

THE STATE BUDGET
2000-2001

REGIONAL SOUTH AUSTRALIA:
A BETTER FUTURE

REGIONAL STATEMENT

Circulated on the occasion of the
State Budget for 2000-2001

Table Of Contents

1. Foreword	1
2. Regional Budget Highlights	3
3. Supporting Regional People	5
Employment, Education and Training.....	5
Health and Community Services.....	6
A Safer Community	7
Health and Related Infrastructure in Indigenous Communities	9
Stronger Communities.....	9
Arts and Culture.....	10
Housing	11
4. Supporting Business and Economic Development.....	12
Small Business.....	12
Farm Businesses.....	12
Mineral Resources.....	13
Industry and Enterprise Improvement.....	14
Research and Development	14
Infrastructure Building	15
Tourism	16
Understanding Our Regions	16
Native Title.....	17
5. Making the Connections.....	18
Better Communications.....	18
Efficient Transport.....	18
6. Protecting Our Natural Resources	21
National Parks and Wildlife.....	21
Water Resources	21
Fisheries.....	22
7. Planning the Future	24
Sustainable Natural Resource Management	24
Planning Land Use	24

1. FOREWORD

As we move into the 21st Century, regional South Australia is experiencing heartening growth with on-going vineyard and winery developments, expansion into exports by the horticultural sector, new mining developments including the \$1.94 billion expansion of Olympic Dam, a rapid increase in aquaculture production and exciting developments in regional tourism. However, many rural and regional communities are still to share the benefits of development and growth. While many parts of non-metropolitan Adelaide are charging ahead, others are struggling to meet the challenges posed by globalisation and industry structural change.

Through this Statement, the State Government renews its commitment to working in partnership with rural and regional people, business and other spheres of government to help ensure all our regions have every opportunity to share a better future.

The State Government comes to this year's budget with a solid record of achievement in delivering practical initiatives that are making a difference in regional South Australia. By example, in improving access to strategic infrastructure such as telecommunications, transport networks, electricity and water; in addressing the challenges of sustainable natural resource management, identifying impediments to and improving planning approvals through investment attraction; and by building social and human capital of our regional communities.

To reinforce its desire to focus resources on regional development the Government has prepared its first Regional Budget Statement.

This statement outlines the Government's commitment to regional development by identifying its spending on regional services — a commitment which exceeds \$1 billion per annum. The statement highlights the range of initiatives the Government has either put in place or enhanced, in response to the social and economic needs of regional South Australia. It also details some new measures being taken to help meet the challenges of living and working in regional South Australia.

As many communities across the nation are discovering, there are challenges associated with geographical distance, economies of scale, and lack of employment and enterprise opportunities. Change arising from globalisation, new technology, market deregulation and industry rationalisation has had particular impacts on regional South Australia. Some regions have suffered economic and social stresses as a result of long-term industry restructuring or decline, particularly those with small towns and a narrow industry base. Other regions have benefited from the opportunities created by the emergence and growth of new industries.

The State's ability to develop its potential in economic and social terms is dependent on regional development. While much of the economic wealth of South Australia is derived directly from regional activities, there is also a symbiotic relationship between the growth of economic activity in Adelaide and the regions.

In view of the importance of regional South Australia and pressures for change facing regional communities, the Government commissioned the Regional Development Task Force to report on strategies to strengthen South Australia's regions. The conclusions and recommendations of the Report of the Task Force were based on extensive public consultation involving a series of hearings in regional and metropolitan South Australia.

The task force highlighted some key concerns of regional communities, including a perceived lack of acknowledgement of the contribution that regions make to South Australia, insufficient

involvement of the regions in decision making, as well as concerns about the withdrawal of services and staff from regional towns and infrastructure gaps constraining development.

The full set of recommendations proposed by the task force provided a framework for improved processes in regional development, building upon existing systems, structures and priorities. The State Government has consequently built, and will maintain, a significant role in regional issues. As a demonstration of the State Government's commitment to regional development it has established the following new governance arrangements in the past year:

- a Minister for Regional Development who is a Senior Cabinet Minister
- an Office of Regional Development to advocate for a whole of government approach to regional development
- a Regional Development Council to ensure the interests of regions are recognised at the State level
- a Regional Development Issues Group comprising Senior State Government officers with authority to commit their agencies to action.

These new arrangements have enabled the Government to implement a more focused whole of government approach to strategic issues impacting on regional South Australia.

The report of the Regional Development Task Force has been instrumental in focusing attention on issues of concern in regional South Australia. In this budget, the Government has announced major new initiatives tailored specifically for the regions in rural health, education, infrastructure building, communication technologies and the information economy, community safety, water resource management, farmer assistance and business development. These new and enhanced levels of funding will maintain this Government's commitment to support regional South Australia, not just for one year but in an enduring way.

The Government recognises it has a clear role in encouraging regional development and this goes beyond economical fundamentals. This statement not only portrays the Government's intended action in regard to encouraging regional development, but also forms part of its platform for a whole of government approach.

During the term of this Government, we are determined to see significant progress made in regional development and to work in partnership with the people and communities of regional South Australia to make our regions a better place to live and work.

This statement provides the framework for the State Government to fulfil its role in helping to build a better future for regional South Australia.

Rob Kerin
Deputy Premier
Minister for Primary Industries and Resources
Minister for Regional Development

2. REGIONAL BUDGET HIGHLIGHTS

This Regional Budget Statement presents a comprehensive package of new, expanded and continuing programs and services designed to meet regional challenges and help make our regions a better place to live and work.

