

## **Barton Deakin Brief: 2016-17 Northern Territory Budget**

**25 May 2016**

Yesterday, the Northern Territory Chief Minister, the Hon Adam Giles MLA, and the Northern Territory Treasurer, the Hon William Tollner MLA, released the [2016-17 Territory Budget](#).

The 2016-17 Territory Budget included the following key indicators in its fiscal outlook:

- The net fiscal balance for 2016-17 is expected to be a \$794 million deficit;
- The net debt in 2016-17 is expected to be \$2.707 billion;
- The Territory will receive an expected \$3.263 billion in GST revenue in 2016-17; and
- The Territory's fiscal balance is expected to reach surplus again in 2019-20.

The Budget includes a number of significant policy and funding commitments across a range of portfolio areas.

### **Infrastructure**

The Government stated it would invest approximately \$1.7 billion in new and existing infrastructure projects, including:

- A total of \$589.6M for roads and transport across the Northern Territory;
- \$164.1 million in education infrastructure including \$33.1 million for repairs and maintenance and \$11.6 million for minor new works on state education facilities;
- \$8.07 million for new water sources at Ngukurr, Barunga, Yuendumu, Imanpa and Wadeye Manthape;
- \$5 million for water storage replacement at Numbulwar;
- \$5.48 million for grid connections from Nganmariyanga and Peppimenarti to Wadeye;
- \$6 million over two years to upgrade the Sandover Highway; and
- \$5 million to continue the \$15 million three-year joint Telstra and Territory Government co-investment program to expand telecommunications services across remote communities.

### **Health**

Total health services spending of approximately \$1.52 billion will include:

- \$185.9 million over five years on information and communications technology (ICT) systems in Territory hospitals, including the introduction of electronic health records;
- \$29.4 million to upgrade Royal Darwin Hospital; and
- A new \$149 million five-year agreement between the Territory Government and St John Ambulance which will fund more staff, and greater service provisions.



## Education

The 2016-17 Budget will see approximately \$1 billion spent on education, training and apprentice support, including:

- \$388 million Territory schools in the global schools budget pool, in addition to \$59 million to meet centralised school costs;
- \$242 million in operational and capital subsidies for non-government schools, including \$167 million in Commonwealth Students First funding;
- \$43.7 million, including Commonwealth funding, to improve Indigenous student outcomes as part of the Government's Indigenous Education Strategy; and
- \$5.4 million to operate the Northern Territory Open Education Centre in new facilities at the Bullocky Point Education Precinct.

## Economic Development and Growth

The Government will invest:

- \$99.7 million for training and employment opportunities;
- \$5.25 million over two years, including Commonwealth funding, to establish bakeries in remote areas, to provide consumer choice and employment opportunities; and
- \$48.6 million for housing cyclone rectification works.

## Tourism

The 2016-16 Budget provides a total of \$48.5 million to support tourism, including:

- \$5 million to continue the Tourism Infrastructure Development Fund, which is designed to aid operators in making improvements to existing products and provide new or expanded accommodation facilities;
- \$2 million to Regional Tourist Organisations and Visitor Information Centres to provide regional marketing and visitor information services;
- \$2 million for business events with a focus on conferences, corporate incentive marketing and a branding campaign for Darwin and Alice Springs; and
- \$1.5 million for ongoing sponsorships with key sporting and consumer brands to encourage tourism in the Territory.

## Housing and Social Services

- \$140.4 over five years invested in social housing in urban centres through the Territory Government Housing Strategy;
- \$20 million investment in the Home Improvement Scheme to help home owners undertake minor improvements and necessary maintenance to their homes;
- \$5.5 million in funding to allow first home buyers to forgo the cost of 50 per cent of stamp duty on existing homes, up to \$10,000 in value; and
- \$9.4 million to establish a Remote Family Support Service, with funding provided through the Commonwealth's National Partnership on NT Remote Aboriginal Investment.



## Aboriginal Affairs

- \$0.4 million to establish crocodile farming enterprises in East Arnhem;
- \$0.5 million for a bush tucker industry research and development study to establish a national industry-based hub in Alice Springs; and
- \$1 million for a planning study for Aboriginal cultural centres.

## Industry, Science and Innovation

- \$3.02 million to invest in the Knowledge Territory Platform, including funding to create the independent Office of the Chief Scientists of the Northern Territory, a study voucher programme for apprentices and expand scholarship programmes.

## Sport and Culture

- An investment of more than \$29 million into local sporting facilities including:
  - Redevelopment of the pool at Parap Leisure and Sports Centre;
  - Construction of a tennis centre at Marrara;
  - Upgrades at TIO stadium; and
  - Redevelopment of netball facilities in Alice Springs.

## Other Initiatives

- \$1.25 million to support the delivery of the [Northern Territory Arts and Cultural Policy](#); and
- \$47.6 million to upgrade police facilities including across the Territory, within a total packet of \$768 million spend on community safety.

## Darwin Port

The net proceeds of the Port of Darwin lease were \$506 million. Of the proceeds, \$431 million will be invested back into the Northern Territory infrastructure including through:

- The \$100 million *Boosting our Economy* package;
- The *Home Improvement Scheme*;
- Upgrading the Territory's power stations;
- Building tourism infrastructure including skywalk adventure facilities in national parks; and
- Completing existing Territory road programmes.

## Further information

To view the speech from the Treasurer, click [here](#).

To view message from the Chief Minister, click [here](#).

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For more information, please contact [Gerard Paynter](#) or call +61 416 113 059.

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