



Regional Budget Statement



Queensland State Budget 2007-08

Far North Queensland



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 Far North Queensland'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.

Peter Beattie MP
Premier and Minister for Trade

Anna Bligh MP
Deputy Premier, Treasurer and
Minister for Infrastructure

State Budget highlights for Far North Queensland in 2007-08 include:

- \$82 million to continue redeveloping the Cairns Airport domestic and international terminals
- \$66.8 million for housing grants and purchase of rental accommodation for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities
- \$61.4 million toward replacing power transmission lines from Kareeya to Innisfail and Innisfail to Edmonton
- \$21.6 million for the new \$45.3 million Weipa Hospital
- \$9.6 million to construct stage 2 and begin planning for stage 3 of Redlynch State College, Cairns*
- \$8.86 million for the new Emergency Management Queensland helicopter to be based in Cairns
- \$1.7 million to replace police stations at Port Douglas and Smithfield.

** The Australian Government may also contribute to this project.*

Far North Queensland

Image courtesy of Cairns Port Authority



Cairns Airport

A record investment in economic and social infrastructure

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

More than half of this capital program will be spent outside Brisbane, on major infrastructure for better transport, water and energy supply for the residents of all regions.

The *Statewide Water Policy* outlines the Government's plan to improve water security and support future economic development in regional Queensland. This policy commits \$222 million for dams and weirs, \$198 million for channels and pipelines and \$31.5 million for investigations and early works on new sources of water supply throughout the State.

The strong State financial position achieved by the Government has enabled us to fund other major infrastructure in regional Queensland such as \$58.3 million towards stages 2 and 3 of the Townsville Ring Road,

\$30.6 million for bridge projects in Mackay, \$134.7 million towards new and continuing airport and seaport works in Cairns, and power supply projects such as the \$12.2 million improvements to the Mica Creek Power Station near Mount Isa, and \$9.4 million to finish new transmission lines from Ross to Townsville South.

In 2007-08 we will also redevelop hospitals in Ingham, Innisfail and Yeppoon, upgrade emergency departments in Rockhampton and Dalby and commence a major upgrade to Bundaberg Hospital.

Queensland capital program

2003-04 to 2007-08

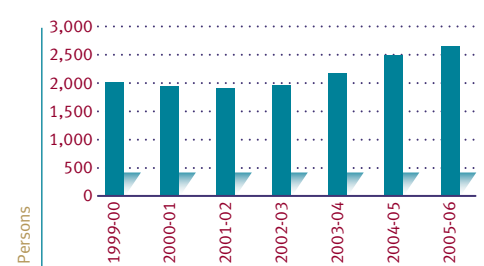


Financial year

Includes purchases of non-financial assets and capital grants by the State Non-Financial Public Sector, Sources: ABS 5512.0 and Queensland Treasury.

Participation in post-secondary education, apprenticeships

1999-00 to 2005-06



Financial year

Source: DETA, Apprenticeships and traineeships, (unpublished data).

Far North Queensland's unique natural heritage ranges from savannah, rainforest and reef to the Torres Strait Islands near our international border with Papua New Guinea. The region covers more than 15% of the State and is home to around 242,263 Queenslanders. Tourism, agriculture, fishing, mining, education and retail trade are important industries in the region.

As a Government, we recognise the valuable contribution of Far North Queensland to the Smart State's economy. With over 50% of the budgeted infrastructure investment outside Brisbane, this Regional Budget Statement for Far North Queensland 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 Far North Queensland will include:

- \$21.6 million for the new \$45.3 million Weipa Hospital
- \$10.7 million to construct new or upgrade primary health care facilities at Yarrabah and Warraber Island.

Far North Queensland 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.

The Government is continuing its support for frail older people, people with a disability and their carers with commitments in Far North Queensland including:

- \$9.9 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

- \$5.8 million to support people with a disability to live and participate in their communities
- \$2.8 million for respite support to families of people with a disability
- \$380,000 for non-government organisations to provide mental health services in the region.

We are providing ongoing housing and housing-related services to support low-income families and individuals in Far North Queensland in 2007-08, including:

- \$66.8 million for housing grants and purchase of rental accommodation for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities
- \$16.6 million for public housing, community, crisis, transitional and long-term housing needs.

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

- \$3 million for a multipurpose events centre at Cooktown
- \$1.226 million for a multipurpose outdoor sporting facility at Redlynch and to redevelop the Gordonvale pool
- \$1 million for an indoor one-court multipurpose centre and two outdoor courts at Tully State High School.

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.