The highlights of the package include the following new or expanded regional initiatives:

- \$9.6 million for the upgrade and improvement of education facilities
- \$11.95 million to upgrade and improve regional health facilities over two years
- \$6.23 million to provide housing for people in need
- \$2.13 million to upgrade security and education facilities at major regional prisons
- \$13.52 million to upgrade fire appliances and station facilities for Country and Metropolitan Fire Services
- \$4 million to increase the size of the ambulance fleet with at least 12 new ambulances to regional locations
- \$5.5 million for the Regional Development Infrastructure Fund targeting areas where infrastructure requirements are impeding development
- \$16.0 million to reduce the bowser cost of petroleum fuel for all users in regional South Australia.
- \$1.7 million to improve aquaculture farming techniques and opportunities throughout the state
- \$1.0 million to provide assistance to income affected farmers in the Central North East
- \$3.77 million in support of the Regional Development Board Framework providing an increase of \$750 000
- \$50 million capital allocation as the initial tranche of a \$125 million contribution to the Adelaide to Darwin rail link construction
- \$23 million for new water supply and wastewater treatment to reduce the level of nutrients discharged
- \$1.03 million to fund the “Networks for You” initiative to create awareness of the opportunities of the information age
- \$43 million to extend emergency services communications coverage to regional areas through the Government’s Radio Network
- \$83.4 million for the provision of strategic road infrastructure in regional areas
- \$3.35 million provided to regional bus service providers for students, pensioners and seniors with concession travel
- \$8.0 million to upgrade marine facilities
- \$5.95 million to improve and upgrade assets within the State’s national parks and walking trails across the State
- \$350 000 to update the Country Planning Strategy
- reductions to the Emergency Services Levy that specifically benefit regional areas and primary producers

The value of these initiatives is not measured in their cost alone, but in the contribution they make to the economic prosperity of regions and the quality of life of their communities.

3. SUPPORTING REGIONAL PEOPLE

Employment, Education and Training

Access to training, quality education, and employment is crucial to the advancement of all regions.

The Government has placed priority on lifelong learning as the main way for individuals to achieve lifelong employability, and to support economic growth by ensuring South Australia has a highly-skilled workforce. Partnerships 21 is also progressively providing greater opportunities for community partnerships through local school management. Forty per cent of all sites across the state (133 preschools and 236 schools) are participating in Partnerships 21 from the start of 2000. A further 130 schools and preschools have registered for training during 2000 for entry to this project.

The Government has embarked on the Enterprise and Vocational Education Strategy which builds on the very successful Ready, Set, Go Program. The Vocational Education and Training in Schools programs for 2000 involve approximately 16 000 students completing nearly 2.4 million hours of vocational education and training. This is a projected growth of more than 30 per cent in student participation.

The budget provides \$398.1 million to deliver education services within regional South Australia comprising \$388.5 million in operating expenditure and \$9.6 million in capital investment funding to upgrade and improve education facilities. Key features include:

- \$16 million for the provision of early childhood education through Preschools and Child Parent centres to build foundations for learning and living
- \$293 million for the provision of education in government schools from the reception year to year 12
- \$57 million for the provision of vocational education and training by TAFE institutes and other providers outside the school sector, to enable training opportunities to be expanded through new apprenticeships and a comprehensive range of training and employment programs which meet the needs of industry and individual clients
- \$10 million for the provision of child care incorporating Centre-based Day Care, Family Day Care, Out of School Hours Care and Occasional Care, to enable planning and development for new services, industry training, curriculum materials, support and information to parents and staff working in child-care centres
- \$380 000 for the provision of programs and services to improve outcomes for youth and promote their participation in the community and involvement in decision making.
- \$6.4 million to support employment programs and initiatives targeted to improve employment outcomes to support South Australia's 60 000 small businesses. A major initiative this year will be to merge most of the employment programs accessed by Regional Development Boards into a single, more flexible funding structure for the boards. The development of a Regional Employment Strategy will ensure the regions have greater autonomy in planning and decision making based on local knowledge and needs and build a shared commitment to improve employment outcomes in regions and outcomes for youth in regions
- \$1.6 million to encourage regionally based public sector traineeships

- \$1.1 million for Regional Aboriginal Apprentice Program.

The Department of Employment, Training and Education will undertake the following improvements to regional schools in 2000-01:

- \$800 000 to construct the new Oak Valley Aboriginal School
- \$520 000 to upgrade the Science Laboratories at the Wudina Area School
- \$1.0 million to upgrade the Anangu School at Amata
- \$915 000 to redevelop Clare High School
- \$590 000 to relocate Cleve Preschool
- \$580 000 to upgrade the Anangu School at Fregon
- \$922 000 to relocate the Gordon Education Centre
- \$989 000 to upgrade and redevelop the Mt Gambier East Primary School
- \$700 000 to upgrade the Riverton High School
- \$400 000 to upgrade Victor Harbor Primary School
- \$250 000 to amalgamate Jamestown Schools
- \$550 000 to upgrade Kirton Point Primary School
- \$500 000 to upgrade Moonta Area School
- \$700 000 to provide additional accommodation at Roxby Downs Area School
- \$200 000 to upgrade Murray Bridge Primary and Special School.

Health and Community Services

The Government is committed to enhancing and improving regional access to health services. This means providing better quality care through upgraded facilities and services, access to technology, attracting more professionals to the regions, and ensuring that workers in the regions are encouraged and supported in staying. Regional South Australians will also continue to benefit from improved access to health services through the Government's strong desire to increase information technology opportunities for hospitals, doctors and service providers.

