

10. WOMEN'S BUDGET STATEMENT

Overview

The Women's Budget Statement sets out the ACT Government's initiatives in the 2004-05 Budget that benefit women (women and girls under 18 years). This is the Stanhope Government's first Women's Budget Statement, and should be seen as part of an evolving process. The Government will seek feedback on the statement from the community and the Ministerial Advisory Council on Women over the next twelve months.

87.7% of all budget initiatives directly or indirectly benefit women.

- Initiatives directly benefiting women are defined as those meeting a specific purpose or need for them as individuals, parents, carers, students, patients, employees and employers, partners, tenants, home owners, land, property and small business owners and users of government services.
- Initiatives indirectly benefiting women are those that assist the broader community, such as road construction, bushfire reduction programs and upgrading of sport and recreation facilities.

Relevant examples of initiatives in the budget that directly or indirectly benefit women are set out in the statement.

Targeted Initiatives for Women

There are a number of initiatives that are significant to Canberra's women and worth highlighting in this statement. However, these should not be considered in isolation. Analysis of the budget has shown that the majority of the initiatives assist women in some way.

Highlights include:

- exempting private sector companies that grant employees maternity, primary care giver and adoption leave from payroll tax for those people - estimated \$0.450m in revenue foregone over four years;
- establishing a Women's Grants Program, \$0.4m over four years;
- increasing the number of specialist breast cancer nurses, \$0.654m over four years;
- extending the Aboriginal Midwifery Access Program, \$0.793m over four years; and
- funding scholarships for company directorship courses for women, \$0.040m over four years.

Encouraging maternity, primary care giver and adoption leave in the private sector

The ACT Government is providing an incentive to private sector employers to give employees' maternity, adoption and primary care giver leave.

The initiative introduces a payroll tax exemption for private sector employees who access paid maternity, primary care giver and adoption leave. This includes full time and part time

employees and is for a maximum of 14 weeks. The exemption applies to employees while they are on leave and will commence on 1 July 2005.

In implementing the initiative, the ACT will lead the country in supporting workers in the private sector with newborn babies, or those who have adopted children, and in encouraging family friendly measures. Primary care giver leave is provided for the same period as maternity leave and covers fathers, spouses, partners or any other carer.

It is estimated that over sixty percent of ACT private sector employees do not have access to maternity, adoption or primary care giver leave.

Building the capacity of women's groups and the evidence base to inform women's policy and services

In establishing the Women's Grants Program, the Government recognises that women's groups need support to build capacity, strengthen effectiveness and improve the status of women in the ACT community.

In this program, key directions relating to women will be addressed to improve the conditions, opportunities, recognition and understanding of ACT women, particularly those who are disadvantaged.

Research projects will also be funded, the outcomes of which will inform the development of Government policies and services for women.

The Ministerial Advisory Council for Women will play a key role in assisting with the allocation of grants.

Supporting Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander (ATSI) mothers

The Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Midwifery Access Program will provide continued funding for community based antenatal and postnatal care to ATSI mothers and their babies. The program is based at Winnunga Nimmityjah Aboriginal Health Service.

Increasing support for women with breast cancer

An increase in the number of specialist breast care nurses will improve support for women with breast cancer. The program will coordinate clinical and psychosocial care and advocacy for women undergoing treatment, and is designed to decrease post treatment psychological conditions.

Upgrading facilities at the Women's Health Service

Facilities at the Women's Health Service will be upgraded in response to identified areas of need. This work will improve accessibility for women with disabilities, address privacy issues for women from multicultural backgrounds who require the use of interpreters, and strengthen the security of the premises to ensure the safety of service user and staff.

Funding scholarships at the Australian Institute of Company Directors.

The Government is funding three scholarships a year for women to attend courses at the Australian Institute of Company Directors. The scholarships will enhance leadership skills and target women with disabilities, young and older women, ATSI women, and those from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds.

Initiatives in the Budget that will benefit Women

Initiatives include:

