

Australian Capital Territory



**ACT**  
Government

# Budget

## 2011-2012

**BUDGET PAPER NO 1:**  
Speech

# Budget Paper No 1

## Guide to the Budget Papers

### Structure and content of the 2011-2012 Budget Papers

The 2011-2012 Budget is presented in four papers plus a reader's guide.

#### **BUDGET PAPER NO. 1: Speech**

The Treasurer's speech to the Legislative Assembly highlights the Government's Budget strategies and key features of the Budget.

#### **BUDGET PAPER NO. 2: Working Smarter. Delivering More.**

A summary of the overall budgetary position together with information on the Government's expenditure priorities in key service delivery areas.

#### **BUDGET PAPER NO. 3: Budget Overview**

Summarises the 2011-2012 Budget and forward estimates for the general government sector, the public trading enterprise sector and the total Territory Government. Details of the projected 2011-2012 Budget results are provided, as well as background information on the development of the 2011-2012 Budget, including economic conditions and federal financial relations.

Also provides an overview of the Territory's infrastructure investment program and details of the 2011-2012 expenditure, revenue and capital initiatives.

The Appropriation Bill 2011-2012 is appended.

#### **BUDGET PAPER NO. 4: Budget Estimates**

Information on each directorate and Territory authority and corporation is provided. This includes output classes (where relevant), descriptions of functions, roles and responsibilities, together with major strategic priorities. Full accrual financial statements and notes are provided for the general government sector as well as details of the Territory's public trading enterprises.

### Reader's Guide to the Budget

The guide provides readers of the Budget Papers with useful information to assist in understanding and interpreting the Budget.

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# Working Smarter. Delivering More.

Mr Speaker, it is my pleasure to present the 2011-12 ACT Budget – my third Budget as the ACT Treasurer.

The Budget is focused on meeting our commitments to the community, increasing frontline services experiencing demand pressures, and supporting those in our community who need additional support.

This is a disciplined Budget. It carefully manages our growing costs, seeks to improve the efficiency of government services whilst meeting areas of increasing demand, and continues the record investments in the Territory's essential infrastructure.

Mr Speaker, this has been a tough Budget to put together. It is a Budget delivered against a backdrop of changing economic conditions, including the continual loss of GST revenue and increasing cost pressures.

In this Budget we are improving public service processes, implementing new approaches to working, reducing duplication and delivering increases in services, whilst managing our own costs more efficiently.

Mr Speaker, this Budget returns the Territory to surplus in 2013-14, as planned.

This is a Budget that is fiscally responsible. As outlined in our original fiscal recovery plan, we are systematically and sustainably working to return to surplus, improving our own efficiency without slashing service delivery.

Targeted, recurrent expenditure with a net impact of \$266.5 million over four years is made in this Budget for sensible and needed investments in healthcare, schools, community safety, and municipal and community services.

The Budget invests in measures to deliver affordable housing, addresses cost of living pressures for those most in need and continues to respond to the challenges of climate change.

Positioning Canberra for our coming of age, the Budget supports our preparations for the celebration of Canberra's Centenary, the need for public transport expansion and continued urban renewal to meet the demands of our growing city.

Mr Speaker, since the last Budget, revenues have improved due to the strength of economic activity in the Territory. The Budget returns to surplus in 2013-14 as forecast last year and two years ahead of the original recovery plan.

We have maintained fiscal restraint. Expenditure on new initiatives is largely supported by savings. We remain focused on prioritising essential service delivery, building our frontline services and tightening areas where efficiencies can realistically be achieved.

This Government has consistently rejected a slash and burn approach to our Budget recovery. Whilst our focus remains on expenditure restraint, savings do need to be realised to return our Budget back to surplus. These are never easy tasks.

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In 2011-12, we are estimating expenditure of around \$825 million on new works and works in progress. In doing so we provide critical support for local jobs, provide long term certainty for the private sector and at the same time deliver for our community high quality public infrastructure for the future.

There are no new taxes in this Budget. In fact, tax subsidies are provided to support transition through microeconomic reform.

## **Economic Outlook**

Mr Speaker, compared with other jurisdictions, the Territory's economy performed very well this year, recording some of the highest growth rates through the year.

