Over the 2011 summer, Queensland experienced State-wide devastation from natural disasters. The floods and Cyclone Yasi saw 100 per cent of Queensland local government areas declared disaster affected and triggered the largest rebuilding and recovery operation ever undertaken in this state. The 2011-12 Budget fosters that recovery, while also providing relief for families. My Government’s decision to abolish the ambulance levy will provide immediate relief for families doing it tough.

There is also a new $140 million Queensland Building Boost, to stimulate the housing sector and make it more attractive for people to purchase their first home.

We will also implement reforms to our education system by moving Year 7 into high school, enabling our children to get full benefit from the new Australian Curriculum. This Budget invests a record amount in events funding - an $85.8 million boost over five years - to help Queensland attract major events and drive up tourism numbers. This is a Budget built on strength of spirit that will restore long-term social and economic prosperity to the Far North Queensland region and right across the State.

On track for recovery from the global financial crisis, Queensland’s economy was instead faced with the worst floods in 100 years and Cyclone Yasi. Mines were flooded, crops destroyed and communities were isolated. Some of our key export partners, too, were hit by natural disasters.

The 2011-12 State Budget faces those challenges head-on, reprioritising our needs and maintaining our sights on prosperity and a return to surplus. It will also chart our course back to the front of the economic pack, with growth in 2011-12 to outpace the other states and the nation. Our prosperity is in our regions - our mineral-rich centres, our tourism and heritage hotspots, and our business, industry and agriculture hubs.

This Government will maintain its focus on economic reform and jobs generation. Our infrastructure investment will clock in at $15 billion - more than Western Australia and more than Victoria. The program will support almost 93,000 jobs. The 2011-12 State Budget will strengthen Queensland’s economy and deliver on our commitment to protect Queensland jobs.

Government services in Far North Queensland
Smart Service Queensland
State Emergency Service
13 Health
Every Dollar Counts concessions website
For Government services call 13 13 04 or visit www.qld.gov.au
Telephone: 132 500
Telephone: 13 43 25 84
www.communityservices.qld.gov.au/community/concessions/

For more information about the 2011-12 State Budget: www.budget.qld.gov.au
For more information about Government initiatives in your region, visit www.qld.gov.au/buildingqld

Cost of living support for Queenslanders

- $140 million to reduce the cost of electricity bills by abolishing the Community Ambulance Cover levy.
- $411 million to ensure that regardless of where they live, all Queensland electricity customers of a similar type pay a similar price for electricity.
- $165.9 million for cost of living concessions, to improve affordability of council rates for pensioners and electricity for pensioners and seniors.
- $337.8 million for regional freight and passenger transport subsidies, including air services in Cairns and Weipa and bus services in Cairns and Innisfail.
- $54.6 million for the Patient Travel Subsidy Scheme which assists patients accessing specialist medical services not available within their local area.
- $146.7 million for the School Transport Assistance Scheme to assist students who have to travel long distances to their nearest school.

Disaster response funding

- $151.3 million to local governments for recovery and reconstruction projects, in partnership with the Australian Government.
- $500,000 of $10 million to restore essential services at Tully State High School.
- $5 million to reconstruct the Bruce Highway along the Cardwell foreshore.
- $15 million to assist the Cassowary Coast Regional Council restore vital infrastructure, vegetation and beaches.
- $14.1 million of $20 million for industry clean-up and building industry resilience following Cyclone Yasi.
- $6.3 million to refurbish Cairns Convention Centre.
- $6.5 million to replace Lockhart River Police Station.
- $3.3 million to continue developing Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander arts industries in Queensland.
- $4.6 million for a replacement fire and rescue station at Smithfield.
- $4.9 million for more classrooms at Redlynch State College.
- $15 million to complete the $26.6 million upgrade of the Tropical North Queensland Institute of TAFE in Cairns.
- $50 million towards the $446.3 million redevelopment of the Cairns Base Hospital, due to open in 2014.
- $30 million over two years for ten cyclone shelters, including in Cairns, the Cassowary Coast and Weipa.
- $5 million to reconstruct the Kennedy Developmental Road between Three Ways and the Lynd Junction.
- $25 million to reconstruct the Cape York Regional Council restore vital infrastructure, vegetation and beaches.
- $8.9 million for more classrooms at Redlynch State College.
- $9 million of $23.3 million to continue developing the foreshore in the Cairns Cityport.

Key
- Health
- Environment
- Education
- Law and order
- Infrastructure
- Community
- Disaster response

Supporting our State’s regions by improving access to and affordability of a range of services:

- $8.2 million to the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority for the Marine Park’s Field Management Program.
- $12 million to commence work on the City Place Bus Station, at a total estimated cost of $36 million, as part of the Cairns Transit Mall and Public Transport Network Upgrade.
- $99 million for vocational education and training, including apprenticeships and traineeships.
- $8.5 million towards relocating Tagai State College’s Mer Campus in the Torres Strait.
- $6.1 million to build and maintain homes in Indigenous communities.
- $8.9 million to complete the $11.8 million floodway on the Peninsula Developmental Road at Laura River.
- $51.3 million to continue the $442.8 million expansion and redevelopment of the Lotus Glen Correctional Centre.
- $25 million of $115 million to continue the Cardwell Range realignment on the Bruce Highway between Ingham and Innisfail, in partnership with the Australian Government.