- enhanced child protection and support, \$11.796m over four years; foster care, \$1.454m over four years; additional Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander foster carers, \$0.453m over four years; after hours medical care for children at risk, \$0.288m over four years; and establishment of a Restorative Justice Unit, \$2.173m over four years;
- construction work at Weston Creek Childcare Centre, \$0.550m in 2005-06; Civic Youth Centre, \$0.645m in 2004-05; Birragai, \$2.1m in 2004-05; and minor new works at Children's, Youth and Family Services facilities and older preschools, \$0.9m and \$0.450m respectively in 2004-05;
- additional early intervention measures, \$2.657m over four years; more intensive youth justice case management, \$1.869m over four years; the Quamby upgrade, \$6.8m in 2005-06; the Messengers youth arts program, \$0.474m over four years; and nurse support at the Junction, \$0.301m over four years;
- building and upgrading at schools, \$10.7m in 2004-06; and minor new works, \$3.2m in 2004-05; and building and upgrading at the Canberra Institute of Technology, \$2m in 2004-05;
- an enhanced school students' health and fitness program, \$0.939m over four years;
- a Training Pathway Guarantee for students who have not completed their schooling, \$1.549m over four years;
- increased places for apprentices and traineeships, \$8m over four years;
- traineeships in Environment ACT for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders, \$0.685m over four years; and assistance to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students in government schools and preschools, \$1.646m and \$0.868m respectively over four years;
- capital works at the Canberra and Calvary Hospitals, \$10.095m and \$10.375m respectively in 2004-06;
- better access and increased support for hospital emergency department treatment, \$3.092m over four years; inpatient services, \$4.153m over four years; intensive care, \$11.368m over four years; general surgery, \$17.025m over four years; cataract and joint replacement, \$4.153m over four years; renal dialysis, \$4.819m over four years and \$2.2m for construction in 2004-06; cardiology, \$1.094m over four years; acute allied health, \$3.197m over four years; cancer treatment, \$2.591m over four years; and specialist breast cancer nurses, \$0.654m over four years;
- funding for peak winter demand for hospital services, \$1.260m over four years; pharmaceutical costs, \$3.249m over four years; increased ward persons, \$0.749m over four years; and appointment of pharmacist and radiologist, \$0.389m and \$0.416m respectively over four years;

- establishment of a new subacute facility at Calvary hospital for rehabilitation and psychogeriatric needs, \$22.213m over four years;
- long term care for people adversely affected by the bushfires, \$0.252m over four years;
- outreach services at Gungahlin for children and young people through the Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service, \$0.624m over four years; suicide prevention measures, \$1.373m over four years; and intensive care and treatment program for people at risk, \$3.226m in 2005-2008;
- construction projects for the Junction Youth Health Service, \$0.780m in 2004-2005; Psychiatric Secure Unit, \$1m in 2004-2005; and Crisis Assessment Treatment Team, \$0.1m in 2004-2005; and feasibility studies into a new psychiatric unit and a new forensic facility, \$0.140m in 2004-2005;
- protocols for collaborative approach for case management of injecting drug users, \$0.416m over four years; provision of dual diagnosis outreach workers for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, \$0.582m over four years; and minor capital works at the Opioid Treatment Centre, \$0.085m in 2004-2005;
- minor new capital works at the Belconnen, Phillip, Narrabundah and Dickson Health Centres, \$0.360m in 2004-2005; and the Women's Health Service, \$0.110m in 2004-2005;
- a strengthening of home based palliative care, \$0.681m over four years;
- increased numbers of community nursing and allied health officers, \$2.580m over four years;
- introduction of an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Family Support Service, \$0.312m over four years; enhancement of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Midwifery Access Program, \$0.793m over four years; hearing screening for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children, \$0.830 m over four years; and a feasibility study for a Bush Healing Centre, \$0.1m in 2004-2005;
- funding for unmet needs for people with disabilities, \$5.750m over four years; special accommodation needs support, \$2.710m over four years; relief support staff, \$2.601m over four years; extension of eligibility for the taxi subsidy scheme to young people under 16 years of age, \$0.495m over four years; additional support for government school students with disabilities, \$4.388m over four years; and minor new works at the Independent Living Centre, \$0.175m in 2004-05;
- increased services to support older people and younger people with a disability to remain at home through the Home and Community Care Program, \$3.384m over four years;
- continued operation of a residential aged care liaison nurse, \$0.341m over four years;
- initiatives that grow the community capacity of older Canberrans, address service gaps and implement positive ageing initiatives, \$1.384m over four years;
- a grants initiative to develop carers' knowledge, skills and support networks, \$0.830m over four years;
- an increase in the supply of affordable housing, \$20m over four years;
- the home buyers concession scheme, \$20.840m over four years;
- a reduction of the land tax rate, \$20.640m in foregone revenue over four years;

