Premier’s Message

The Queensland Government is firmly committed to strengthening and building the regions which are the foundation of this State. As a Government we are forging a strong, prosperous future and a better quality of life for all Queenslanders.

This second Regional Budget Statement for Western Queensland highlights capital works and services in the State Budget 2003-04 that specifically meet the needs of people within the region. This Statement signifies a significant investment in the Western Queensland region. For example, $2.5 million is provided for junior and senior campuses at Spinifex State College at Mount Isa.

This Budget delivers improved and integrated services in the areas of health, families, education, housing and law and order to achieve better outcomes for people in Western Queensland.

A highly skilled and educated workforce is integral to our Smart State initiatives in employment creation and economic growth. In 2003-04 the Government will spend more than $4 million on initiatives that will provide further training and employment opportunities.

Western Queensland will benefit from the following infrastructure funding in the State Budget 2003-04:

- $20 million in National Highway funding to continue to construct bridges and approach works on the Barkly Highway between Mount Isa and Camooweal
- $4.71 million for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander housing and $1.83 million for construction of new public housing
- $1.3 million to construct the new Doomadgee Council Chambers
- $908,000 for emergency services facilities, including new ambulance stations at Hughenden and Dirranbandi.

The initiatives contained in this Statement reinforce my Government’s commitment to working in partnership with the people of Western Queensland to maximise the social, economic and environmental capacity of the Smart State.

Peter Beattie
Premier and Minister for Trade
This Regional Budget Statement outlines key Government spending in the State Budget 2003-04 designed exclusively for the needs of the Western Queensland region and its people. As a Government, we recognise the uniqueness and diversity of the regions as the building blocks of this State. In fact, in this Budget we have allocated 62.5% of capital works funding for regions outside the Brisbane Statistical Division.

Western Queensland is home to 73,588 Queenslanders and covers an area of more than one million square kilometres. This region includes 29 local government areas ranging from Carpentaria shire in the north-west to Bulloo shire in the south-west and out to Aramac shire in the central-west. In addition, the region includes the Doomadgee Aboriginal Council.

Significant contributors to the region’s economy are the agriculture and mining industries. The gross value of agricultural production was almost $1.2 billion in 1999-2000.

Building Queensland’s regions

The Queensland Government will continue its partnership with the Western Queensland region in 2003-04 to promote regional growth and economic development.

In support of this priority, the Government has allocated a further $50 million over four years to extend the Regional Centres Program across the State. Western Queensland will benefit from $1.5 million offered to Mount Isa City Council for the Mount Isa Outdoor Events Park — Buchanan Park Redevelopment. This project will create a single venue for large outdoor events, including major events such as the annual show and the famous Mount Isa Rodeo.

A safe and efficient transport network underpins economic activity with the region. Highlights of transport funding in 2003-04 are:

- $4.43 million for shoulder sealing and widening projects on the Carnarvon Highway north of Roma
- $1.8 million to pave and seal a section of the Diamantina Developmental Road between Bedourie and Crownwheel Creek
- $2.14 million to help local governments construct road and drainage in the region.

The region will benefit from a share of $25 million provided statewide for drought assistance and drought recovery activities. In 2003-04, an additional $1.78 million is allocated to continue the Great Artesian Basins Sustainability Initiative. This project will achieve better utilisation of scarce water resources through capping of artesian bores.

To fulfil the increasing demands for power, CS Energy has allocated $11.3 million for overhaul and other capital expenditure at the Mica Creek Power Station.

Value of Mineral Production (dollar million), Western Queensland, 1991-92 to 2000-01

[Graph showing value of mineral production from 1991-92 to 2000-01]

Source: Department of Natural Resources and Mines (unpublished data)

Main Street, Winton
In 2003-04, $665,000 is allocated to continue the work of the Queensland Government Agent Program in delivering Government services and information to people in rural areas in Western Queensland. Business support services in the region will be assisted by $60,000 funding to the Julia Creek Combined Sporting Association. The tourism industry will benefit from $331,000 provided to the Outback Queensland Tourism Authority to continue promoting Western Queensland to holiday-makers.