The Government is committed to working with the Federal Government in improving health outcomes for regional South Australians, and many of the regional initiatives and priorities for 2000-01 will be jointly funded. Specific funding in the 2000-01 Budget that will be targeted to continue and help improve access to health care of people living in rural and regional South Australia, totals \$286.7 million, comprising \$282.4 million in operating expenditure, and \$11.95 million in capital funding to upgrade and improve health facilities over two years (\$4.39 million in 2000-01).

Disability services will be significantly increased in South Australian in 2000-01 by an additional \$6 million. It is estimated that approximately one-third of this funding will be applied to regional South Australia.

The new funding will be targeted to help families caring for people with disabilities through new initiatives:

- New community accommodation places will be provided for people with disabilities who require various levels of support. This is in line with national and international trends towards supporting people with a disability living in the community.
- A new program will begin to provide families with a range of respite options, including in-home support. In addition, there will be new funds to expand recreation and day activity opportunities for people with disabilities, building on the successful “Moving On” program.
- The additional State funds will complement programs supported by the new Commonwealth allocation for carers who are ageing or who have been caring for an adult child for many years.

Other key features to continue current services and improve services include:

- \$10.3 million in care for older people through aged care, palliative care and domiciliary care services
- \$10.15 million recurrent funding for community health
- \$226.4 million recurrent funding for admitted patient services in regional hospitals and emergency transport (including Royal Flying Doctor Service)
- \$23.8 million for non-admitted patient services covering accident and emergency, physiotherapy, podiatry, etc

In terms of Family and Youth Services there is:

- \$4.521 million recurrent funding to ensure care and protection of children under guardianship
- \$2.26 million to provide a range of anti-poverty programs and services to people who are in impoverished circumstances or experiencing financial disadvantage
- \$5.727 million to promote well-being of young people and families, and strengthen the capacity to break the poverty circle
- \$2.06 million to provide responses to young people in the juvenile justice system to ensure rehabilitation in the community
- \$301 000 to facilitate community development activities through primary support in the community.

The Department of Human Services is committed to upgrading regional facilities through its capital investment program to improve services to rural residents. In 2000-01 funding is allocated to begin, progress and complete a range of works in regional areas including:

- \$1.86 million to provide electric beds in country facilities
- \$90 000 to finalise the upgrade of the Jamestown Aged Care Facilities
- \$10 000 to complete the upgrade of the Millicent Hospital
- \$410 000 to complete the redevelopment of the South Coast Hospital
- \$13 000 to complete the Waikerie Aged Care project
- \$1.076 million to continue to develop the Wakefield Aged Care facility.

A Safer Community

The State Government recognises the importance of maintaining a safe working and living environment within regional South Australia.

The Government will continue to prevent and reduce crime through prevention and early intervention strategies in partnership between police and local communities with priority placed on domestic violence, violent crime, neighborhood watch programs and local crime prevention committees. South Australia, including our regional areas, will maintain its pre-eminent role in crime prevention and develop innovative policing strategies.

Regional areas also have a particular need to ensure that emergency services are able to be used as needed without unnecessary delay.

Expenditure on emergency services across South Australia will be maintained while the amount to be collected from regional areas by the Emergency Services Levy will be reduced.

The budget contains a range of new and expanded initiatives which will deliver to regional people a safer place to live. Key features include:

- \$54.5 million to provide a full range of police services in regional areas; currently some 760 personnel are employed by the South Australian Police throughout regional areas
- \$22.39 million for custodial services at regional prisons and \$3.31 million for community-based offender supervision at regional community correction centres
- \$1.7 million for the provision of court services
- \$500 000 to provide legal support services
- \$14.61 million for fire service incident management and prevention
- \$1.04 million for State Emergency Service incident management and prevention
- \$12.5 million for the provision of emergency and elective ambulance services throughout rural South Australia; Emergency Ambulance Services from 86 stations located around rural South Australia, and training and administrative support in support of associated ambulance services at ten other South Australian communities are provided by 168 officers and approximately 1300 volunteer officers crew ambulances in regional South Australia
- \$800 000 to continue recruiting and training support to volunteer ambulance officers who operate from 69 country locations; this includes an additional \$100 000 provided in 2000-01 to update and upgrade the existing volunteer ambulance officer program to achieve national accreditation at Certificate IV level
- \$200 000 to continue to develop ambulance officers towards attaining paramedic level of qualification which should enable four additional paramedics over the next two years; currently paramedics operate from larger rural centres however, paramedic service is actively progressed into neighbouring communities in support of volunteer response
- \$50 000 to continue an ambulance service strategy that supports and resources attendance by rural medical practitioners at local incidents of trauma
- \$60 000 to review and develop continuing education programs for full-time ambulance officers in rural localities with a view to identifying old qualifications and upgrading them to improve the general level of ambulance service provision
- \$1.3 million to administer and enforce relevant occupational health and safety, industrial relations and public safety issues regionally.

The Budget also contains initiatives to improve equipment and facilities for justice and safety in the regions:

- \$1.35 million to redevelop the Port Lincoln Prison and Cadell Training Centre

- \$780 000 to upgrade electronic security at Port Augusta Prison
- \$9.41 million to upgrade regional fire appliances
- \$4.11 million to upgrade fire service facilities in regional areas
- \$860 000 to upgrade SES rescue appliances
- \$600 000 to upgrade SES stations within regional areas
- \$1.11 million to upgrade and develop ambulance station facilities throughout rural South Australia
- \$4.0 million to upgrade ambulance fleet and rotate vehicles to achieve most economic deployment. It is anticipated that a minimum of 12 new Ford F350 modular ambulances will be introduced to rural localities throughout 2000-01.