The Territory's economy is significantly influenced by the decisions and actions of the Commonwealth Government. There is no doubt the austerity of the upcoming Federal Budget will impact on our economy. State Final Demand growth is forecast to moderate to 1¼ per cent.

The labour market is also well positioned for 2011-12. Employment is forecast to grow by 2½ per cent in 2010-11. We have the second lowest unemployment rate in the country at 3.2 per cent, and the second highest labour force participation rate at over 73 per cent. Employment growth in 2011-12 is forecast to moderate to ¾ per cent consistent with the moderation in overall economic growth.

Mr Speaker, the global financial uncertainty continues. Natural disasters around the country will impact markedly on the Commonwealth Budget and bring risks to the ACT economy. However, our strong labour market, relative job security and population growth will continue to support the economy. The prospects for the ACT economy remain positive.

## **Fiscal Outlook and Budget Objectives**

Mr Speaker, the fiscal position of the Territory was significantly impacted by the effects of the global financial crisis.

To make matters worse, we have also seen a drop in our GST revenue due to a reduction in our Commonwealth Grants Commission relativities. This is in part because our needs have been assessed as relatively lower. Our economy has performed relatively better than the other States. But our Budget has suffered as a result.

The Government adopted a robust and flexible plan in 2009-10 to restore the Budget to surplus in 2015-16. Last year, we advanced the target to 2013-14.

The longer term plan means greater discipline, and we have exercised discipline in working towards this target.

It means neither savagely cutting programs and services, nor recklessly spending. It means a measured approach.

The Territory will be returned to surplus as planned. New policy initiatives, necessary to meet the needs of the community, are largely offset by savings.

Savings measures are aimed at reducing administrative costs, both in the resources consumed by staff as well as through reducing duplication and increasing productivity.

An Efficiency Dividend commenced in 2010-11 and continues in this Budget. Applied only to non-frontline services, the Dividend delivers \$66.6 million in savings over four years.

The Budget incorporates further savings initiatives to reduce administrative costs by \$150.7 million over four years.

Agencies are being asked to reduce expenditure in areas such as travel and accommodation, stationery, consultants and contractors, recruitment and training, electricity and fleet leasing.

Mr Speaker, in 2006-07 in order to achieve whole of government efficiencies, procurement, information technology, finance and human resource management were centralised in the Shared Services agency.

This Budget commences stage two of the Shared Services rationalisation reform program with savings in business processes of around \$15.5 million over four years.

This Budget continues our efforts to manage the size of the ACT Public Service. With wages and staffing costs consuming around 47 per cent of the Budget in 2010-11, managing the growth in staff is essential to managing the Budget overall.

Mr Speaker, this Budget introduces a process of reprioritising and redirecting staffing resources to areas of greatest need.

Under this Budget the size of the ACT Public Service continues to grow.

The initiatives in this Budget increase the size of the public service by around 320 full time equivalent staff, with many for frontline services.

However, the Government intends to limit the growth in the public service overall, and will be seeking staffing reductions in the order of 210 full time equivalent staff.

These will be managed through normal staff turnover and targeted redundancies, through voluntary processes.

Mr Speaker, there will be no involuntary redundancies.

We will work with our colleagues in the union movement to ensure that these reductions are managed carefully and appropriately.

Mr Speaker, this Budget provides for \$928.5 million in capital initiatives, including plant and equipment and Information and Communications Technology.

General Government borrowings will increase to \$650 million. These borrowings will fund the capital investment in the health system and the upgrade to Majura Parkway. The Territory's balance sheet remains strong.

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## **Restructured Public Service – The ACT Public Service Review**

The initiatives in this Budget will be delivered by a streamlined Public Service. Adoption of the ACT Public Service Review's recommendations and undertaking significant structural changes to the ACT Public Service are required to ensure this occurs. A single structure will facilitate greater integration of services and foster more innovative and holistic approaches.

It will deliver a public service designed to work smarter and deliver more.

A single Public Service will be more flexible, more collaborative and more connected. It will facilitate new approaches to delivering services.