The region will benefit from $95,000 for the Indigenous Regional Arts Development Fund, a partnership program with Aboriginal community councils or other host organisations in Queensland’s Deed of Grant in Trust communities. This funding supports projects that retain and strengthen culture and assist economic independence or job creation. In addition, $681,000 is provided for a regional arts development partnership program with local governments to provide financial assistance for community and cultural activities.

More jobs for Queensland – skills and innovation – the Smart State

High standards of training and education are the foundation of our efforts to position Queensland as the Smart State.

Through the Breaking the Unemployment Cycle initiative, the Government will continue to support the region’s young job seekers, with $4 million allocated to help create 490 jobs across the region.

An investment of $250,000 in the development of an education precinct at Mount Isa Institute of TAFE will ensure the Western Queensland region has the skills to underpin development in the region.

To maintain existing educational facilities within the region, $400,000 is provided for new toilets at Mount Isa Central State School and $100,000 for upgrades of Special Education Classes at Charleville State High School and Cloncurry State School. Also, $513,000 is provided for the Triple R program, which provides repainting, reticulation and re-roofing enhancements to local schools. Under this program, repainting work will be undertaken at a number of school facilities including Aramac, Burketown and Mitchell State Schools.

In 2003-04, $338,000 will help purchase books for public libraries.

Traditional industries are the backbone of the Western Queensland economy and will be assisted by the following research:

- $1.5 million to continue research to enable producers to develop high quality wool and sheep meat for international and domestic markets, with the Cooperative Research Centre and Australian Wool Innovation
- $260,000 to continue research into the control of silverleaf whitefly, with the Cotton Research and Development Corporation.

Safer and more supportive communities

The Government is committed to working in partnership with the Western Queensland region to achieve a safe and supportive community environment.

Emergency services in the region will be supported by funding to develop the following facilities:

- $250,000 to provide co-located urban and rural Queensland Fire and Rescue Service administration at Roma
- $120,000 to replace the Queensland Fire and Rescue Station at Morven, which will be co-located with the ambulance station.

---

**Gross Value of Agricultural Production ($ million)**

**Western Queensland, 1991-92 to 2000-01**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Value ($ million)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1991-92</td>
<td>855</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1992-93</td>
<td>860</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1993-94</td>
<td>870</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1994-95</td>
<td>770</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1995-96</td>
<td>750</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1996-97</td>
<td>740</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1997-98</td>
<td>730</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1998-99</td>
<td>720</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1999-00</td>
<td>710</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2000-01</td>
<td>700</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Source: ABS, Agriculture, Queensland (unpublished data)*
We are committed to providing a high standard of sport and recreation facilities and improving the wellbeing and lifestyles of Western Queensland people. In partnership with local government and community organisations we will spend:

- $141,000 to construct a multipurpose sports field at Bedourie
- $75,000 to install lighting and irrigation in support of rugby league at Roma
- $72,000 to South West Drag Racing Association for a strip track and safety access road
- $64,000 for the St George Bowls Club to upgrade to a synthetic bowling green.

Valuing the environment

Queensland’s natural and cultural heritage will be protected for the benefit of all Queenslanders. Highlights in environmental funding in the Western Queensland region include $349,000 for a range of works on national parks and state forests including:

- $79,000 to upgrade boundary fencing at Currawinya National Park
- $116,000 for Poeppel Corner Visitor Management at Simpson Desert National Park
- $58,000 to continue the Longreach visitor management strategy
- $17,000 for walking tracks and visitor facilities at Lark Quarry Conservation Park.

To improve the health of our natural resources and ensure their sustainable use, $343,000 is allocated in Western Queensland for the National Action Plan on Salinity and Water Quality, jointly funded with the Commonwealth Government. Through the plan, communities and governments will work together to prevent, stabilise or reverse dryland salinity and improve water quality.