Health and Related Infrastructure in Indigenous Communities

The Government will advance Aboriginal reconciliation by encouraging greater understanding between all Australians, and by recognising the special needs of Aboriginal communities, especially in health and education. Priority is placed on achieving improved health and life expectancy for Aboriginal people, and ensuring that mainstream services are more responsive to and accountable for the care, well-being and needs of Aboriginal people.

The budget also delivers funding to ensure active assistance will be provided to Aboriginal communities to develop a range of sound economically viable partnerships and business enterprises that create employment opportunities, increase prosperity and social well-being outcomes for Aboriginal people. Support is provided through Aboriginal community involvement programs which help provide training and infrastructure to support employment in the communities. Key features include:

- \$5.9 million to continue to promote self-determination and self-management for Aboriginal people in achieving improved health outcomes for Aboriginal communities
- \$3.5 million to undertake essential service maintenance (water, power and sewerage) which includes a \$300 000 increase in funding to accommodate price increases in fuel and a one-off \$500 000 to reduce the backlog in maintenance
- \$1.01 million to increase the number of apprenticeships available to Aboriginal people and to expand the range of sustainable employment opportunities that assist their community.
- \$600 000 to undertake road maintenance at Anangu Pitjantjatjara
- \$615 000 in Land Holding Authority funding to enable Aboriginal communities to own land for communal benefit
- \$130 000 to coordinate and provide advice on Regional Aboriginal Visitor schemes
- \$50 000 to encourage Aboriginal enterprise development
- \$100 000 for site verifications, conservation and protection of Aboriginal heritage.

Stronger Communities

The Government is committed to helping regional communities develop and enhance their capacity to determine their own future. This will be achieved through support for leadership development, demonstration of best practice community economic development, grants for community events and the development of enterprising communities.

In addition, the Government is working to improve the delivery of its services and information provision, with better coordination and less duplication between agencies and between the tiers of government. Measures funded within this budget include:

- \$45 000 for Rural Leadership Development to provide leadership training for rural South Australians
- \$180 000 over three years matched by the Local Government Association to develop a Community Builders program in regional South Australia—a grass roots action learning process to encourage and empower regional residents to become involved in discovering and building their community and its economy; eight clusters of communities spread geographically across the State are expected to complete the program in 2000-01
- \$3.0 million for the introduction of a new scheme, known as High Performance Enterprising Communities (HPEC), to be applied across regional South Australia; the HPEC model seeks to integrate many local practices into a holistic community based development approach and aims to promote best practice by demonstrating how education and training provision can be linked to growth industries, the local economy and new civic initiatives that offer young people employment
- \$60 000 to increase awareness of international and national examples of best practice in regional development to help build ideas and capacity within communities, through road-shows, study tours, information provision and forums
- \$1.05 million funding as grants for various community events such as Centenary of Federation
- \$100 000 to provide practical assistance for rural councils in the development of Local Government frameworks.

Arts and Culture

All people in regional South Australia need improved opportunities to engage in cultural and leisure activities. These activities are significant in fostering a sense of community and in developing the creative skills of people in regional South Australia.

Arts in regional South Australia are enjoying record levels of activity and this budget contains increased funding to improve cultural facilities to enhance opportunities to expand cultural touring programs. Funding includes:

- \$4.26 million funding to Country Arts SA for the provision of art and cultural services across South Australia, and support the operation of regional theatres
- \$105 000 contribution to the Barossa Music Festival
- \$100 000 contribution to the regional touring program
- \$200 000 for the provision of youth theatre and festivals
- \$130 000 contribution for Main Street theatre performances
- \$1.69 million funding for 29 public libraries
- \$490 000 funding to improve the level of library services in 48 school communities
- \$70 000 funding for the Public Library Access Information Network at eleven community information sites
- \$150 000 for general upgrade of cultural facilities

- \$150 000 towards a multi-purpose arts centre at Port Lincoln
- \$900 000 to continue Regional Facilities grants to develop and upgrade recreation and sport facilities in regional communities; as a contribution to investments being made by communities themselves, the grants are provided to sporting organisations, local councils and schools for the development of facilities
- \$650 000 contribution to the improvement of regional museums.

Housing

The Government aims to provide adequate and sustainable low-cost housing for regional South Australians in need. It also has a role to play in facilitating housing to meet the needs of industry development within the regions and to provide housing services for public employees in regional areas. Continued recurrent expenditure includes:

- \$46.65 million to provide a range of housing related services to people in need, provided through nine regional offices
- \$15.072 million to satisfy housing needs of Government employees within the regions.

4. SUPPORTING BUSINESS AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Small Business

The vitality of small business is important for the State's economy but is even more important in the regions. Almost a quarter of South Australia's small businesses operate in rural areas and they are the key to jobs and prosperity. All government agencies now focus on the needs of small business through the development of Small Business Charters. In addition, the Government contributes to support the Small Business Advisory Council and the Small Business Advocate to address problems that small business has with government agencies.

The budget continues funding to support the development of small business through:

- \$520 000 funding for Regional Development Boards to each employ a business adviser
- \$2.36 million contribution to the core operational and administrative funding for the state's 14 Regional Development boards.
- \$750 000 for various new initiatives for the Regional Development Board Framework
- \$700 000 to the Department of Industry and Trade's Regional Development Team to help facilitate with business the retention and creation of jobs and generation of investment in regions
- \$60 000 funding for two regional development boards to employ an officer in remote locations
- \$50 000 to conduct a training needs analysis in the Southern Fleurieu Peninsula to assess the requirements of companies and develop courses in association with TAFE and other training providers
- \$764 400 to provide an extensive range of consumer protection and business licensing services through three regional offices
- \$2.9 million to provide land valuation services from seven regional locations
- \$16.0 million to reduce the bowser cost of petroleum fuels for all users in regional South Australia.

