



NORTHERN TERRITORY

2025-26 BUDGET

BUDGET
and
REGIONAL OVERVIEW

Budget and Regional Overview

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Message from the Treasurer

It's a privilege to deliver the first budget of the Finocchiaro Country Liberal Government – shaped in challenging times to reverse eight years of Labor's drift and rising debt. Real progress begins with safety – and that's why this is a law and order budget. Without safety, there can be no prosperity.

We're delivering record investment in police, courts and corrections to put victims first, hold offenders accountable and restore the rule of law. This budget backs our frontline and delivers on our promise to reduce crime and protect Territorians.

At the same time, we're focused on rebuilding the Territory economy in 2025. The HomeGrown Territory grants, payroll tax relief, the Territory Coordinator, the Approvals Fast Track Taskforce and streamlined merits review anchor our 2025–2028 Rebuilding the Economy Strategy – making the Territory the best place in Australia to do business. We stand firmly behind our onshore gas industry and the Beetaloo Sub-basin. Developing this resource will secure energy for the Territory and the nation, rebuild our economy and create thousands of well paid jobs.

Upon coming to government, we implemented a machinery of government restructure, establishing 18 specialist departments focused on driving economic growth. This reform is reflected in the budget's staffing FTE figures, with roles reallocated and transferred to align with the new agency structures. There have been no cuts to the public service, just improved efficiency through streamlined agencies, allowing them to focus on their core business.

But growth means little if Territorians can't enjoy their lifestyle. That's why we're easing cost of living pressures by keeping power bills down, funding the early childhood services subsidy to reduce the cost of childcare, providing free driver licences for 12 months, waiving trailer registration and providing \$600 in vouchers for learn to swim, back to school and sports participation – practical help that leaves more money in people's pockets.

Labor's legacy – under funded frontline services, stalled projects and an artificial debt ceiling – required decisive action. We abolished the ceiling because keeping it would have meant cuts and job losses, undermining our goals to rebuild the economy, reduce crime and restore the Territory lifestyle.

This budget increases funding for courts and corrections to manage the flow-on effects of additional police resources. It also resets the infrastructure program, boosting repairs and maintenance and increased capital works funding to reduce the record levels of revote experienced under the former government, whereby projects were announced but did not proceed.

Stronger forecasts for GST, taxes and royalties help absorb new commitments, and the operating balance is on track to return to surplus in 2027-28 – proof that safety, growth and fiscal discipline can go hand in hand. Together, this budget charts a path to a safer, stronger and more prosperous Territory – one where disciplined finances support bold ambition for generations to come.

Bill Yan

The Hon. Bill Yan MLA

Treasurer

Budget highlights



Safer communities

\$1.5 billion in public order and safety, and \$780 million in social protection to deliver initiatives to build safer and more resilient communities. This includes \$608 million for police services.



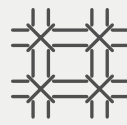
Domestic violence package

\$180 million over five years and \$36 million ongoing for domestic, family and sexual violence prevention, early intervention and response.



Additional funding for the justice system

\$78 million over four years from 2024-25 to 2027-28, and \$20.9 million ongoing to address pressures in the justice system.



Additional funding for corrections

\$126 million in 2025-26 and \$176 million ongoing to address pressures on the corrections system due to legacy underinvestment in capacity.



Cost of living relief

Over \$290 million to deliver a range of concessions and subsidies to help Territorians with cost of living pressures.



Housing

\$1.8 billion to support urban and remote housing and address key barriers to entry in the housing market.



Health

\$2.5 billion investment for health services including additional funding for the new mental health in-patient ward at Royal Darwin Hospital.



Economic affairs

\$1.9 billion to deliver a stronger, sustainable economic future for all Territorians.



Education

\$1.6 billion for education and training, including \$120 million for vocational training and higher education.



Infrastructure

\$4.3 billion for the 2025-26 capital works program for a targeted, responsible approach to infrastructure investment.

