



Northern Territory

BUDGET 2004

Moving the Territory ahead... **less tax, more jobs, great lifestyle**

M E D I A R E L E A S E

Peter Toyne

Minister for Central Australia

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INFRASTRUCTURE BOOST FOR CENTRAL AUSTRALIA

Central Australia will benefit from significant infrastructure spending in Budget 2004, as well as its strong focus on supporting local business, creating jobs and building on our lifestyle, Minister for Central Australia Dr Peter Toyne said today.

“As well as tax cuts, Central Australia will benefit from record infrastructure spending in the Budget of \$441 million,” Dr Toyne said.

“This money will provide a considerable boost to the local construction industry, as will the Government’s continuing commitment to opening up residential land release in Alice Springs, evidenced by the \$1 million for headworks at Mt Johns Valley.”

Dr Toyne said increased resources in health would see more beds and more health professionals in the Alice Springs Hospital and extra nurses in remote communities, and local schools would benefit from a new small grants program and more money going into literacy and information technology.

“We are also putting money behind our commitment to getting extra police on the beat and putting resources behind community crime fighting initiatives,” he said.

“Local business will benefit from payroll tax changes and specific industry boosts such as more than \$500,000 for tourism destination marketing in the Centre.

“Budget 2004 is about keeping the Territory moving ahead and Centralians are big winners with significant funding aimed at driving economic growth in the region.”

INFRASTRUCTURE SPENDING IN CENTRAL AUSTRALIA

Spending on tourism infrastructure, roads, and strategic development projects will be a welcome investment in the region, benefiting the tourism and construction industries, as well as the wider community. Highlights include:

- \$38 million to upgrade the Mereenie Loop Road over three years.
- \$25.6 million to build the Desert Knowledge Precinct over two years.
- \$11 million for Alice Springs Hospital over the next four years to expand the Intensive Care/High Dependency Unit. The money will also help attract and retain specialists to the Centre.
- \$1 million for headworks for Mt Johns Valley residential subdivision.
- \$1.7 million to complete the upgrade of Traeger Park, including a new grandstand and other facilities.
- \$1 million for further upgrading and sealing of the Tanami Road.
- \$1 million to upgrade bridges at Chinaman Creek and Salt Creek.
- \$460,000 for Stuart Highway rehabilitation and widening.



- \$900,000 for a fire safety upgrade at Alice Springs Hospital.
- \$250,000 to complete an airconditioning upgrade at Gillen Primary School.
- \$1 million for public housing in Alice Springs to meet increased demand.
- \$410,000 to construct a new power station at Docker River.
- \$400,000 for a new power station at Nyirripi.
- \$360,000 for a new power generating set at Yuendumu.
- \$220,000 to upgrade the police holding cell at Ti Tree.
- \$270,000 for a Stage One project to drill and equip bores at Alcoota.
- \$160,000 for a new power generating set at Hermannsburg.
- \$150,000 to extend the power station at Imanpa.

SUPPORTING CENTRAL AUSTRALIAN BUSINESS

As well as tax cuts, Central Australia will also benefit from a range of other initiatives in Budget 2004 which will support local business, including:

- \$640,000 for CATIA to provide visitor information and market the region.
- \$500,000 for additional marketing of Central Australian destinations.
- \$850,000 for monitoring, extension and advisory services to local land-holders.
- \$220,000 to develop new table grape varieties.
- \$150,000 for an arid zone pastoral research area at Owen Springs Station.
- \$360,000 for mineral and petroleum exploration in the Amadeus Basin.
- \$320,000 for the Territory Business Centre.

MORE FUNDS FOR JOBS AND TRAINING

Jobs and training are a key Budget focus with initiatives for Central Australia including:

- \$500,000 for Desert Knowledge.
- \$1.05 million for tertiary programs at the Alice Springs campuses of Charles Darwin University and Batchelor Institute of Indigenous Tertiary Education.
- \$580,000 for training for Indigenous people.
- \$390,000 for Footprints Forward to improve employment opportunities for Indigenous people in Alice Springs.
- \$50,000 for skills development and training for young people with disabilities.

BUILDING SAFER COMMUNITIES IN CENTRAL AUSTRALIA

To build safer communities, Budget 2004 includes:

- \$30.5 million for police, fire and emergency services in the Alice Springs region.
- \$20.92 million for operations at Alice Springs Correctional Centre.
- \$1.31 million for community corrections for adult and juvenile clients.
- \$2.4 million for child protection services working with families at risk.
- \$1.97 million for court services to regional and remote communities.
- \$620,000 for a range of justice services in the region.
- \$320,000 for a large fire fighting tanker for Alice Springs Fire Station.
- \$38,000 for volunteer bush fire brigades in the region.
- \$260,000 for the Community Harmony Strategy.

BETTER EDUCATION OUTCOMES IN CENTRAL AUSTRALIA

To support better education outcomes for Central Australia, the budget includes:

- \$23.4 million to deliver primary and early childhood education in urban schools.
- \$20.02 million for early childhood, primary and post primary education in remote schools.
- \$19 million for non-government schools.
- \$13.05 million for Government secondary schools in Alice Springs.
- \$190,000 for the Accelerated Literacy Project at Gillen Primary and Anzac Hill High.

SUPPORTING OUR GREAT LIFESTYLE

To support our great lifestyle in Central Australia, Budget 2004 includes:

- \$5.07 million to manage facilities and collections at the Araluen Centre, Museums of Central Australia and the Strehlow Research Centre.
- \$2.74 million to support the Alice Springs Desert Park.
- \$800,000 to monitor the quality and quantity of the region's groundwater and surfacewater resources.
- \$1 million for bushfire mitigation, fire control operations and fire management.
- \$500,000 for the Alice Springs Masters Games.
- \$390,000 for weed management.
- \$100,000 for the Alice Springs Desert Song festival.
- \$30,000 for flood forecasting services for the Todd River.

BUDGET 2004 NEW INITIATIVES

The Central Australian region will also benefit from a range of other initiatives contained in Budget 2004. They include:

- Immediately abolishing the HIH levy on business.
- Increasing the payroll tax threshold from \$600,000 to \$1 million over the next two years.
- Increasing sports grants by \$0.5 million to \$5.58 million.
- 120 new police recruits throughout the Territory.
- \$1.25 million extra for the Accelerated Literacy Program in schools.
- \$2.25 million extra for information technology in schools.
- \$500,000 for extra equipment in schools.
- \$300,000 ongoing for a new small grants program for schools.