Farm Businesses

Agricultural pursuits are the most common enterprises in the regions of South Australia and account for \$3 billion gross value of production and about 60 per cent of the State's exports. The State has a Food Plan which aims to increase the value of the food industry to \$15 billion by 2010 and agricultural development is critical to achieving this objective.

Agriculture underpins the economies of most regional towns and cities, is the largest employer, and has the most significant environmental impact and responsibility.

Terms of trade for exports have continued to decline for most commodities and communities have felt the effects of efficiencies achieved through larger scale production units, higher levels of mechanisation, specialised enterprises, as well as global downturn in demand for some products such as wool and cereals.

The State Government remains committed to facilitating adjustment and enhancing the competitiveness of the farm business sector through:

- \$3.6 million for animal health industry development services and facilitating compliance with minimum meat industry standards
- \$780 000 for cattle and intensive animal industry development services
- \$1.14 million for field crops industry development services
- \$670 000 for fruit, vegetables and ornamentals industry development services
- \$300 000 for grape industry development services
- \$1.64 million to facilitate plant health compliance and quarantine
- \$440 000 for sheep industry development services
- \$500 000 to develop and construct a new Farmer Information Centre
- \$500 000 over four years to coordinate the planning and management of training, education and industry development for South Australia's sheep industries
- \$30 000 to establish mechanisms to increase the economic and ecological sustainability of the rangelands
- \$1.0 million to provide assistance to income affected farmers in the Central North East to develop long-term viable and more resilient farming enterprises
- \$100 000 contribution to enable development of a strategic plan for the Southern Rangelands to increase the economic viability of the region
- \$155 000 to provide a range of human services which increase the effectiveness and autonomy of primary producers
- reducing the amount required from primary producers for the Emergency Services Levy

Mineral Resources

Resource Development is a major platform for the economic development of South Australia. The Government's response to the Resources Task Force Report (the Mineral Resources Plan) identified that it is critical to stimulate industry growth and elevate private investment in South Australia. The Task Force vision is to double the output and the real value of the minerals sector to the state's economy by 2020 in order to achieve \$4 billion in minerals output annually. Estimates for the minerals industry are that 7670 new jobs will be directly generated, with flow-on effects to the rest of the economy. Most of the direct jobs will be in regional South Australia.

Measures funded within this budget include:

- \$3.48 million to undertake research and scientific investigations to demonstrate the prospectivity of South Australia to potential investors
- \$3.0 million to implement the Mineral Resources Plan
- \$1.2 million to ensure mining operations and quarries are operated in accordance with legislation
- \$600 000 to develop long term solutions to environmental issues at Brukunga mine site
- \$400 000 to administer the Petroleum Acts to sustain development in the regions.

Industry and Enterprise Improvement

Sustainable new employment opportunities and wealth will only be created in regional areas by expanding existing industry segments, increasing strategic industry investment, facilitating a diversification of the industry base, and stimulating the services sector through tourism and inter-industry linkages.

While the Government has a whole of State approach to industry and enterprise improvement, there are specific initiatives funded to help improve access to these opportunities in the regions. Key features include:

- \$77.9 million to manage South Australia's plantation forest resources and provide softwood logs to the South Australian sawmilling industry
- \$400 000 for an Industry and Enterprise Improvement Program to ensure that regional firms are ideally positioned to take advantage of emerging opportunities arising from the Adelaide to Darwin rail link
- \$80 000 funding for four Export Development officers to be co-located with Regional Development Boards in partnership with Austrade
- \$100 000 to expand the level of Department of Industry and Trade services provided across regional South Australia
- \$150 000 to prepare investment briefs describing industry value adding opportunities in the regions
- \$155 000 to move the Food for the Future—Partners for Growth initiative into full scale implementation building on the success of demonstration projects developed in 1999-2000
- \$1.7 million to manage and improve farmed seafood techniques which includes a range of programs including Regional Advisory Services, Shellfish Quality Assurance and the implementation of sustainable farm management practices
- \$920 000 to interact with appropriate reference groups and seek to maximise local content in the construction phases of the Adelaide to Darwin rail link project
- \$80 000 contribution to the Upper Spencer Gulf Implementation Team to work collaboratively toward a common vision and long-term strategies to achieve sustainable economic growth in the Upper Spencer Gulf. A key initiative in 2000-01 will be to support a business cluster development.

Research and Development

Research and development plays a major role in improving the international competitiveness of our industries. An Innovation, Science and Technology Policy has recently been released and establishes a Innovation, Science and Technology Council to develop an innovation culture and knowledge-based enterprises. This will be achieved through commercialisation of research and development, leveraging the power of digital technology, networking regional partnerships, incubation and cluster development.

The State Government remains committed to funding research and development and enhancing the competitiveness of the farm sector through:

- \$5.0 million to fisheries and aquaculture research programs
- \$3.6 million to support field crops research

- \$2.4 million to support horticulture research and development
- \$4.87 million to livestock, pasture and sustainable resources research.

Infrastructure Building

World class infrastructure is an essential pre-condition for industry development and economic growth. Providing and maintaining infrastructure are key factors in regional development.