Fiscal outlook

The 2025 Budget is underpinned by the new government's priorities of reducing crime, rebuilding the economy and restoring the Territory lifestyle.

It includes \$2.26 billion in new policy commitments over the budget cycle to 2027-28, largely to address funding shortfalls in frontline government services. New commitments include:

- reducing crime through early intervention programs and addressing demand on the justice system
- rebuilding the economy through increased repairs and maintenance and capital works spending, supporting tourism, and worker and student attraction initiatives
- restoring the Territory lifestyle through increasing the regulated utility tariff subsidy to reduce cost of living pressures, additional support for mental health and hospital services, and addressing ongoing demand for critical government services.

The 2025 Budget also includes improved GST, taxation and royalty revenue forecasts, partly offsetting the budget impact of new policy commitments. GST revenue is expected to increase by almost \$600 million, and taxation and royalty revenue by around \$450 million over the budget cycle to 2027-28.

Key fiscal projections in the 2025 Budget include:

- general government net operating balance deficit of \$265 million in 2025-26, returning to surplus from 2027-28
- total revenue in the non financial public sector of \$10.04 billion and total expenditure (including net capital investment) of \$12.19 billion in 2025-26
- non financial public sector fiscal balance deficit of \$1.31 billion in 2025-26, improving to a deficit of \$531 million by 2028-29
- net debt in the non financial public sector of \$12.19 billion in 2025-26, with a net debt to revenue ratio of 121%.

Table 1.1: Key fiscal indicators

	2024-25	2025-26	2026-27	2027-28	2028-29
	Revised	Budget	Forward estimate		
	\$M	\$M	\$M	\$M	\$M
General government sector					
Net operating balance	- 707	- 265	- 101	17	52
Non financial public sector					
Fiscal balance	- 1 647	- 1 308	- 897	- 529	- 531
Net debt	10 548	12 191	13 107	13 506	13 966
Net debt to revenue (%)	116	121	130	131	132

Revenue

Territory revenue is expected to be \$10.04 billion for the non financial public sector in 2025-26, rising to \$10.55 billion by 2028-29. When compared to the 2024 *Pre-Election Fiscal Outlook* (PEFO), total revenue is projected to be on average \$947 million per annum higher across the budget and forward estimates.

The increase is mostly due to new tied Commonwealth funding for remote Aboriginal investment, health, legal assistance, roads and schools, combined with additional GST revenue.

Commonwealth revenue represents about 71% of total Territory revenue, comprising GST and tied grants. GST remains the Territory's largest revenue source and represents around 46% of total revenue in 2025-26, and about 47% over the forward estimates. When compared to the 2024 PEFO, GST revenue is expected to increase on average by \$150 million per annum. The additional revenue reflects an increase in the Territory's GST relativity from 5.06681 in 2024-25 to 5.15112 in 2025-26, combined with higher forecast growth in the GST collections pool.

Taxation and royalty revenue represents the Territory's primary source of income that government can directly influence, constituting around 11% of total revenue in 2025-26 and over the budget cycle. Taxes comprise payroll tax, stamp duty on conveyances, taxes on gambling and insurance, and motor vehicle fees and taxes.

Revenue from taxes and royalties is expected to remain largely stable over the budget and forward estimates period averaging \$1.07 billion per annum. When compared to the 2024 PEFO, taxation and royalty revenue is expected to grow by \$142 million in 2025-26, with smaller revisions over the forward estimates, mainly due to improved royalties and gambling tax reforms.

