



Crystal Creek, Thuringowa

Regional Budget Statement



Queensland State Budget 2007-08

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 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 the North Queensland region in 2007-08 include:

- \$15.1 million to complete the \$80.2 million upgrade of the Ross River Dam
- \$14.7 million for public housing, community, crisis, transitional and long-term housing needs
- \$12.13 million to redevelop the Murray Sports Complex and the Townsville Arts Hub Flexible Performing Arts space (under the Q150 program)
- \$9.013 million towards a \$44.984 million redevelopment of Ingham Hospital
- \$8.86 million for the new Emergency Management Queensland helicopter to be based in Townsville
- \$7.4 million to develop SkillsTech Australia's specialist trade campus in Townsville
- \$6.9 million to replace the police station and watchhouse at Ayr
- \$6.8 million for channel dredging and a new jetty and barge ramp at Palm Island.

North Queensland



Burdekin Falls Dam

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.

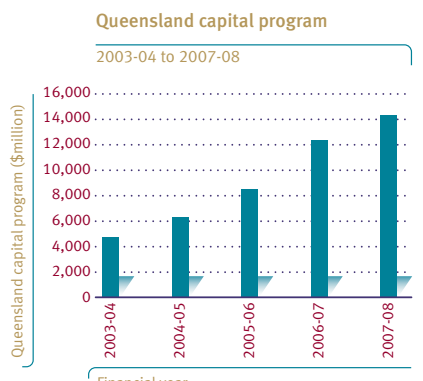
More than half of this capital program will be spent outside Brisbane, on major infrastructure for better transport, water and energy supply for the residents of all regions.

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.



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

North Queensland covers 4.6% of the State and is home to 210,943 Queenslanders in environments ranging from the reef to the outback. The region's relaxed tropical lifestyle attracts visitors to coastal areas all year-round, while tourism in the west is growing in importance, particularly during the winter months. Agricultural and mineral exports are important contributors to the regional economy.

As a Government, we recognise the valuable contribution of North Queensland to the Smart State's economy.

With over 50% of the budgeted infrastructure investment outside Brisbane, this Regional Budget Statement for 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 North Queensland will include:

- \$9.013 million towards a \$44.984 million redevelopment of Ingham Hospital
- \$1 million to commence an \$84 million expansion of The Townsville Hospital.

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.

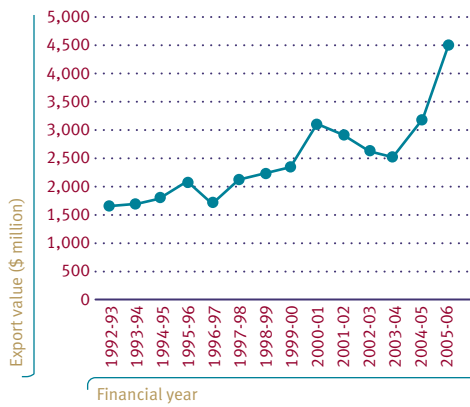
The Government is continuing its support for frail older people, people with a disability and their carers with commitments in North Queensland including:

- \$10.4 million to support people with a disability and their families through a range of programs



Note: Region is based on Northern and North West statistical divisions.
Source: ABS, Detailed Labour Force, Cat no. 6291.0.55.001.

Value of exports from the Port of Townsville
(\$ million), 1992-93 to 2005-06



Source: ABS Foreign Trade (unpublished data).

- \$8.3 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
- \$2.2 million to provide short-term and time-limited respite support to families of people with a disability.

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

- \$14.7 million for public housing, community, crisis, transitional and long-term housing needs
- \$8.44 million in housing grants for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities.

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

- \$12.13 million to redevelop the Murray Sports Complex and the Townsville Arts Hub Flexible Performing Arts space (under the Q150 program)
- \$5.95 million for capital upgrades and refurbishment of the administration building at Dairy Farmers Stadium
- \$1.65 million for the Ingham Cultural Complex-Tyto Precinct (under the Q150 Program)
- \$135,000 to Thuringowa City Council to construct a skate park at Peggy Banfield Park.

New Emergency Services AugustaWestland AW139 helicopter



Image courtesy of Emergency Management Queensland

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 North Queensland's contribution to the Smart State will also include:

- \$57.2 million for vocational education and training
- \$7.4 million to develop SkillsTech Australia's specialist trade campus in Townsville
- a share in \$4.3 million as part of the ongoing \$48 million Queensland Tourism Strategy
- \$3.5 million from the State Innovation Building Fund for the Tropical Science and Innovation Precinct at James Cook University
- \$2.1 million to begin replacing an amenities block and to continue refurbishing the vocational education training centre at the Palm Island Senior Campus*
- \$75,000 to establish an Indigenous Knowledge Centre on Palm Island.

* The Australian Government may also contribute to this project.

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 Townsville.

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 \$1.63 million in 2007-08 for strengthening child protection services in Indigenous communities including Palm Island.