The State Government recognises that improving regional infrastructure, such as electricity and water headworks, and ports and maintaining government buildings provides major benefits to regional communities and to businesses. In particular, Government continues to support the Country Water Quality Improvement Program with stage 2 proposing a further improvement to country water quality, estimated to cost in the order of \$36 million to be implemented over seven years.

The 2000-01 Budget delivers on building regional infrastructure through:

- \$5.5 million for the Regional Development Infrastructure Fund targeting areas where infrastructure requirements are an impediment to industry development
- \$630 000 to work collaboratively with industry to identify strategic economic physical infrastructure needs and opportunities, predominantly in regional areas
- \$6.41 million to operate and replace electrical power generation equipment and distribution systems and subsidise electrical power generation costs in remote areas
- \$48.0 million to enable water storage, treatment and distribution for domestic, commercial and industrial purposes
- \$9.0 million to augment water supply headworks to maintain an adequate supply to areas south of the Onkaparinga River and the Fleurieu Peninsula, including the Victor Harbor–Goolwa area
- \$6.0 million for a new water treatment plant to serve Mount Pleasant, Springton and Eden Valley with improved water quality using new magnetic ion exchange technology
- \$2.0 million to replace domestic water meters which exceed their economic and engineered life
- \$300 000 to undertake cathode protection to prevent corrosion and extend the life of steel water mains
- \$200 000 to undertake upgrading works to ensure that current dam management guidelines are met
- \$5.4 million to continue rehabilitation of the Loxton Irrigation Area
- \$5.0 million to provide lining and covering of water storage at Redbanks, Upper Paskerville, Upper Wakefield and various tank pipe work modifications
- \$850 000 to undertake port infrastructure maintenance and hydrographic services
- \$2.51 million to provide mooring, navigational and pilotage services to port users
- \$1.51 million to undertake jetty improvements at Port Giles and Wallaroo
- \$430 000 to undertake improvements to Thevenard Wharf
- \$2.54 million to undertake a harbour upgrade at Cape Jervis

- \$20 000 for navigation aid improvements at Port Lincoln
- \$250 000 to upgrade cargo facilities at Port Pirie
- \$22.39 million will be used to partly fund office accommodation and maintenance for government-owned buildings in regional areas.

Tourism

Tourism is one of only a few broad scale industries with the power to generate employment and investment in rural and regional areas. The South Australian Government has set as a priority the development and marketing of the regions.

South Australian tourism has experienced strong growth, strongly aided by the SA Secrets advertising and promotional campaign. For example, in the past 12 months, holiday packages for the major domestic airlines increased by around 30 per cent and Kangaroo Island Sealink increased by 33 per cent from Sydney and 31 per cent from Melbourne.

A plan has been produced in conjunction with the regions to guide tourist investment decisions by both public and private sectors.

Responding to the needs of the regions the South Australian Tourism Commission (SATC) has carried out a regional tourism review to step up development and marketing of regional South Australia. To this end, SATC has restructured its Regional Marketing Unit and set up a new Sector Development Group and an expanded Business Development Group. Measures in this budget include:

- \$2.74 million to fund major tourism projects and infrastructure
- \$1.0 million to continue the Minor Infrastructure Fund which provides \$ for \$ assistance (up to \$50 000 per project) for the development of supporting tourism infrastructure including boardwalks, lookouts, and additional accommodation
- \$537 000 to continue the Tourist Road Grant Program which provides \$ for \$ assistance to councils for the upgrading of minor roads of tourism significance
- \$10 000 for the development of a Tourism Optimisation Management Model for Kangaroo Island
- \$2.5 million on regional tourism marketing which supports the 12 tourism regions
- \$600 000 to support regional festivals and events
- \$175 000 to upgrade the role and capability of visitor information centres
- \$160 000 to develop and market key tourism product
- \$2.0 million to develop roads on Kangaroo Island.

Understanding Our Regions

A comprehensive understanding of regional issues, economic performance and directions is a powerful tool for regions in marketing their strength and opportunities to investors.

The Government is committed to understanding the needs and priorities of people in regional areas and fostering the development of regional South Australia. The future cohesion and prosperity of the State is dependent to a great extent on the economic, cultural and social well-being of regional communities. There is also a need for greater acknowledgment of the

contribution made by regional areas to the State's economic and social development and stronger marketing of the potential for development.

South Australia's regional communities and towns are the home of many a success story. The Government will recognise these successes through a comprehensive regional promotions program and will further strengthen relations with regional areas through the formation of the Regional Development Council and Office of Regional Development. Key features include:

- \$75 000 to produce regional profiles of each of the state's regions
- \$300 000 to improve communication of the Government's regional initiatives with the quarterly production of Regional Directions supplements for 27 regional newspapers
- \$60 000 sponsorship to SA Great to include a Regional Awards program within its successful SA Great Awards
- \$150 000 to develop 26 episodes of Directions for South Australia focusing on industry achievements in regional South Australia
- \$60 000 to create a welcome message at the gateways to the State with a display of pride at State borders and regional towns
- \$80 000 to run a program of country field days
- \$740 000 to fund the operations of the Office of Regional Development and Regional Development Council to be a voice for regions within Government
- \$120 000 for Community meetings to encourage regional issues and priorities to be presented to senior Ministers.

Native Title

The Government is working closely with Aboriginal people, the Aboriginal Legal Rights Movement, the South Australian Farmers Federation and the SA Chamber of Mines and Energy to explore whether Indigenous Land Use Agreements can be developed as an alternative to resolving native title issues through the courts. If successful, this will allow for native title issues to be resolved sooner and at lower cost, resulting in greater certainty about land use and a more positive climate for future relationships.