A new Government Office Block will bring together ACT public servants and increase integration of services and effort. Work will commence on the Office Block in 2013-14, with funding of \$124.9 million commencing over the last two years in this Budget. The total investment in the Office Block will be around \$432 million, offset by \$114 million in asset sales. This is a large project, a significant civic building with a strong commitment from this government to prepare our city for the future.

The Budget also invests \$150,000 for a study into the cost and design of a new office block in Gungahlin for ACT public servants. This will be a significant boost for local jobs in Canberra's fastest growing region.

The Government Performance and Accountability Framework and the Evaluation Policy is supported through funding of \$1.5 million over four years to assist in improving the quality of government service provision.

Training for public servants with disabilities and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders is being continued, along with leadership and management opportunities for other staff through funding of around \$1.6 million.

An ACT Public Service Workers' Compensation and Work Safety Improvement Plan will be developed and implemented through funding of \$4 million over two years. The Plan will include a new case management model, strengthen the capability of case managers, contribute to a healthy and productive Public Service, and curtail costs.

The Government's core services depend on reliable and up to date information and communications technology.

Strategic investments are being made by the Government in Information and Communications Technology. This Budget allocates around \$35 million to technology projects that will ensure our high service standards are maintained.

Mr Speaker, I now turn to more detail about the Budget initiatives.

## Economic Development and the Arts

Economic development is essential to the well being of our city, our livelihoods and our future. It facilitates business opportunities and creates jobs. It promotes confidence, retains and attracts viable businesses and creates an environment where investment flourishes.

This Budget delivers initiatives that will continue our record of being a good place to do business and work. It funds more initiatives that will attract people to Canberra, and improve the city's reputation as a good place to live.

Skill shortages are being addressed, with the Skilled and Business Migration Program provided with further funding of \$1.1 million over four years.

Small companies developing innovative products and services, and commercialisation opportunities are further supported through funding of \$1.6 million over four years for the Innovation Connect Program. Advisory services deliver support for high growth potential firms and attract external development finance and this Budget will provide \$760,000.

The Government's investment in the city's coming of age, our Centenary, will further contribute to our economic development, attracting new visitors and will showcase the city and our business potential.

A Centenary Marketing Fund of \$1.8 million over three years, for a national Canberra marketing campaign, will further promote our city as the nation's capital.

Community members and groups can now access funding to assist in the delivery of Centenary events, with just over \$1 million provided for this purpose.

A Centenary Trail will be constructed for walkers and cyclists featuring the ACT's iconic sites and notable landmarks through funding of \$3.3 million.

The Street Theatre will be extended, with \$3.2 million allocated to create a performing arts hub in City West.

The National Arboretum, soon to become an iconic Canberra landmark, receives additional Commonwealth funding of \$20 million over four years as a gift to the National Capital for the Centennial year.

Based on the success of *"Masterpieces from Paris"* an annual "blockbuster" fund of \$2 million over two years will assist Canberra's major cultural institutions acquire large scale exhibitions. The fund will be used to attract increased interstate and international visitors and focus positive national and international attention on the ACT.

## Sport and Recreation

Canberra is recognised as an important sporting centre and this brings economic and lifestyle benefits.

The Budget provides \$4.3 million over four years to host seven games in the 2015 Asian Cup, as well as \$2.2 million to the Canberra Stadium for the design of improvements to facilities.

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\$26.3 million is allocated for a 50 metre swimming pool complex at Gungahlin, \$2.8 million for future planning and design at Stromlo Forest Park, \$2 million for redeveloping Kippax playing fields and \$1.1 million for the restoration of Isabella Plains and Charnwood sports grounds. This sees continued investment in local community sport and recreation facilities.

A multi use indoor sporting facility will be constructed at Greenway for community use, with funding of \$2.1 million provided. This facility will also house a Men's Shed.

## **Housing Affordability**

Mr Speaker there is no doubt that the ACT housing market has performed well over 2010-11, with dwelling commencements and dwelling completions reaching record levels. Residential building approvals are significantly above long-run averages while dwelling commencements and completions are recording the strongest growth in more than ten years.

We have seen increases in residential property prices of just over 7 per cent, a 47 per cent increase in residential building approvals and annual growth in dwelling commencements of almost 38 per cent.

The ACT housing market continues to provide an attractive investment option due to a tight rental market, gains in house prices and a stable labour market.

