Government will continue to implement the Queensland Skills Plan, a $1 billion strategy to respond to skills shortages across the State.

We are matching the supply of skilled labour to industry’s and the economy’s needs in the Darling Downs and West Moreton region with $3.96 million for the Skilling Queenslanders for Work initiative to assist 728 Queenslanders who are disadvantaged in the labour market.

In 2007-08, the region’s primary industries will benefit from State-wide commitments of:

- $160 million for industry development and trade services
- $82.5 million for Biosecurity Queensland
- $31.2 million for fisheries management.

Delivering responsive government

Governments exist to deliver services, and a responsive government improves services by delivering on its commitments and involving people in decision making.

The State Government has committed $12 million to implement the first stage of the Local Government Reform Program. This is the most historic reform of local government in the last 100 years and will deliver a more efficient and financially sustainable system of local government for all Queensland communities.

We are committed to delivering a government for everybody, no matter where they live in Queensland. In 2007, our 100th Community Cabinet was held in Atherton, continuing the commitment we gave in 1998 to community consultation and taking government to the people. Over the years, around 50,000 people have taken advantage of this opportunity. In 2007-08, Queenslanders will again be able to stay in touch with their Government through regular Community Cabinet functions and Ministerial Regional Community Forums.

Services for people and communities

The Government’s investment in human capital and social services is improving access to quality education, health care, mental health, child safety, disability, and public housing services throughout Queensland.

Up to 192 additional teachers and teacher aides will be funded in 2007-08 to meet State school enrolment growth. An education and training capital works program of $562.8 million will enhance learning environments for Queensland students. The transformation of the State’s vocational training system continues with a $118 million allocation. $10 million will be provided in 2007-08 to commence a $70 million four-year program to provide State school and TAFE teachers with computers.

Health system reform and service improvements will be resourced with $7.45 billion in 2007-08 including $602.8 million for better clinical training for the health workforce and electronic information sharing between service providers. Critical hospital and building works have been allocated an additional $371 million over four years. Almost $50 million extra has been allocated to meet the growing demand for ambulance services across the State.

Over $528 million over four years will be directed at improving mental health services. A greater investment of $374 million over four years follows last year’s commitment of $128 million over four years for expanding and modernising services to people with a disability.

The most significant reforms to Queensland’s child protection system are continuing in 2007-08 with the largest-ever operating budget of $551.3 million. Housing assistance will reach $719 million in 2007-08.
Budget Highlights 2007–08

Budget summary

Strong economic growth maintains low unemployment
- Queensland’s economic growth is forecast to remain strong at 5% in 2007-08 and exceed growth in the rest of Australia for the 12th consecutive year.
- Employment growth is expected to exceed the rest of Australia in 2006-07 and 2007-08 at 4¾% and 3% respectively.
- As a result, Queensland’s year-average unemployment rate is forecast to fall to a 33-year low of 4% in the current financial year and remain there in 2007-08.

Strong finances
- The expected 2006-07 operating result of $2.393 billion reflects the strength of the economy and investment markets.
- A General Government operating surplus of $268 million is forecast in 2007-08.
- Moderate surpluses over the forward estimates reflect implementation of election commitments and other service enhancements across key service delivery agencies, as well as costs associated with the Government’s significant capital investment.

Competitive taxes
- Queensland maintains its competitive tax status, with taxpayers in other states and territories to pay an average of $131 more state tax each than Queeslanders in 2007-08. With the Fuel Subsidy Scheme in place, Queensland taxpayers are on average $257 per capita better off than taxpayers in other states and territories.
- The Government continues its commitment to ongoing reform of the State tax system, with net tax cuts of $49 million in 2007-08 as a result of Budget measures. These include a land tax relief package from 1 July 2007 and a 50% cut to mortgage duty from 1 January 2008. Vehicle registration duty will move to a cylinder-based model from 1 January 2008.

Delivering on our priorities

Improving health care and strengthening services to the community
- $528.8 million over four years to improve hospital and community-based mental health services in Queensland.
- Increased recurrent funding of almost $50 million for the Queensland Ambulance Service to meet growing demand for services. This includes funding for an additional 250 ambulance officers and the upgrade of critical ambulance equipment and facilities across the State, and is on top of the more than 220 extra staff employed in 2006-07.
- A housing assistance package of $719.3 million in 2007-08.
- An additional $237.4 million in recurrent funding and $136.7 million in capital funding over four years to enhance disability services.

Realising the Smart State through education, skills and innovation
- Funding for up to 192 additional teachers and teacher aides to meet state school enrolment growth.
- An education and training capital works program of $562.8 million in 2007-08 to help provide quality learning environments for Queensland state school and TAFE students.
- $10 million to commence a $70 million four-year program to provide state school and TAFE teachers with computers.

Protecting our children and enhancing community safety
- Additional recurrent funding of $58.7 million and capital funding of $13.6 million will be invested over four years to enhance child protection services.
- An additional 200 sworn police positions across the State will bring the total number of sworn officers to 9,928 by October 2008 – above the national average police-to-population ratio.

Managing urban growth and building Queensland’s regions
- Estimated capital spending is more than $14 billion in 2007-08, an increase of 15.6% on estimated actual 2006-07 outlays. Over 50% of this will be spent outside Brisbane. This spending will support some 101,000 full-time jobs in Queensland.
- The Government will invest $2.5 billion in water infrastructure in 2007-08, including $354.9 million to progress two new dams in South East Queensland and $1.18 billion to continue designing and building the Western Corridor Recycled Water Project.