In this budget the Government has allocated \$6.89 million to enable greater harmony and understanding in all areas of the South Australian community with regard to access to land and its resources which may be subject to a native title claim.

5. MAKING THE CONNECTIONS

Better Communications

Communications are not only an essential tool for business, they also provide vital social and educational links for rural and remote areas. Providing effective regional telecommunications infrastructure and access to information technology and the Internet for regional communities will have enormous benefits. At present, regional and remote areas of South Australia have highly variable coverage and, where available, it is often at relatively high cost.

One of the key goals of the Government is to involve regional South Australia in the information economy. The recently established Pathways SA program has given regional South Australia faster and more affordable Internet access and therefore the tools to become more competitive in the national and global economy.

The budget contains initiatives designed to ensure that South Australia's communications and information technology sectors continue to take up the opportunities offered by new technologies, to create new employment, educational, social and entertainment opportunities — regardless of where people live. Initiatives specifically for regional areas include:

- \$1.03 million to support the “Networks for You” initiative which will support community centres across the State so that regional and rural South Australians can access Internet tuition and resources in their area; the awareness and skills development programs will be tailored for groups such as farmers, tuna fishermen, seniors, opal miners, tourism operators
- \$43.0 million to extend the Government's Radio Communication Network to regional areas and enhance access to emergency services through an effective, integrated, whole of State communication system for message and data transmission
- \$80 000 to continue to provide on-going facilitation and coordination for the Commonwealth Regional Telecommunications Infrastructure Fund
- \$200 000 to conduct a detailed audit and analysis of regional telecommunications infrastructure in regional South Australia.

Efficient Transport

The State Government is committed to improve South Australia's transport system to maintain accessibility, that is access to markets, access to services (eg education, health) and access to social networks (eg friends, family, clubs). The Government's role in the provision of access is of increased importance in regional South Australia. Moreover, the State's transport system plays an integral role in the economic viability of regional South Australia's many industries.

The 2000-01 Budget provides funding for initiatives designed to ensure that South Australia's transport system maintains a competitive environment through:

- \$50 million as the initial tranche of a \$125 million contribution to the construction of the Adelaide to Darwin rail link to enable more direct and commercially attractive access to South East Asia
- \$3.35 million to reimburse concessions provided to students, pensioners and seniors with concessional travel on regional bus services

- \$900 000 in operating subsidies to the providers of regular bus passenger services in six provincial cities
- \$650 000 to provide community passenger networks in rural areas, including \$350 000 additional funding in 2000-01
- \$150 000 to undertake marketing and training initiatives to support current route service operators including:
 - country bus stop information
 - marketing assistance
 - improved linkages with regional tourism
- \$6.18 million to undertake maintenance on outback roads
- \$50 000 to develop a strategy for the development of regional airports
- \$6.15 million to operate ferries
- \$3.3 million for grants to councils for recreational boating projects and maintenance of fishing facilities
- \$3.9 million to provide customer services for driver licensing and vehicle registration
- \$4.722 million to provide public information, strategic planning and good land management eg land rehabilitation
- \$33.15 million to undertake routine and periodic maintenance of arterial roads
- \$2.2 million to upgrade and seal standard strategic local roads
- \$4.850 million to continue the sealing of all rural arterial roads by 2004, with the Swan Reach to Purnong, Lock to Elliston, and Hawker to Orroroo roads to be completed next
- \$2.48 million to upgrade tourist roads in the Flinders Ranges
- \$3.95 million to jointly, with the local council, construct and seal Gomersal Road from Sheoak Log into the Barossa Valley
- \$4.54 million to construct the Hindmarsh Island Bridge
- \$380 000 to widen seal on Lincoln Highway south of Cowell
- \$6.38 million to undertake minor works on road infrastructure
- \$13.18 million to undertake major works, safety and urgent minor works on national highways
- \$1.88 million to upgrade the Noarlunga to Cape Jervis Road
- \$340 000 to upgrade the Noarlunga to Victor Harbor Road
- \$1.49 million to construct overtaking lanes across the principal state arterial roads in rural areas
- \$1.7 million to upgrade the Wallaroo to Port Wakefield, Wallaroo to Kadina, and Kulpara to Port Wakefield Road section
- \$700 000 to upgrade the Warnertown to Peterborough (via Jamestown) freight route for A-trains to allow further productivity gains for heavy vehicle transport, with cost benefits to farmers and regional areas
- \$500 000 to initiate a Rural Road Safety Program.

In addition, the Department of Administrative and Information Services (DAIS) coordinates the supply of vehicles and goods to government agencies in country areas. Whenever possible, DAIS utilises regional/rural dealers for provision of products. Direct costs include:

- \$15.2 million to supply vehicles
- \$220 000 for short-term hire vehicle pool services
- \$1.8 million for the Whyalla Warehouse which provides and sells a wide range of goods to government agencies, schools, hospitals and benevolent institutions in the northern region of the State.

6. PROTECTING OUR NATURAL RESOURCES

National Parks and Wildlife

The Parks Agenda Program is making a significant contribution to the condition of parks by eradicating pest plants and animals. The Government also continues to upgrade tourism infrastructure in key parks.

A framework for the conservation of our natural landscapes and species of plants and animals have commenced with development of the State's first Regional Biodiversity Plan, focusing in the first instance on the South East. Other major biodiversity programs underway include:

- Flinders Ranges Bounceback, linking feral animal control, natural recovery processes, weed control, revegetation and recovery of endangered species such as the yellow-footed rock-wallaby
- Ark on Eyre, involving the protection and restoration of wildlife and habitats on Eyre Peninsula, and recovery and reintroduction of endangered species such as the bilby, brush-tailed bettong, stick-nest rat and mallee fowl
- relocation of the State Herbarium to the new Plant Biodiversity Centre as the key facility for knowledge and information on South Australian flora.

