

NSW Budget 2024-25

Tara Moriarty

Minister for Regional New South Wales
Minister for Western New South Wales

Media Release

Tuesday, 18 June 2024

A plan to strengthen regional communities

The Minns Labor Government's second Budget has delivered a suite of new initiatives to support regional NSW.

The NSW Government has been working on a comprehensive plan which focuses on taking pressure off NSW households and understands how people want to live, while working to provide better services like healthcare and education – no matter where in the State you live.

NSW continues to face strong economic headwinds, and the former Government's legacy of leaving the largest debt in the State's history, which is why this is a Budget that continues to responsibly reduce debt.

This Budget is a blueprint for how we will build a better NSW and strengthen regional communities.

Building Homes for New South Wales

This Budget addresses the housing crisis being faced across all of New South Wales, with a priority of ensuring victim survivors of Domestic and Family Violence have access to safe and affordable housing.

This Budget delivers a historic investment of **\$6.1 billion** to build 8,400 social homes and upgrade 33,500 homes across the state.

18,255 people or 38 per cent of those seeking specialist homelessness services in 2022-23 reported family and domestic violence as the main reason they were seeking assistance – higher than any other category – but tragically close to half of those were turned away because of a lack of accommodation support.

The NSW Government will prioritise at least half of these new homes for those fleeing family and domestic violence.

Improving Health Services

The NSW Government is committed to ensuring no matter where you live in New South Wales, you have access to essential healthcare.

The 2024-25 Budget delivers **\$200.1 million** for key health worker accommodation across rural and regional New South Wales. Early assessment has identified a number of possible future locations including in Lismore, Eurobodalla, Tweed Heads and Lake Cargelligo.

\$274.7 million is being invested to boost staffing at new and upgraded hospitals across the State that were left without adequate staff by the previous government, this includes the new Tweed Hospital, Bowral, Cowra, Cooma, Glenn Innes and Griffith.

This Budget also delivers **\$188.8 million** for the Bulk Billing Support Initiative, which introduces a new payroll tax rebate to medical centres in regional areas that bulk-bill over 70 per cent of eligible services.

Strengthening our education system

The NSW Government is continuing to rebuild public education across the state, to ensure every child has access to a quality, free education.

This Budget funds vital education infrastructure upgrades across regional NSW, including a new primary school and a new high school in Huntlee, a new primary school at Calderwood and a second expansion of Googong Public School.

This Budget also continues to address the chronic teacher shortage created under the former government, which is felt particularly in our rural communities with the expansion of the Priority Recruitment Support program. This program allows schools with longstanding vacancies, primarily in regional NSW, to advertise a recruitment bonus of up to \$20,000 and relocation support package of up to \$8,000.

Supporting Regional Economic Development

This Budget continues to invest in initiatives which support regional NSW being a thriving place to live, work and have a family.

An additional **\$50 million** has been allocated to the Regional Development Trust, bringing the total investment up to \$400 million.

Over **\$200 million** will be delivered to enhance digital connectivity for rural, regional and remote communities.

\$3 million has been allocated to support the vital work of regional and community newspapers.

The award-winning Holiday Break program, delivering recreational programs for young people during school holidays will also continue with an investment of **\$4 million**.

Responding to biosecurity threats

\$946 million is being spent to continue the critical role of prevention and protection against biosecurity threats.

This includes an additional **\$13.1 million** for the continuation of the Feral Pig and Pest Management Control program. Our Budget is assisting agricultural communities by strengthening our frontlines against threats and incursions plus funding advice and action on their land and waterways, including:

- **\$55.3 million** for the eradication of red imported fire ants

- **\$36.2 million** to increase the resilience and capacity of beekeepers, and other industries to manage Varroa mite
- **\$25 million** to support specialist scientific skills to boost the State's frontline surveillance and preventative capabilities to defend against biosecurity risks
- **\$6.2 million** to target White Spot disease, supporting prawn fishers, farmers and businesses
- **\$5.8 million** to continue implementing the Good Neighbour Program to tackle weed and pest infestations between neighbouring public and private lands.

Connecting regional communities

This Budget continues to deliver vital funding for regional roads and transport, to ensure the connectivity and safety of regional travellers.

Safety on our roads continues to be a priority with **\$290 million** of additional funding for the Towards Zero Safer Roads Program.

\$3.3 billion will be delivered to repair State and local roads in areas impacted by natural disasters, including the North Coast and Central West.

At the same time this Budget continues to invest in major road infrastructure, including the Coffs Harbour Bypass, Singleton Bypass, Milton Ulladulla Bypass and the M1 construction.

Infrastructure upgrades to regional roads to enable the safe and timely transport of Renewable Energy Zone Project components including preliminary planning for a logistics precinct in Newcastle are supported with a **\$128.5 million** investment.

\$1.2 billion will be invested to continue delivering a new rail fleet to improve safety, accessibility, amenities and reliability of regional train journeys.

Building better communities

This is a Budget that continues to responsibly reduce debt. A Budget which prioritises building better homes for the people of New South Wales, ensuring those who need it most, no matter where they live have access to safe and affordable housing.

This Budget makes considered investments to strengthen regional communities, with access to roads, transport, and vital essential services.

We will continue to make responsible, better choices on how and where we spend the public's money.

MEDIA: **Alastair Walton** | Minister **Moriarty** | **0418 251 229**