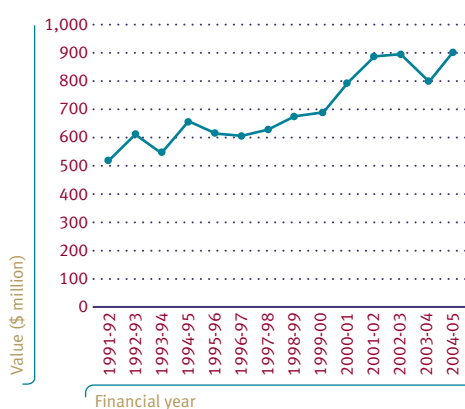
To equip teachers for modern teaching environments, the Government will invest \$70 million over four years to provide State school and TAFE teachers with computers. Funding will start with \$10 million in 2007-08 and increase to \$20 million per year thereafter.

Our investment in Far North Queensland's contribution to the Smart State will also include:

- \$63.4 million for vocational education and training
- \$9.6 million to construct stage 2 and begin planning for stage 3 of Redlynch State College, Cairns*
- \$4.7 million for a general learning area block, amenities and covered area at Hambleton State School*
- \$4.5 million for stage 2 of Western Cape College – Weipa*
- a share in \$4.3 million as part of the ongoing \$48 million Queensland Tourism Strategy
- a share in an additional \$1.25 million for the Queensland Music Festival to expand its program to more regional centres, including Cairns, Innisfail and Cooktown

Agricultural production

value (\$ million), 1991-92 to 2004-05



Source: ABS, Agriculture, Queensland (unpublished data).

- \$75,000 to establish an Indigenous Knowledge Centre on Yam Island.

* 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 towards establishing a therapeutic residential facility in Cairns.

Far North Queensland will benefit from a State-wide allocation of \$49.2 million over four years for additional front-line staff, and a regional allocation of \$6.71 million in 2007-08 for strengthening child protection services to the Indigenous communities.

In 2007-08, \$7.55 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. \$1.2 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 Far North Queensland include:

- \$8.8 million to support homeless and at-risk people

New police Britten-Norman BN-2 aircraft



- \$2.7 million for community support services
- \$2.6 million for child care delivery
- \$2.3 million for youth development services
- \$2.2 million for victims of domestic violence and for a new men's perpetrator service.

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 Far North Queensland in 2007-08, including:

- \$4.9 million over four years for a new fixed-wing police aircraft to enhance search and rescue capacity in the Torres Strait
- \$3.8 million to commence constructing a new Magistrates Court and watchhouse in Mareeba
- \$3 million for planning and design for a possible future expansion of Lotus Glen Correctional Centre
- \$1.7 million to replace police stations at Port Douglas and Smithfield
- \$1.3 million for a new \$2.8 million police station and watchhouse at Wujal Wujal
- \$900,000 for an Indigenous Alcohol Diversion program to begin in Cairns, including Yarrabah, in July.

Funding for emergency services initiatives in Far North Queensland includes:

- \$8.86 million for the new Emergency Management Queensland helicopter to be based in Cairns
- \$1.2 million to replace the Malanda and Yungaburra Auxiliary Fire Stations
- \$514,000 for enhanced aeromedical and air rescue helicopter services in the Torres Strait and Northern Peninsula Area.

Managing urban growth and building Queensland's regions

State-wide infrastructure development, water, regional job creation and integrated transport networks are critical to Queensland's growth. To ensure that Far North Queenslanders continue to contribute to and benefit from our economic success, our commitment will include:

- \$82 million to continue redeveloping the Cairns Airport domestic and international terminals
- \$61.4 million toward replacing power transmission lines from Kareeya to Innisfail and Innisfail to Edmonton
- \$10.2 million to continue developing Cairns Cityport waterfront
- \$9.3 million to widen and seal sections of the Kennedy Highway between Mount Garnet and The Lynd

- \$8.7 million to seal sections of the Peninsula Developmental Road between Coen and Weipa
- \$4.1 million towards constructing the bridge and approaches at Gilbert River on the Burke Developmental Road
- \$530,000 to widen the Daintree River Boat Ramp on Cape Tribulation Road to two lanes
- \$250,000 for a building on Thursday Island in which to conduct training and house safety equipment for a Torres Strait maritime safety initiative
- \$235,000 to start rehabilitating the abandoned mine at Croydon at a total cost of \$1.04 million.

Protecting the environment for a sustainable future

Far North Queensland's cultural and natural environment is unique and fragile, and protecting it makes both social and economic sense. 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 also benefit from State-wide initiatives including:

Hinchinbrook Island



Image courtesy of Tourism Queensland

- \$18 million to complete water resource planning across the State
- \$10 million to help residents install water-saving devices in their homes
- \$10 million for rebates on fixed water charges for irrigators impacted by the drought
- \$8.27 million for the day-to-day management of the Great Barrier Reef
- \$2.3 million to fund capacity development officers for the Native Title Support Program.

In Far North Queensland, we are also committing \$1.53 million for capital works in parks and forests across the region.

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 skills shortages.

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.