Above average population growth continues to drive demand for new and existing homes.

Although it's expected the housing market will soften somewhat during 2011-12, the market is still forecast to grow at sustainable levels. Increases in housing supply, higher interest rates and the withdrawal of Commonwealth stimulus measures will see first home buyer activity return to long-run average levels, however, non-first home buyer activity still remains at high levels due to our strong population growth and favourable investment environment.

Affordability is clearly not an issue for many ACT residents. For others, however, it is a major concern and one the Government shares. This Budget will deliver more affordable housing for Canberrans. The ACT Government is continuing to invest in student accommodation and community housing, release more land and investigate new models of meeting the challenges of housing affordability in a prospering city.

Mr Speaker, while all governments are struggling to address housing affordability, in the ACT we are providing real and practical options for people seeking to purchase or rent a home, or who are homeless. This Government is continuing to implement its Affordable Housing Action Plan, which is recognised across Australia and internationally.

In 2011-12 the Government will release 5,500 dwelling sites on 2011-12, and a total of 18,500 over the next four years. As a result of the accelerated residential land release program, housing supply has significantly increased.

Additional funding of \$1.6 million over four years will establish an inventory of release ready land to deliver affordable housing in green field areas. Land release and supply continue to be key Government responses to affordability.

Further land is being released in Ngunnawal for aged care, a pressing area of housing need, with funding of \$2.4 million allocated.

A rolling program of master plans is being implemented with funding of \$4.2 million. This will assist the Government identify future opportunities for land release.

Significant funding of \$44.5 million over two years is provided to support necessary infrastructure including water and stormwater for initial land releases in Stage Two of Molonglo. John Gorton Drive is being extended to improve access to the new suburbs. Horse Park Drive is also being extended to improve access to new suburbs in North Gungahlin with funding of \$24.2 million.

A further \$20 million loan is provided to Community Housing Canberra for 90 properties for affordable rental in Crace, Bonner and Bruce. This loan builds on the \$50 million already provided to the company for affordable housing and will help deliver 1,000 affordable housing properties for rental and sale by 2018.

A \$23 million loan and a \$6 million grant over nine years is also made to the University of Canberra for the purchase and refurbishment of Wing 5 of Cameron Offices in Belconnen for 212 student accommodation places.

Social housing is being expanded with funding of \$9.5 million for an additional 32 dwellings to address housing affordability. In particular an intentional community will be developed at Phillip to house people with a disability who need family and other support nearby.

Further policies and programs connected with the Affordable Housing Action Plan, including further measures for the homeless, will improve housing affordability, with funding of \$1.4 million over two years.

Narrabundah Long Stay Caravan Park is being upgraded, financial assistance provided to eligible residents, and 25 new mobile homes being constructed with \$7.7 million allocated.

People who are homeless will also be further assisted to re-engage with support services in order to obtain and sustain a successful tenancy, through funding of \$508,000.

Support will also be provided for a Common Ground feasibility study – an internationally recognised supportive housing model.

## **Health Care**

Mr Speaker, this Budget continues to ensure the Health Budget grows to meet the needs of the community. The increases target the expansion of existing services, provide for new services and ensure the continued development of new hospital and community health facilities.

Over \$129.1 million is provided over four years for the continued implementation of the Capital Asset Development Plan, to build a sustainable and modern health system.

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This investment provides \$41 million to progress the next stage of planning and design for new infrastructure such as a new tower block at the Canberra Hospital which will be designed to accommodate the majority of all inpatient activity at the hospital in the future. The new tower block will ensure that our tertiary referral hospital is able to meet projected increases in inpatient bed numbers in a modern hospital setting able to provide health care in the safest and most efficient way.

The 2011-12 Budget also provides \$4 million for preliminary work on the future expansion of hospital services for the North side of Canberra. The Government will be building a new hospital on the North side of Canberra and this funding will be used to explore location options as well as undertake detailed project scoping and documentation, and explore financing options.

Funding of \$15.1 million will enable the inclusion of further enhancements, and additional treatment spaces to the ACT's new Integrated Cancer Centre, construction of which will begin shortly.

The annual Health Budget this year will grow to \$1.1 billion as demand for health services across our community continues to increase.