Protecting the environment for a sustainable future
- Up to $100.8 million in 2007-08 for the WaterWise rebate schemes to help Queenslanders make their homes and gardens more water efficient.

Growing a diverse economy and creating jobs
- Capital funding of $300 million towards clean coal technologies, including funding for a feasibility study into the use of advanced carbon capture and storage technology to achieve near-zero electricity generation emissions.
- A $100 million extension to the Innovation Building Fund for infrastructure to support strategic research and development.
Government services in your region

Boonah
QGAP
70 High Street
Boonah QLD 4310
Telephone 5463 2165
Facsimile 5463 2167
Opening Hours: Monday to Friday - 8.30am to 4.30pm

Crows Nest
QGAP
16 Charlotte Street
Crows Nest QLD 4355
Telephone 4698 2985
Facsimile 4698 2800
Opening Hours: Monday to Friday - 9.30am to 4.30pm

Dalby
Department of Natural Resources and Water
Ergon Energy Building
30 Marble Street
Dalby QLD 4405
Telephone 4669 9599
Facsimile 4662 5310
Opening Hours: Monday to Friday - 8.30am to 4.30pm

Goondiwindi
Department of Natural Resources and Water
24-26 McLean Street
Goondiwindi QLD 4390
Telephone 4671 6100
Facsimile 4671 6163
Opening Hours: Monday to Friday - 8.30am to 4.30pm

Goombungee
QGAP
80 Mocatta Street
Goombungee QLD 4354
Telephone 4696 5985
Facsimile 4696 7940
Opening Hours: Monday to Friday - 9am to 1pm Tuesday and Thursday - 12pm to 4pm

Ipswich
Department of Communities - Moreton Regional Office
Level 6, Condamine Centre
Bell Street Mall
Toowoomba QLD 4350
Telephone 4699 4222
Facsimile 4638 1169
Opening Hours: Monday to Friday - 8.30am to 5pm

Inglewood
QGAP
25 Albert Street
Inglewood QLD 4387
Telephone 4652 1310
Facsimile 4652 2964
Opening Hours: Monday to Thursday - 9.30am to 1.30pm and 2pm to 3pm Friday - 9.30am to 1.30pm and 2pm to 4pm

Jandowae
QGAP
Community and Cultural Centre
Cnr George & High Streets
Jandowae QLD 4410
Telephone 4668 5488
Facsimile 4668 5842
Opening Hours: Monday to Friday - 8.30am to 1.30pm

Kalbar
QGAP
78 George Street
Kalbar QLD 4309
Telephone 5463 7777
Facsimile 5463 7888
Opening Hours: Tuesday to Friday - 12pm to 4pm

Laidley
QGAP
Spicer Street, Laidley QLD 4341
Telephone 5466 8814
Facsimile 5466 8860
Opening Hours: Monday to Friday - 8am to 5pm

Lowood
QGAP
Cnr Michel & Main Streets
Lowood QLD 4311
Telephone 5426 2007
Facsimile 5426 1816
Opening Hours: Monday to Friday - 9am to 5pm

Miles
QGAP
32 Constance Street
Miles QLD 4415
Telephone 4627 1177
Facsimile 4627 1341
Opening Hours: Monday to Friday - 9am to 4.30pm

Preparatory Year enquiries
Telephone 1300 650 220
Facsimile 3247 3988

Queensland Water Commission
Telephone 1300 789 906

Smart Service Queensland
For information on all other Government services call 13 13 04
www.qld.gov.au

Stanthorpe
QGAP
51 Marsh Street
Stanthorpe QLD 4380
Telephone 4681 4965
Facsimile 4681 4971
Opening Hours: Monday, Tuesday, Thursday and Friday - 9.30am to 4pm Wednesday - 9.30am to 4pm

Tara
QGAP
19 Fry Street
Tara QLD 4421
Telephone 4665 3130
Facsimile 4665 3460
Opening Hours: Monday to Friday - 9am to 1pm and 2pm to 4pm

Texas
QGAP
32 Cadell Street
Texas QLD 4385
Telephone 4653 1251
Facsimile 4653 1265
Opening Hours: Monday, Wednesday, Thursday and Friday - 9.30am to 1pm and 2pm to 5pm

Wandoan
QGAP
11 Lawton Street
Wandoan QLD 4419
Telephone 4627 5400
Facsimile 4627 5400
Opening Hours: Monday to Friday - 9am to 4.30pm

Toowoomba
Department of Communities - Darling Downs South West Queensland Regional Office
Level 6, Condamine Centre
Bell Street Mall
Toowoomba QLD 4350
Telephone 4699 4222
Facsimile 4638 1169
Opening Hours: Monday to Friday - 8.30am to 5pm

Toowoomba
State Development Centre
Downs Business Centre
4 Little Street
Toowoomba QLD 4350
Telephone 4699 9800
Facsimile 4638 2139
Opening Hours: Monday to Friday - 8.30am to 5pm

Toowoomba
Smart Service Queensland
For information on all other Government services call 13 13 04
www.qld.gov.au

Darling Downs and West Moreton region
The Darling Downs and West Moreton region consists of Toowoomba City and the towns of Dalby and Goondiwindi. It also includes the shires of Boonah, Cambooya, Chinchilla, Clifton, Crows Nest, Esk, Gatton, Inglewood, Jondaryan, Laidley, Millmerran, Murilla, Pittsworth, Rosalie, Stanthorpe, Tara, Taroom, Waggamba, Wambo and Warwick.