In 2007-08 we are matching the supply of skilled labour to industry's and the economy's needs in Far North Queensland by allocating \$3.57 million for the Skilling Queenslanders for Work initiative to assist

624 Queenslanders who are disadvantaged in the labour market.

In 2007-08, Far North Queensland'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.

Assistance to help primary producers recover from the impact of Cyclone Larry will continue in 2007-08, with \$540,000 to rebuild damaged facilities at Coen and redirecting up to \$1.2 million funding for industry development officers and farm financial counsellors.

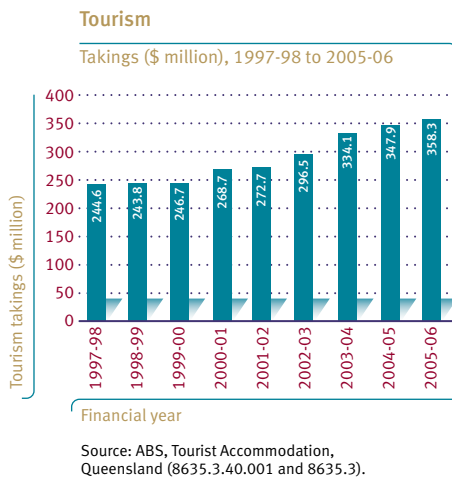
Delivering responsive government

Governments exist to deliver services, and a responsive government improves service delivery 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.

We will continue to improve service delivery in Far North Queensland, and in 2007-08 we will allocate \$5 million to commence constructing a Government office building on Thursday Island.



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 Queenslanders 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

Babinda

QGAP

91 Munro Street
Babinda QLD 4861
Telephone 4067 2021
Facsimile 4067 2027
Opening Hours: Monday
to Friday - 10am to 3pm

Cooktown

QGAP

172 Charlotte Street
Cooktown QLD 4895
Telephone 4069 5333
Facsimile 4069 5864
Opening Hours: Monday
to Friday - 9am to 4.30pm

Croydon

QGAP

Samwell Street
Croydon QLD 4871
Telephone 4745 6185
Facsimile 4745 6174
Opening Hours: Monday
to Friday - 9am to 4pm

Georgetown

QGAP

High Street
Georgetown QLD 4871
Telephone 4062 1204
Facsimile 4062 1260
Opening Hours: Monday
to Friday - 8.30am to 4.30pm

Herberton

QGAP

56 Grace Street
Herberton QLD 4887
Telephone 4096 2702
Facsimile 4096 2704
Opening Hours: Thursday -
9am to 1pm and 2pm to 4pm

Malanda

QGAP

21 James Street
Malanda QLD 4885
Telephone 4096 5277
Facsimile 4096 5008
Opening Hours: Monday
to Friday - 8am to 4pm

Mt Garnet

QGAP

Mt Garnet Police Station
Garnet Street
Mt Garnet QLD 4872
Telephone 4097 9005
Facsimile 4097 9036
Opening Hours: Wednesday
- 9.30am to 3.30pm

Ravenshoe

QGAP

27-29 Grigg Street
Ravenshoe QLD 4888
Telephone 4097 6660
Facsimile 4097 6830
Opening Hours: Monday
to Friday - 9am to 1pm
and 2pm to 4.30pm

Weipa

QGAP

Central Avenue
Weipa QLD 4874
Telephone 4069 9999
Facsimile 4069 9160
Opening Hours: Monday
to Friday - 9am to 4.30pm

Yarrabah

QGAP

c/ - Yarrabah Post Office
5 Noble Drive
Yarrabah QLD 4871
Telephone 4056 0727
Facsimile 4056 9380
Opening Hours: Monday to
Friday - 9am to 12pm and 1pm
to 4pm (closed every second Friday)

Cairns

Department of Communities Far North Queensland Regional Office

85 Spence Street
Cairns QLD 4870
Telephone 4048 9333
Facsimile 4039 8693
Opening Hours: Monday
to Friday - 8.30am to 5pm

Cairns

State Development Centre

Ground Floor
Cairns Port Authority Building
Cnr Grafton & Harley Streets
Cairns QLD 4870
Telephone 4048 1111
Facsimile 4048 1122
Opening Hours: Monday
to Friday - 8.30am to 5pm

Far North Queensland region



*Far North
Queensland includes
Cairns City and the
shires of Atherton,
Aurukun, Cardwell,
Cook, Croydon,
Douglas, Eacham,
Etheridge, Herberton,
Hope Vale,
Injino, Johnstone,
Kowanyama,
Lockhart River,
Mapoon, Mareeba,
Napranum, New
Mapoon, Pormpuraaw, Torres, Umagico,
Wujal Wujal, and Yarrabah.*

Preparatory Year enquiries

Telephone 1300 650 220
Facsimile 3247 3988

Queensland Water Commission

Telephone 1300 789 906

13 HEALTH

Telephone 13 43 25 84

Smart Service Queensland

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