In addition, $110,000 is allocated for vegetation mapping to determine areas of high conservation value and to support vegetation management plans in Northwest Highlands, Gulf Plains, Mulga Lands and Mitchell Grass Downs Bioregions.
State Budget Highlights

Budget summary

Creating new jobs

• In 2002-03, an estimated 55,000 new jobs were created in Queensland, accounting for almost a quarter of all new jobs in Australia.

• Queensland’s year-average unemployment rate is expected to fall to 7% in 2002-03, its lowest level for 13 years.

Growing the economy

• Queensland’s economic outlook is strong. Solid growth of 4% is forecast for 2003-04, exceeding the 3¼% forecast nationally.

• Growth in household consumption and business investment is forecast to exceed national performance in 2003-04.

Strong finances

• A General Government net operating surplus of $153 million and a cash surplus of $152 million are forecast in 2003-04.

• The State’s net worth is budgeted to grow from $58.7 billion at 30 June 2003, to $60.3 billion by 30 June 2004 and to $67 billion by 30 June 2007.

Competitive taxes

• Taxpayers in other States and Territories will pay on average 28% more tax than Queenslanders.

• As a result of the land tax relief in this Budget, more than 13,500 land holders will not be liable for land tax in 2003-04.

Delivering on our priorities

Building Queensland's regions

• Capital spending will be boosted to $5.3 billion in 2003-04, supporting some 44,500 full-time jobs with a total of 62.5% of capital works funding spent outside the Brisbane Statistical Division.

• The Regional Centres Program will receive $50 million over four years to help local governments deliver infrastructure and community facilities.

More jobs for Queensland – skills and innovation – the Smart State

• The Budget includes $100 million over 4 years for a package of measures to increase the effectiveness of public and private research and development.

• The Breaking the Unemployment Cycle initiative will be extended with an extra $255 million over 3 years from 2004-05, plus an additional $3.8 million to employ 300 public sector apprentices.

• Funding is provided for an extra 636 teachers in schools from 2004.

Safer and more supportive communities

• As the second year of a $188 million four-year initiatives package, $32 million will help generate better outcomes for families and children.

• The Queensland Ambulance Service will employ an extra 110 officers statewide, and will commence or complete 17 replacement and four new stations.

• The number of police officers will increase by approximately 300 in 2003-04 as the Police Service progresses towards the achievement of 9,100 officers by 2005.

Community engagement and a better quality of life

• There is an additional $2.6 billion over 4 years for Health (including Commonwealth and State funding), compared to the 2002-03 Health Budget, including additional investment and service enhancements in acute hospital care, elective surgery, home and community care and mental health.

• An additional $290.5 million in State funding is provided over four years to Disability Services Queensland including $200 million to implement Funding Reform Project initiatives.

Valuing the environment

• As part of a $150 million Commonwealth-State tree clearing reduction package, the State will provide an additional $75 million over five years.
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.

Aramac
QGAP
Gordon Street
Aramac QLD 4726
Phone: 4651 3014
Monday, Wednesday, Thursday
10.00am–4.45pm
Tuesday 9.00am–1.00pm
Friday 9.00am–1.00pm and
2.00pm–4.45pm

Augathella
QGAP
Augathella Visitors Centre
98 Main Street
Augathella QLD 4477
Phone: 4654 5007
Monday–Thursday
9.30am–3.30pm
Friday 9.30am–4.00pm

Barcaldine
QGAP
Barcaldine Court House
Ash Street
Barcaldine QLD 4725
Phone: 4651 1191
Monday–Friday
9.00am–4.30pm

Bedourie
QGAP
Police Station
Merri Street
Bedourie QLD 4829
Phone: 4746 1128
Monday and Wednesday
9.00am–12.00pm
Tuesday and Thursday
2.00pm–5.00pm
Friday 9.00am–1.00pm

