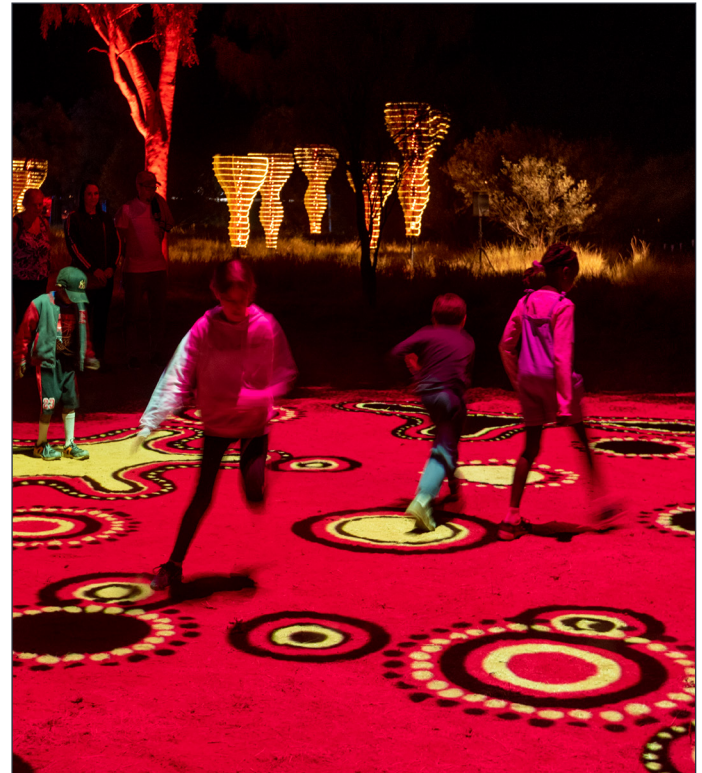


Central Australia is the Territory's largest region, covering 42% of the total land area. The region is made up of small communities separated by long distances and is home to around 42,000 people, of whom about 43% are Aboriginal.



Alice Springs is the main centre in the region, with a population of around 29,700. About 33% of the region's population are aged 24 years or under and about 8% are aged 65 years or older.

Major industries 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.

There are also a number of events unique to Central Australia that provide an authentic and culturally immersive experience including the Parrtjima Light Festival in Alice Springs, the Field of Light installation at Uluru, and the Desert Mob Festival.

Alice Springs infrastructure priorities

The 2025 Budget includes \$168.7 million for Alice Springs infrastructure priorities to deliver projects that prioritise children and community well-being through improved sporting infrastructure, enhance community liveability and support the tourism industry.

Key projects include:

- \$123.5 million for delivery of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Art Gallery of Australia
- \$14.8 million to construct a new Alice Springs Town Council Library, expanding public services and enriching community spaces
- \$14.1 million for a multi-sports precinct in Gillen
- \$8.9 million to establish a new multicultural centre to celebrate and support Alice Springs' diverse cultural landscape
- \$5.7 million for a new regional Skate and Play Precinct at Newland Park with \$4 million from the Commonwealth
- \$4.8 million towards a new Tourism Central Australia headquarters and Visitor Information Centre to help strengthen local tourism
- \$450,000 for free pool access at the Alice Springs Aquatic and Leisure Centre during summer holidays, Saturday afternoons and all-day Sunday
- reinstatement of ANZAC Oval to enhance recreational opportunities.

Major works overview

	Capital works
	\$000
Transport	459 932
Recreation, culture and religion	174 276
Housing and community amenities	25 943
Environmental protection	9 386
Education	3 755
Economic affairs	1 200
Health	473
Total Central Australia	674 964

Land release

The Territory Government continues to support the growth and economic development of the region through investment to support a program of land release, including:

- \$11 million for headworks and subdivision works to support the development of Kilgariff residential land
- \$9.4 million to mitigate flooding in Alice Springs
- \$1.2 million to remediate Alice Springs lots at the Shell depot site
- \$0.9 million for subdivision works at Sienna Village.

St Mary’s land development

The 2025 Budget includes \$14 million for enabling infrastructure (such as power, water, sewerage and roads), site preparation, demolition and remediation to develop up to 120 social housing dwellings at the St Mary’s site.

The site has potential for housing and other community spaces, while preserving the historic chapel, mural and other items of cultural significance. Works are expected to commence mid-2025.

Remote housing

The 2025 Budget is reducing overcrowding and improving housing quality by delivering up to 2,700 houses over 10-years, and a comprehensive repairs and maintenance program, under the \$4 billion remote housing agreement, co-funded by the Territory and Commonwealth governments.

In 2024-25, around 77 dwellings are expected to be delivered across communities in Central Australia, including 18 dwellings in Yuendumu.

Roads

The 2025 Budget includes \$460 million for upgrades to roads in Central Australia, to improve connectivity, flood immunity, safety and access, as well as economic development for the region. Key upgrades include:

- \$289 million to upgrade and seal 150 kilometres of the Tanami Road
- \$161 million for continuing works on the Outback Way to upgrade various sections of the Plenty Highway and the Tjukururu Road.
- \$8.9 million for upgrades to Schwartz Crescent and Stuart Highway intersection.

Reducing crime

The 2025 Budget continues to invest in critical infrastructure upgrades at Alice Springs Correctional Centre to improve and expand prison facilities and a new residential youth justice facility to support rehabilitation.

The 2025 Budget also includes \$2 million to establish a dedicated police communications centre in Alice Springs, which will improve efficiency, enhance response capabilities and integrate seamlessly with the Joint Emergency Services Communications Centre (JESCC).

Additional funding has also been provided for the Circuit Breaker program, an initiative that quickly identifies children, young people, and families who require proactive interventions to reduce risk and increase safety for children, young people and the wider community. The program involves identified families receiving intensive, wraparound support and intense case management services.

New walking track

The 2025 Budget includes \$5.5 million for a new multi-day walking track in the Watarrka National Park.

Located 330 kilometres southwest of Alice Springs and home to Kings Canyon, the Watarrka National Park already attracts more than 250,000 visitors each year, and is set to be one of Australia’s most scenic multi-day walking experiences.

Traditional Owners and NT Parks and Wildlife will work in partnership to achieve the best outcomes, including negotiating an appropriate track alignment, while delivering a quality walking experience for locals and visitors.

Photograph courtesy of Department of the Chief Minister and Cabinet, June Smith