

BOARD OF TREASURERS

COMMUNIQUE

Friday 30 November 2018

ALL AUSTRALIANS BENEFIT FROM IMPROVED CO-OPERATION BETWEEN STATE TREASURERS

Today at Uluru in the Northern Territory, Australia's state and territory (state) Treasurers reconfirmed their commitment to provide a single voice for the benefit and wellbeing of all Australian citizens. In its first year of operation, the Board of Treasurers forum has enabled states to reach new levels of cooperation in federal financial affairs, strengthening their capacity to deliver the quality services that citizens deserve.

The Treasurers have established new levels of trust and goodwill through regular face-to-face discussions at the Board during 2018. They have agreed to stronger and more consistent joint positions in negotiations with the Commonwealth government in key funding areas, which has directly led to more sustainable funding arrangements for critical services.

Greater cooperation has led to positive outcomes on GST distribution. Treasurers' collaboration was crucial to obtaining the legislated guarantee that states would be no worse off under the Commonwealth's GST distribution reforms during the transition period to 2026-27 and that the Productivity Commission would review the reforms by 2026. The Board's joint considerations of education reforms under Gonski 2.0 are also working to drive a fairer and more consistent recognition of states' existing funding efforts, which will further support efforts to achieve better educational outcomes for our children.

Early efforts by the Board this year also aligned approaches among many states to the taxation of online gambling, delivering a simpler regime for the industry and demonstrating Treasurers' ability to work together in areas of common interest.

Topics discussed today included: productivity reforms related to infrastructure investment, planning approval times, data sharing for better service delivery, mutual recognition of occupational licences and reducing the payroll tax administration burden; working with the Commonwealth on population policy; developing consultation criteria to guide future national health funding negotiations; the risks to

state revenue from the digital economy; the impact of new accounting standards on state debt, joint strategies to increase tax compliance among labour hire firms, and GST treatment of Commonwealth payments.

Treasurers also considered the report and recommendations of Mr John Azarias, following his review of the Board's governance and structure. The NSW Treasurer formally handed over the rotating chairmanship of the Board to the Treasurer of South Australia who will lead the forum in 2019.

State and Territory attendees: The Hon Dominic Perrottet, NSW Treasurer; The Hon Tim Pallas, VIC Treasurer; Mr Andrew Barr, ACT Chief Minister & Treasurer, The Hon Nicole Manison; NT Treasurer. By Phone: The Hon Rob Lucas, SA Treasurer; The Hon Ben Wyatt, WA Treasurer; The Hon Peter Gutwein, TAS Treasurer. Apologies: The Hon Jackie Trad, QLD Treasurer, was engaged in urgent meetings about the unfolding Queensland bushfires and unable to attend.

Board of Treasurers' webpage: www.treasury.nsw.gov.au/board-treasurers