Birdsville
QGAP
Police Station
McDonald Street
Birdsville QLD 4482
Phone: 4656 3310
Monday–Thursday
8.45am–12.00pm
Friday 9.00am–12.00pm

Blackall
QGAP
Shamrock Street
Blackall QLD 4472
Phone: 4657 4233
Monday–Friday
9.00am–4.30pm

Boulia
QGAP
Police Station
Herbert Street
Boulia QLD 4829
Phone: 4746 3043
Monday–Thursday
8.30am–12.30pm

Camooweal
QGAP
Banky Street
Camooweal QLD 4828
Phone: 4748 2025
Monday–Friday
9.00am–5.00pm
Saturday 9.00am–12.00pm

Cunnamulla
QGAP
5 Stockyard Street
Cunnamulla QLD 4490
Phone: 4655 1131
Monday–Friday
9.00am–1.00pm and
2.00pm–5.00pm

Dirranbandi
QGAP
35-37 Railway Street
Dirranbandi QLD 4486
Phone: 4625 8411
Monday–Friday
10.00am–12.30pm and
1.30pm–4.00pm

Hughenden
QGAP
65 Brodie Street
Hughenden QLD 4821
Phone: 4741 1735
Monday–Friday
8.00am–5.00pm

Injune
QGAP
Injune Library
Hutton Street
Injune QLD 4454
Phone: 4626 1546
Monday–Tuesday
1.30pm–5.00pm
Wednesday 9.00am–1.00pm
Thursday 11.30am–5.00pm
Friday 11.00am–5.00pm

Isisford
QGAP
Police Station
St Mary Street
Isisford QLD 4731
Phone: 4658 8153
Wednesday and Friday
9.00am–5.00pm

Julia Creek
QGAP
Burke Street
Julia Creek QLD 4823
Phone: 4746 7162
Monday, Tuesday and Friday
9.00am–4.30pm
Wednesday and Thursday
9.00am–12.30pm and
1.30pm–4.30pm

Jundah
QGAP
Police Station
Dickson Street
Jundah QLD 4736
Phone: 4658 6193
Monday and Wednesday
9.00am–1.30pm
Friday 9.00am–12.30pm and
1.00–4.00pm

Mount Isa
State Development Centre
75 Camooweal Street
Mount Isa QLD 4825
Phone: 4747 2144
Monday–Friday 9.00–5.00pm

Mitchell
QGAP
86 Mary Street
Mitchell QLD 4465
Phone: 4623 1106
Monday–Friday
9.00am–12.30pm and
1.30pm–4.30pm

Normanton
QGAP
Haig Street
Normanton QLD 4890
Phone: 4745 1177
Monday–Friday
9.00am–4.45pm

Richmond
QGAP
Goldring Street
Richmond QLD 4822
Phone: 4741 3227
Monday–Friday
9.00am–12.30pm and
1.30pm–4.30pm

Roma
State Development Centre
c/-Department of Natural
Resources
31 McDowall Street
Roma QLD 4455
Phone: 4620 1043
Monday–Friday
8:30am–5.00pm

St George
QGAP
The Terrace
St George QLD 4487
Phone: 4625 3266
Monday–Friday
9.00am–4.30pm

Surat
QGAP
72 Burrows Street
Surat QLD 4417
Phone: 4626 5046
Monday–Thursday
1.00pm–4.30pm
Friday 10.30am–12.00pm and
12.30pm–5.30pm

Thargomindah
QGAP
Police Station
Dowling Street
Thargomindah QLD 4492
Phone: 4655 3291
Monday–Thursday
9.00am–12.00pm and Friday
9.00am–1.00pm

Windorah
QGAP
Police Station
Victoria Street
Windorah QLD 4481
Phone: 4656 3171
Monday–Wednesday
8.00am–11.00am
Tuesday and Thursday
2.00pm–5.00pm
Friday 8.00am–12.00pm

Winton
QGAP
Courthouse
59 Vindex Street
Winton QLD 4735
Phone: 4657 1536
Monday–Friday
8.30am–4.30pm