- an enhancement of the Canberra Emergency Accommodation Service, \$1.595m over four years;
- enhanced concession payments for electricity, water and sewerage charges, \$1.354m over four years; and emergency relief, \$0.618m over four years;
- increased police numbers and implementation of a property crime reduction strategy, \$7.7m over four years; improved street lighting, \$0.250m in 2004-2005;
- establishment of an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Justice Centre, \$1.418m over four years;
- appointment of additional correction health service staff, \$0.819m over four years;
- a unit dedicated to ACT counter terrorism response, \$1.080m over four years; and intergovernmental chemical, biological and radiological response arrangements, \$6.268m over four years;
- stronger compliance with occupational health and safety, dangerous substances, \$1.239m over four years; development of regulations and projects concerning dangerous chemicals and explosives, \$0.862m over four years; and training through Unions ACT, \$0.319m over four years;
- projects that advance the status of women and research projects that provide insights into women's issues, \$0.4m over four years;
- additional staff to help implement the Human Rights legislation, \$1.014m over four years;
- scholarships for company directorship courses for women, \$0.040m over four years;
- implementing the Canberra Spatial Plan, \$2m in 2004-2007;
- forward design on the Childers Street upgrade and the City Walk West Stage 1, \$0.6m and \$1.270m respectively in 2004-2005; and a grant to convention and exhibition facilities, \$40m in 2004-2006;
- forward design, preliminary work and construction of roads around the ACT, \$30.980m in 2004-2006; and an upgrade of the Holt Shopping Centre, \$0.9m in 2004-2006;
- construction of a community hall at Palmerston, \$1m in 2004-2005; a Multicultural Centre, \$2.591m in 2004-2005; and capital works at Exhibition Park, \$0.695m in 2004-2005; and Grant Cameron Community Centre, \$0.250m in 2004-2005;
- implementation of the Playground Safety Program, \$0.5m in 2004-2005; landscape upgrade, \$0.350m in 2004-2005; neighbourhood street and park tree replacement, \$0.350m in 2004-2005; and forward design of Harrison District playing fields, \$0.250m in 2004-2005;
- urban tree safety, \$1m over four years;
- additional peak weekday bus services from the outer suburbs, \$4.627m over four years;
- forward design work on the relocation of the Woden Bus Interchange and bus lay-bys and stops, \$0.4m and \$0.150m respectively in 2004-2005; and minor new works that include bicycle racks and making public transport more accessible, \$0.545m in 2004-2005;
- establishment and construction of the Powerhouse Glass Centre, \$1.34m over four years and \$4.175m in 2004-2005 respectively; and site selection and forward design on the Belconnen Arts Centre, \$0.2m in 2004-2005;

- support for the broader community to access and participate in the arts, \$2.050m over four years; the Public Arts Program, \$0.250m in 2004-2005; arts facilities, \$0.1m in 2004-2005; and minor new works to the Canberra Theatre, \$0.3m in 2004-2005;
- an expanded collection of materials at the new Kippax Library, \$0.220m in 2004-2005, capital works at Kippax and Belconnen Libraries, \$1m and \$0.241m respectively in 2004-2006; and the completion of the Civic Library and Link Project construction work, \$14.307m in 2004-2006;
- construction work at Manuka Oval, \$1.580m in 2004-2005; maintenance of Phillip Oval, \$0.320m over four years; general refurbishment of sporting facilities, \$1m in 2004-2005; and forward design work on the Civic Pool, \$0.070m in 2004-2005;
- digital pass keys that will provide students with an electronic identity for accessing online services, \$0.490m over four years; customer centric websites, \$0.209m over four years; additional information technology support, \$4.138m over four years; upgraded IT resources, \$3.607m over four years; and assistance with information and communication resources for non-government schools, \$2.491m over four years;
- the Clinical Information Access Project, expansion of the General Practitioners patient event notification project, electronic discharge and referral, and improvements in patient information security, \$4.984m over four years;
- continuing work on the Integrated Document Management System, \$6.449m over four years; and the development of a new ACT Government owned, private, communication data network;
- exemption of companies from payroll tax for those employees who access maternity, primary care giver and adoption leave, \$0.450m in estimated revenue foregone over four years;
- an extension of Small and Micro Business Programs, \$13.139m over four years;
- establishment of the Office of Film, Television and Digital Media, \$1.218m over four years;
- increasing tourism marketing and promotion, both domestically and internationally, \$28.2m over four years;
- restoring the Cotter Precinct, \$0.196m in 2004-2006; Tidbinbilla Reserve design and preliminary works, \$2m in 2004-06; and construction and upgrading of walking tracks and trails, \$0.5m in 2004-05;
- reducing bushfire fuel, \$2m over four years; and engaging the community with Greening Australia in the renewal and revegetation of the landscape affected by bushfires, \$0.954m in 2004-07;
- further bushfire initiatives such as Community Fire Units, \$1.108m over four years; Rapid Response Teams and rapid access equipment, \$3.108m over four years; and a Fire Management Unit, \$0.510m over four years;
- additional garbage and recycling services, \$0.532m over four years;
- implementation of the Water Resources Strategy and water efficiency measures, \$8.418m over four years; and improved catchment management to alleviate impact of the bushfires on drinking water quality, \$0.816m over four years;

- environmental projects such as the construction of the international arboretum, \$10m in 2004-06;
- measures to reduce greenhouse gases, \$1.2m over four years;
- forward design for the Sustainable Transport Initiative Stage I, \$6m in 2004-06; and
- land release programs and associated capital works, \$10.750m in 2004-06.

Conclusion

This paper has provided an outline of initiatives in ACT Budget 2004-05, which will impact on women. It demonstrates that the budget progresses the ACT Government's commitment to women in many practical ways, focusing on providing tangible support for their life circumstances and the many roles they undertake in our community.

The Government will continue to work to address the needs and improve the status of women in the ACT.