Awareness of conservation will also be boosted through outstanding national parks and by creating opportunities for nature-based tourism in South Australia. Key budget features include:

- \$42.0 million to manage South Australia's national parks and reserves to achieve a comprehensive, adequate and representative reserve system, including the provision of visitor education and information services
- \$1.8 million spread over three years to undertake critical maintenance of park assets across the State, predominantly in key visitation parks
- \$3.53 million to continue the Parks Agenda Program with major upgrades to Seal Bay visitor facility, Waitpinga boardwalk, Coorong National Park day visitor facility and Rocky River precinct redevelopment
- up to \$900 000 to continue development of walking trails at Newland Head and surrounds
- \$200 000 to establish infrastructure assets including roads, fences, visitor facilities in the recently proclaimed Gawler Ranges National Park
- \$330 000 to complete an audit and upgrade assets for Heysen and Mawson trails
- \$100 000 to develop community based trails in regional South Australia
- \$300 000 to complete the Riesling Trail between Clare and Auburn.

Water Resources

The Government has demonstrated commitment to the protection of the State's Water Resources by drawing together the key water-related activities into one water resources portfolio, to achieve a strong, consistent and collaborative focus on all water issues.

The Government has also taken an active, leading role in relation to the proposed corporatisation of the Snowy Mountains Hydro-Electric Scheme to ensure that South Australia's

existing rights to the quantity, quality and security of the River Murray flows under the Murray–Darling Basin Agreement and the current legislation for the scheme are protected.

In recognition of the significance and complexity of the Council of Australian Governments' Strategic Water Reform framework, a national steering group on water involving representatives from all states has been convened, with South Australia taking a lead role.

A revised State Water Plan is due to be released in August 2000. This will provide greater certainty to sustainable resources and developer property rights. It will provide parameters for catchment water management plans and local water management plans to ensure consistent management of South Australian water resources.

Major budget initiatives include:

- \$1.405 million to provide advice and monitor compliance of licensees in line with the *Water Resources Act 1997*
- \$1.932 million for technical groundwater resource assessments to develop options for their sustainable management
- \$721 000 to coordinate and undertake surface and groundwater assessments including an additional \$500 000 to undertake an assessment of groundwater sustainability in the South East
- \$590 000 to operate and maintain hydrometric stations across the State
- \$329 000 to maintain baseline data within the State Groundwater Database to determine trends
- \$80 000 to undertake a technical investigation of opportunities to utilise wastewater streams
- \$274 000 to develop a legislatively based catchment management regime to ensure the long-term future of the Lake Eyre Basin
- \$9.0 million to provide reticulated sewerage services for domestic, commercial and industrial properties with treatment, disposal and reuse of water
- \$3.0 million to improve the level of treatment of wastewater at the Victor Harbor Treatment Plant to reduce the levels of nutrients discharged
- \$650 000 to replace unserviceable water meters in the irrigation areas of the Murraylands
- \$330 000 to implement the findings of the South East Select Committee on Water Allocations
- \$1.0 million to provide a ground water pumping and drain disposal scheme for sustainable horticulture and River Murray salinity improvement
- \$4.1 million to design and construct drainage works to alleviate land degradation due to dry land salinity in the Upper South East
- \$400 000 to examine rehabilitation options for industry development and improvement of irrigation management in the Lower Murray.

Fisheries

The fishing industry is based mainly in regional South Australia. Therefore regional input to policy making as well as a regional presence of regulatory officers is essential for the

management of fishery stocks, market development and product quality. The State Government continues to support the State's fishing industry through the allocation of \$2.3 million together with cost recovery from the commercial sector.

7. PLANNING THE FUTURE

Sustainable Natural Resource Management

The future success of our primary industries depends upon conserving biodiversity, rehabilitating ecosystems and providing stewardship for our natural resources. Biodiversity conservation projects also support production and employment in regional and rural South Australia. Projects include Natural Heritage Trust Programs, Land for Wildlife, Flinders Ranges Bounceback, Ark on Eyre, Regional Biodiversity Planning and Threatened Species Management programs. Key features include:

- \$17.0 million to improve natural resource management planning and adoption of practices by primary industries
- \$1.4 million to provide State-wide information to support the sustainable resource management of primary industries
- \$550 000 to provide a regulatory framework to support the sustainable resource management of primary industries.

Planning Land Use

The State's planning and assessment system has a central role to play in ensuring that new industries, services and infrastructure can develop to meet the changing needs of rural business and communities. Better development controls have a key role to play in delivering increased certainty to the developer and the community about the location and design of development. In turn, this can make regions considerably more attractive as places to invest with particular benefits in attracting intensive agricultural activities and a variety of value-added rural industries. Measures in this budget include:

- \$350 000 to update the country section of the Planning Strategy
- \$1.7 million to undertake assessment of development applications in rural areas
- \$750 000 to provide proponents and the community with an integrated clear and effective development assessment framework
- \$400 000 to increase access to quality and timely information, data analysis, research and forecasting to support regional planning and environmental management decisions
- \$110 000 to provide partial funding grants to councils to undertake suitable projects to better define the role of centres and promote a broader range of functions within regional centres/zones
- \$350 000 for partial grants for projects that provide passive recreational opportunities which contribute to the presentation, enhancement and enjoyment of open space areas.