Around \$17.4 million in recurrent funding is allocated to increase the capacity of ACT hospitals by providing for the equivalent of 20 additional acute care beds, and will establish a new service for people suffering from neurological disorders such as Parkinson's Disease.

A further \$8.3 million over four years is provided to increase the Canberra Hospital's Intensive Care Unit by two beds and ten nurses and expanding its outreach services.

Access to surgery will be increased with an additional \$10.4 million over four years to provide both increased access to elective and emergency surgery, bringing our annual target to 11,000 operations per year, and enhance paediatric ophthalmology and plastic surgery services.

This Budget also provides \$7.7 million over four years for growth in obstetrics, gynaecology and other specialised birthing services for women and children, which will be delivered at the new Women and Children's Hospital.

The Capital Region Cancer Service is provided with funding of \$4.2 million over four years to meet increased demand for services and \$6.7 million over four years is provided for the commissioning of a fourth linear accelerator in the Radiation Oncology Department.

The ACT Labor Government continues to invest in supporting the growing number of people in our community who live with mental health issues. Increased funding of \$19.8 million over four years for mental health includes \$13.8 million for the new Adult Mental Health Inpatient Facility. Other funding targets early intervention, prevention, and training for teachers, police and ambulance workers in addressing mental health issues, better equipping them to recognise and appropriately refer those needing support to overcome mental illness.

This Budget provides additional support for rehabilitation, aged and community care with funding of \$4.2 million over four years to support the therapy programs delivered at the Village Creek Centre.

## Education and Training

This Budget continues the Government's commitment to invest in education, to ensure better outcomes for students in public education in the ACT. We are continuing to invest in our teachers and our students to ensure we continue to deliver the highest standards in education and training.

We recognise the pressure placed on our schools and tertiary institutions to deliver these outcomes for our young people and those undertaking further education and training. We continue to believe that educational success is the key to a productive and fulfilling life, a thriving economy and a competitive Canberra.

Helping to meet the growing expectations we have of our teachers, with responsibility for helping students achieve educational success, this Budget will invest over \$11.8 million to implement educational reform and provide enhanced career paths for teachers.

We all recognise that students with disabilities need to be given extra support to achieve educational success. An additional \$20 million over four years is provided for educational programs for students with disabilities to give them similar opportunities to others.

This Budget allocates around \$147 million to build new schools and to improve existing facilities.

A new early childhood school will be constructed at Franklin, along with a new primary school at Bonner. Majura and Macgregor Primary Schools are being expanded, with other school facilities upgraded. Further work is being undertaken at Namadgi P-10 School, Gungahlin College and Harrison Secondary School.

A new pedestrian bridge will provide safe access for students crossing Drakeford Drive to attend the new Namadgi P-10 School at Kambah.

Funding of \$1.6 million over four years is provided to increase accountability for primary school business managers.

Secondary schools will see funding of \$800,000 provided to implement improved approaches to learning and teaching and new pathways for students. Student engagement often declines in these years.

Funding of almost \$15 million is provided for school building and facility improvements, along with \$6.2 million to upgrade preschools to meet national quality standards.

Quality school facilities need to be complemented by up to date technology. This Budget allocates \$4.4 million for Information and Communications Technology in public schools.

The Territory depends on a well functioning vocational education and training sector, supported by an effective information system. \$1.8 million is also being provided in this Budget to replace the Vocational Education Management System.

The CIT receives \$1.2 million to support its expanded footprint of buildings and the increased complexity of its Information Technology systems. Forward Design for a CIT Learning Centre in Tuggeranong is also funded with \$700,000.

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## Municipal Services

Mr Speaker, Canberrans rely on and expect good municipal services. As Canberrans we have a sense of pride in how our city looks and we, as a community we like to see it maintained and protected. Mowing the grass, removing our garbage, cleaning our suburbs and maintaining urban amenity is important to all of us.

The ACT Government is working to balance greenfield and infill development, with urban projects that enliven the city and the suburbs. Transport networks assist in creating dynamic urban spaces that optimise the use of existing and new infrastructure.

This Budget allocates \$4.3 million to maintaining and sustaining the essential municipal services upon which we rely.

