

Delivering for the Wheatbelt



The McGowan Government is delivering for the Wheatbelt, providing cost-of-living support for Wheatbelt residents while investing significantly in health, housing, and WA's transition to cleaner, stronger, reliable, and affordable energy.

The 2023-24 Budget features a massive \$11.2 billion investment in regional infrastructure, as well as billions more in regional service delivery.

The State Budget includes \$4 billion in Royalties for Regions expenditure over the next four years, supporting important initiatives right across the regions. This includes new spending of \$358 million towards initiatives that strengthen regional communities and ensure services remain close to where people live.

Regional Western Australians will benefit from the McGowan Government's \$715 million commitment to deliver further cost-of-living relief, including **providing every WA household with a \$400 electricity credit** and additional targeted support totalling \$826 for households who need it most.

As part of its commitment to keeping power and water affordable for all Western Australians, the McGowan Government will spend \$2.7 billion over the next four years to subsidise the costs of providing water and electricity to regional residents.

Investing in Regional Health and Mental Health

- More than \$2.2 billion per annum on regional health and mental health services
- \$28.5 million for initiatives to attract and retain key health and mental health professionals, primarily to work in regional WA, including paying of up to \$12,000 of HECS-HELP loans for newly qualified nurses and midwives commencing employment in regional WA
- \$24.4 million to extend the Mental Health Emergency Telehealth Service, providing 24/7 mental health support and allowing country doctors to make referrals whenever needed
- \$8.2 million to upgrade WA Country Health Service staff housing, including safety and security upgrades
- \$6.3 million to extend regional cancer services
- \$6.7 million to continue Regional Renal Support Teams
- \$3.1 million to support the palliative care workforce and enhance end of life choices for terminally ill patients in the regions

Delivering Regional Housing

- \$61.6 million boost to Government Regional Officer Housing to refurbish existing properties and add new supply
- \$49 million to partner with community housing providers to provide 100 homes across regional WA in a supported landlord model, for people in regional WA experiencing rough sleeping
- \$450 million into the Social Housing Investment Fund to boost social housing across the State
- \$12 million over four years to deliver more development ready land throughout regional Western Australia, through the Regional Development Assistance Program

Delivering a cleaner, stronger future for the Wheatbelt

- \$2.7 billion investment to transition Western Australia's energy system for a low-carbon future, including funding for the King Rocks Wind Farm development
- Upgrades to Western Power's north and east region networks as part of a \$126 million investment to kickstart the energy grid's transition to net zero and facilitate the green energy boom
- \$77 million funding boost to manage and protect Aboriginal cultural heritage in Western Australia, including support for new Local Aboriginal Cultural Heritage Services
- \$22.2 million to assist industry transition to the mandatory sheep and goat eID system to bolster WA's animal biosecurity defences
- \$20.2 million to extend vital drought resilience initiatives helping future-proof Western Australian farms
- \$5 million to expand the WaterSmart Farms program to support small-scale desalination projects on farms in the region
- \$10.4 million to boost Western Australia's emergency animal disease preparedness following overseas outbreaks of Foot and Mouth Disease and Lumpy Skin Disease
- \$7.6 million towards the Feral Cat Strategy to bolster the management of feral cats throughout regional WA
- \$6.5 million to implement the Western Australian Aquaculture Development Plan
- \$2 million from the New Industries Fund to support regional entrepreneurs in the innovation sector
- \$20 million to continue the Regional Economic Development Grants program, to drive economic development and support regional communities

Delivering a Pipeline of Skills

- \$2.5 million to increase the travel and accommodation allowance for WA apprentices and trainees who are required to travel long distances off-the-job for their training, doubling the travel subsidy to 40c per km and increasing the accommodation allowance from \$70 to \$100 per night
- \$2.9 million to provide eligible regional Diploma of Nursing students with financial support to undertake up to 400 hours of practical placement, including an allowance of \$350 per week with a travel allowance of up to \$500 per training block in the Wheatbelt
- \$6.8 million for upgrades at Agricultural Colleges around the State, including Cunderdin and Narrogin

Plus we are continuing to deliver...

- \$10.4 million for a new Agricultural Machinery Training Centre at the Muresk Institute in Northam, under construction
- \$2.1 million for a new STEM laboratory and a primary science classroom at Merredin College, planning underway

Upgrading roads and transport networks

- A further \$407 million on regional road projects and initiatives being invested in this budget, bringing the total investment over the next four years to \$5.3 billion
- \$175 million boost to the jointly Commonwealth-State funded Regional Road Safety Program, to continue to deliver life-saving works on regional roads, which has to date sealed shoulders and installed audible edges to 1,212 kms of roads in the Wheatbelt region

Plus we are continuing to deliver...

- \$200 million for the Agricultural Supply Chain Improvement program, for freight rail upgrades including 11 rail siding upgrades, with projects currently under construction
- \$275 million for the Bindoon Bypass along Great Northern Highway, currently under construction

- \$80 million for upgrades to Toodyay Road, currently under construction
- \$250 million for upgrades to Great Eastern Highway between Coates Gully, Walgoolan to Southern Cross and Ghooli to Benari, currently under construction
- Continuing work to bring regional road maintenance jobs back in-house to Main Roads, which will see 490 jobs created across regional WA, with new depots established in Narrogin and Northam

Building Stronger, Safer Communities

- \$11.7 million to extend Operation Regional Shield, continuing to deliver police into regional communities experiencing youth crime issues
- \$11.7 million to continue the successful Target 120 youth early intervention program, including in Northam
- \$24.4 million to bolster the Department of Fire and Emergency Services natural disaster recovery team
- \$1.1 million to continue the Respectful Relationships Teaching Support Program and the provision of culturally appropriate services for victims of Family and Domestic Violence in regional areas
- \$4.9 million to continue the Regional Athlete Support Program to help regionally-based talented athletes meet their full potential
- \$700,000 to continue the Rural, Regional and Remote Network program to support regional women