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. \$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 North Queensland include:

- \$7.1 million to support homeless and at-risk people
- \$1.5 million for community support services
- \$1.1 million for 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 North Queensland in 2007-08, including:

- \$163.8 million to complete the correctional centre for women and expand the correctional centre for men in Townsville
- \$6.9 million to replace the police station and watchhouse at Ayr
- \$3.85 million for a new police station and staff accommodation at Cloncurry
- \$1.59 million to upgrade police stations at Kirwan and Townsville
- \$900,000 for an Indigenous Alcohol Diversion program to begin in Townsville in July.

Funding for emergency services initiatives in North Queensland includes \$8.86 million for the new Emergency Management Queensland helicopter to be based in Townsville.

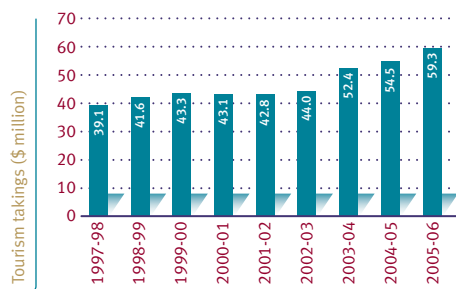
Managing urban growth and building Queensland's regions

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

- \$58.3 million in Queensland and Australian Government funding to continue constructing the Townsville Ring Road
- \$17.8 million to widen sections of the North Ward Road, Townsville, to four lanes
- \$15.1 million to complete the \$80.2 million upgrade of the Ross River Dam

Tourism

(\$ million), 1997-98 to 2005-06



Financial year

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

- \$10 million to widen sections of the Hervey's Range Developmental Road, Townsville, to four lanes
- \$9.4 million to finish constructing a new power transmission line from Ross to Townsville South
- \$6.9 million towards improvements at the Port of Townsville including upgrading high voltage power lines, rail tracks and drainage
- \$6.8 million for channel dredging and a new jetty and barge ramp at Palm Island.

Protecting the environment for a sustainable future

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:

- \$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

View from Towers Hill at sunset, Charters Towers



Image courtesy of Tourism Queensland

- \$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 North Queensland, we are also committing:

- \$2.9 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
- \$2.3 million to improve land management practices on Palm Island.

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.

We are matching the supply of skilled labour to industry's and the economy's needs in North Queensland by allocating \$3.27 million for the Skilling Queenslanders for Work initiative to assist 507 Queenslanders who are disadvantaged in the labour market.

In 2007-08, 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.

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 North Queensland, and in 2007-08 we are committing \$10 million to commence constructing a Government office building on Palm 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 4³/₄% 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

Ayr

Department of Natural Resources and Water

Little Drysdale Street
Ayr QLD 4807
Telephone 4783 0450
Facsimile 4783 7291
Opening Hours: Monday
to Friday - 8.30am to 5pm

Charters Towers

Department of Natural Resources and Water

Tropical Weeds Research Centre
Natal Downs Road
Charters Towers QLD 4820
Telephone 4761 5700
Facsimile 4761 5757
Opening Hours: Monday
to Friday - 9am to 5pm

Hughenden

Department of Natural Resources and Water

Court House
65 Brodie Street
Hughenden QLD 4821
Telephone 4741 1657
Facsimile 4741 1412
Opening Hours: Monday
to Friday - 8.30am to 4.30pm

Ingham

Department of Natural Resources and Water

Ripple Creek
58 Halifax Bemerside Road
Ingham QLD 4850
Telephone 4777 2822
Facsimile 4777 2863
Opening Hours: Monday
to Friday - 8.30am to 5pm

Townsville

Department of Communities

Level 10, Suncorp Metway Plaza
61 Sturt Street
Townsville QLD 4810
Telephone 4799 5533
Facsimile 4799 5570
Opening Hours: Monday
to Friday - 8.30am to 5pm

Townsville

Department of Natural Resources and Water

Level 3, Government Office Building
187-209 Stanley Street
Townsville QLD 4810
Telephone 4799 7200
Facsimile 4799 7125
Opening Hours: Monday
to Friday - 8.30am to 4.30pm

Townsville

Office of Economic & Statistical Research - North Queensland Regional Office

Level 1, State Government Building
Cnr Walker and Stanley Streets
Townsville QLD 4810
Telephone 4760 7650
Facsimile 4760 7651
Opening Hours: Monday
to Friday - 9am to 5pm

Townsville

State Development Centre

Level 1, Enterprise House
Cnr The Strand and
Sir Leslie Thies Drive
Townsville QLD 4810
Telephone 4799 7410
Facsimile 4799 7069
Opening Hours: Monday
to Friday - 8.30am to 5pm

Townsville

Department of Primary Industries and Fisheries

180-202 River Boulevard
Oonoonba QLD 4811
Telephone 4722 2688
Facsimile 4778 2970
Opening Hours: Monday
to Friday - 8am to 5pm

North Queensland region



North Queensland includes the cities of Townsville, Thuringowa and Charters Towers, and the shires of Burdekin, Dalrymple, Hinchinbrook and Palm Island.

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