To further improve our city's amenity, funding of \$4.3 million is allocated for the completion of Bunda Street from East Row to Northbourne Avenue and improvements to Veterans Park, Petrie Plaza, City Walk and Civic Merry-go-round.

An additional \$7.5 million is allocated to looking after our urban trees and to assist the natural regeneration of Box-Gum woodlands. Canberra boasts the largest urban forest managed by a single jurisdiction in Australia, with over 700,000 trees.

Managing and reducing our waste remains a key challenge. Around \$8.4 million in this Budget is directed to problem and stockpiled building waste at West Belconnen Resource Management Centre and to the upgrade of land fill cells to meet environmental standards. A feasibility study into acquiring a new landfill site is also being conducted with \$2.8 million allocated.

## Transport

Fast and reliable public transport is the foundation of a well functioning city.

ACTION requires ongoing investment to ensure it meets commuter needs. This investment is complemented by ongoing efficiencies.

Funding of \$21.4 million over four years is invested in making ACTION buses more accessible and effective. Services to Gungahlin and the Inner North, Fyshwick, Kippax and the Canberra Hospital are being improved. A dedicated mini bus will increase transport options for the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community.

The ways in which we communicate with Canberrans about bus routes, frequency and accessibility are being strengthened to improve patronage and help reduce greenhouse gas emissions from other forms of transport.

Capital funding of around \$20 million is provided for public transport infrastructure, including \$3.7 million to upgrade the Woden bus depot, \$2.5 million for the forward design of the Northbourne Avenue Transitway, \$4.4 million for fuel depots and \$1 million for bus stop upgrades. The ACTION radio system is being replaced with \$4.5 million in funding being provided.

A primary point of contact for the taxi industry and other stakeholders will be established through funding of \$776,000 over four years. Service standards to improve taxi performance will be developed, as well as fare levels and compliance monitored.

Canberra's walking and cycling infrastructure continues to be enhanced with \$1.5 million provided for construction of new cycle ways and shared paths.

Road safety is a paramount concern and the key driver in the Government's continued investment in maintaining and upgrading roads. The Budget provides \$144 million over three years for the Majura Parkway and \$5.5 million for intersections in North Weston and West Belconnen.

Funding of \$3.3 million over four years is also provided for the enhancement of the Road Transport Authorities' Computer System.

## **Community Services**

Mr Speaker, Canberra is a compassionate city that cares for its people. This Budget provides additional funding to support those in our community who need additional assistance whether it be through the provision of specialist services, transport, or financial support to meet increasing costs of living pressures.

A progressive city provides practical support for its residents with disabilities, helping them to participate in the economic and social life of the community.

This Budget provides additional emergency accommodation support places for people with disabilities whose natural or formal supports have failed or who need to exit the hospital system.

In response to community need, a specialist, ten place, after school care program and ten place, full time holiday support program for young people with complex behaviours associated with autism and other developmental delays is being established at a cost of \$1.7 million over four years.

Existing programs that support school leavers with disabilities are also being expanded, with an additional 15 places available each year, for two years, with funding of \$2.8 million over four years provided.

This Budget makes provision to ensure specialist transport services are more affordable and accessible for people with disabilities. The number of taxi vouchers and the subsidies per trip for people with disabilities are increased, with over \$2.3 million allocated over four years.

A centralised wheelchair accessible taxi booking service will be introduced and incentives will be implemented for improved services for people with disabilities with \$2.2 million in funding over four years.

In recognition that the rising costs of energy and water are placing pressure on low income households, this Budget provides for a significant boost to utility concessions in the order of \$131 per annum.

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Further practical help is being provided to low income households to reduce costs by increasing their energy and water efficiency with around \$4.4 million provided over four years. This Budget funds further retrofitting of older public housing properties to improve their energy efficiency. This will assist in reducing tenants' utility costs, with \$8 million over four years allocated.

People on low incomes will now be able to access a Legal Aid Commission Help Desk to help resolve their legal problems, with funding of around \$1.7 million over four years provided.

Mr Speaker, the task of supporting children and young people at risk is not an easy one. This Budget provides additional assistance for those children and young people who live in foster or kinship care, with funding of \$2.2 million over four years provided.

Kinship carers now form around half of all carers of children in out of home care and are further supported with funding of \$1.7 million over four years.

