

Central Australia is the Territory's largest region, covering 42% of the total land area. The region is made up of small communities separated by long distances and is home to about 41,000 people, of whom 43.2% are Aboriginal.

Alice Springs is the main centre in the region, with a population of about 28,900. Around 34% of the region's population are aged 24 years or under and about 8% are aged 65 years or older.

Major industries in the region include tourism, mining, oil and gas exploration, pastoralism and construction. Tourism is an important contributor to economic activity with many natural attractions in the region including Kata Tjuta, Kings Canyon, Uluru and the West MacDonnell Ranges attracting a significant number of domestic and international visitors.

### National Aboriginal Art Gallery

The National Aboriginal Art Gallery continues to progress, with the Territory Government acquiring Anzac Oval and design well advanced.

The gallery is part of the Anzac Hill precinct, which includes a new Tourism Central Australia visitor information centre, realigning Schwarz Crescent and landscaping, featuring the Kwatye waterplay initiative.

The Territory Government has committed around \$100 million to deliver the gallery and wider precinct, and the Commonwealth has committed a further \$80 million to support the gallery. The gallery is a project of national significance and will position Central Australia as a key destination for cultural tourism. Construction is expected to commence in 2024 and be completed in 2027.



### Infrastructure

Budget 2023 invests \$62.5 million for upgrades to the Alice Springs to Halls Creek corridor, funded as part of the Commonwealth's Roads of Strategic Importance initiative. This adds to the \$115.6 million in works underway.

Construction on the corridor commenced in mid-2019 and continues on a rolling basis to deliver improvements to connectivity, road safety, travel times and economic productivity for the region.

Work on the Outback Way continues with \$42 million upgrading various sections of the Plenty Highway and the Tjukururu Road.

### Land release

The Territory Government continues to support the growth and economic development of the Alice Springs region through:

- \$26 million to support industrial land release on the Brewer Estate, with works expected to commence during the first quarter of 2024

- \$20.6 million to progress headworks for stage 2 of the Kilgariff Estate, consisting of 87 residential lots (including social and affordable housing) and community sports facilities
- \$11 million to fast-track release of an additional 362 residential lots to support future population growth in the region, with works expected to start in the second quarter of 2024.

## Housing

Since 2016, the Territory Government has delivered over \$1 billion in housing works across a range of programs, funded by the Territory and Commonwealth governments.

A record 3,642 homes have so far been built and upgraded, both completed and underway.

Major housing works expected to take place in Central Australia in 2023-24 include HomeBuild/Room to Breathe works in Yuendumu and seven new government employee houses.

## A better, safer future for Central Australia

The Territory and Commonwealth governments continue to work with the Central Australian community to improve community safety, tackle alcohol-related harm, and provide more opportunities for young people. The Commonwealth has committed to investing:

- \$250 million to:
  - improve community safety through youth engagement and diversion programs
  - create jobs, particularly in the communities that surround Alice Springs, including changes to the Community Development Program
  - enhance health services in surrounding communities to reduce pressure on Alice Springs
  - prevent and address issues caused by foetal alcohol spectrum disorders, including better health and justice responses
  - invest in families, including better supporting elders and parents and boosting domestic violence services
  - increase on-country learning to improve school attendance and completion.

- \$48 million for community safety, including:
  - \$25 million to extend funding for safety and community services
  - \$14.2 million for high visibility police and law enforcement operations
  - \$5.6 million for emergency accommodation and safe spaces to give young people a place to go to at night and boost the night patrol program
  - \$2 million to improve CCTV, lighting and safety measures throughout Alice Springs
  - \$2 million for the Tangentyere Women's Council to boost domestic violence services.

Further detail on these Commonwealth funded programs is expected to be published in the 2023 Commonwealth Budget.

Budget 2023 also provides funding of \$4.8 million over three years from 2022-23 to resource OCARC, to address crime and antisocial behaviour in Alice Springs.

OCARC coordinates a culturally responsive partnership approach to service delivery by all levels of governments and the community, coordinates funding from governments and will also develop a plan for the region addressing economic development and liveability .

## Tourism

Budget 2023 includes \$5.6 million for the Watarrka Track, a new outback hiking experience, with construction anticipated later in 2023.

The Territory Government is also bolstering tourism in Central Australia through \$1 million for a brand and trade campaign dedicated to the Red Centre, to drive interstate visitation in 2023.

## Major works overview

	Capital works \$000
Transport	229 448
Recreation, culture and religion	81 663
Housing and community amenities	38 965
Economic affairs	31 350
Health	30 703
Public order and safety	17 809
Environmental protection	10 000
Education	4 753
<b>Total Central Australia</b>	<b>444 692</b>

Photograph courtesy of the Department of Territory Families, Housing and Communities

**Delivering for all Territorians.**