Young people who are transitioning from out of home care to independent living, are being provided with the additional assistance of \$2.1 million over four years.

Young people at risk need to be diverted from the justice system if their lives are to improve. The Government is providing supplementary funding of \$5.5 million over four years for the Bimberi Youth Justice Centre to increase funding for staffing, program and security.

This funding includes further support to assist young people minimise their involvement in the justice system and improve responses for those at risk of remand.

Funding of \$1.9 million over four years is allocated to the Office for Multicultural Affairs and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Affairs to strengthen support for Indigenous Canberrans and people from a range of diverse cultures. This includes funding to enhance the Multicultural Festival and the Work Experience Support Program.

Further capital funding of \$4.5 million is provided to complete the refurbishment of the Flynn Community Hub and the former Holt Preschool. A Holder Early Childhood Centre will be constructed with \$7.5 million in funding allocated.

Early childhood facilities are being upgraded, with \$10.5 million in recurrent and capital funding provided, to ensure they meet national quality standards. In total, more than 800 long day care places will be created.

A children's services scholarship program will be established with funding of \$785,000 to assist childcare workers improve their qualifications.

## **Justice and Community Safety**

Our justice, policing and emergency services require significant resourcing. In this Budget, the Government recognises that while ongoing investments need to be made, they need to be targeted to areas where they can deliver the greatest benefit for the community.

Funding has been provided for \$2.9 million over four years to ACT Policing for the implementation and ongoing support of random roadside drug testing.

Court security is further improved, with \$4.6 million over four years allocated for additional sheriff and correctional officers and upgrades to facilities.

Around \$21.1 million is allocated for an additional 30 front line Ambulance Service paramedics and five ambulances in response to the need for more services in Dickson and West Belconnen. Six additional headquarter ambulance staff are also funded to improve response capability.

Work on the Emergency Services Authority's station upgrades and relocation continues, with \$4.7 million allocated for due diligence and forward design of fire and ambulance facilities across Canberra.

In recognition of the demands of our growing city, giving priority to investing in our frontline services and anticipating the retirement of a number of long serving senior staff, we will invest \$1.1 million in the Fire Brigade Recruit College. Two new recruit colleges will be conducted in the next financial year. Protective equipment for our fire fighters is also funded with \$2 million provided.

The Alexander Maconochie Centre receives additional operating funding of around \$5.1 million over four years to better support offender programs, with \$1.4 million for security upgrades.

Funding of \$702,000 is provided for improved access to justice services for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people. A Guidance Partner will assist young Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders who are involved in restorative justice. Galambany Circle Sentencing Court panel members will also receive appropriate remuneration.

## **Climate Change and Sustainability**

The Government strongly believes that we need to meet the challenges of climate change and lead the way in addressing its impacts.

Despite being a small jurisdiction, the ACT continues to lead by example, increasing our uptake of Green Power from 32.5 per cent to 37.5 per cent from 2011-12 at a cost of \$2.9 million. This will reduce the Territory's carbon footprint.

A Resource Management Fund of \$2 million will provide an incentive for the ACT Public Service to improve resource and energy efficiency.

Funding of \$1.5 million has been allocated to improve the quality and reliability of energy efficiency ratings for residential properties for sale. To ensure that new dwellings meet expectations of quality, safety and environmental sustainability, \$6.7 million is provided for additional building inspectors.

The urban waterways program, trialling replacement of a proportion of potable water with stormwater, is also supported with just over \$900,000 allocated over four years.

Funding of almost \$800,000 has been allocated for further work on an ACT Government data management system, which will provide information on energy and water usage, recycling and green house gas emissions.

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## **Conclusion**

Mr Speaker, this is a Budget that delivers additional services to our community, while at the same time delivering the savings that are required to return our Budget to surplus in the short term.

This Budget creates a single public service focused on delivering high quality and efficient services to the community that we serve.

This Budget balances competing interests and demands and seeks to deliver a fair outcome for all.

Within the fiscal constraint that was required, this Budget also shows vision and optimism for the city we are becoming as we approach our second century.

Mr Speaker, I commend the Appropriation Bill and the 2011-12 Budget to the Assembly and to the ACT community.