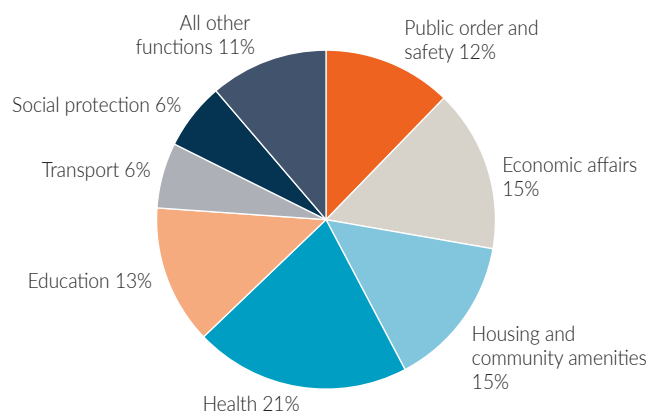
Expenditure

In 2025-26, total expenditure (comprising total expenses and net capital investment) for the non financial public sector is estimated to be \$12.19 billion, and then average \$11.78 billion per annum over the forward estimates.

When compared to the 2024 PEFO, total expenditure is on average \$1.4 billion per annum higher. This increase reflects government policy commitments to continue time-limited funding allocations to prevent frontline service delivery reductions, respond to courts and corrections demand pressures, and progress works on the infrastructure program, combined with delivering new tied Commonwealth funding agreements.

Frontline services for health, education, housing and community amenities, and public order and safety remain the largest functions of government expenditure, constituting 61% of total estimated expenditure in 2025-26.

Total expenditure by function 2025-26



Budget repair

In April 2025, the debt ceiling introduced by the former government was repealed and replaced by a broader budget repair strategy.

The new *Northern Territory Government Budget Repair Strategy* provides flexibility for government to progress budget repair and contain expenditure growth over the medium term, without constraining government's ability to deal with immediate expenditure pressures and expiry of time-limited funding for critical frontline services.

It will also enable government to focus its efforts on growing revenue and enhancing the effectiveness of government spending.

The strategy comprises five priorities:

- growing own-source revenues through economic and population growth
- containing employee cost growth by restraining growth in non-frontline staffing
- engaging with the Commonwealth to unlock economic opportunities, enable sustainable debt management and support regional and remote Territorians
- strengthening policies and processes across government to improve the effectiveness of government spending
- developing a new, contemporary and simplified fiscal strategy focused on prudent debt management.

Government has also replaced the efficiency dividend with a budget repair measure and directed agencies to find further operational savings of \$20 million per annum from 2025-26, with a focus on reducing expenditure on consultancies, travel, communications and marketing, and other discretionary outlays.

Economic outlook

Economic growth

Gross state product (GSP) is forecast to grow by 7.8% in 2025-26 as the Barossa project transitions to the export production phase and GEMCO manganese mine exports resume, partly offset by maintenance at Ichthys LNG plant. GSP is forecast to grow a further by 5.9% in 2026-27 as maintenance works end and Ichthys and Darwin LNG plants reach full operational capacity.

State final demand (SFD), which is GSP excluding net exports, is expected to decline in 2025-26 as private investment contracts following the completion of construction on the Barossa project in September 2025. Solid household consumption reflecting higher real wages and lower interest rates, robust public consumption and strong public investment will partly offset this decline in private investment.

Public investment growth in 2025-26 is expected to be strong as works progress across a number of large infrastructure projects as well as ongoing roads and public housing programs.

GSP and SFD is projected to track towards trend levels of activity and output over the remainder of the forecast period, with steady contributions to growth from consumption and private investment, and broadly stable levels of exports.

Economic growth over the budget cycle is likely to be influenced by the outcomes of United States' international trade arrangements, which are currently undergoing major change, with settings for both the United States and trading partners yet to be finalised.

Territory economic forecasts

	2024-25e	2025-26f	2026-27f	2027-28f	2028-29f
Gross state product ¹	- 2.6	7.8	5.9	1.7	3.0
State final demand ¹	4.0	- 1.8	- 0.6	1.1	2.6
Employment ¹	1.2	0.8	1.2	1.6	1.6
Unemployment rate ²	4.5	5.0	4.7	4.6	4.5
Consumer price index ³	1.7	2.9	2.4	2.5	2.5
Wage price index ¹	3.2	3.0	3.1	3.2	3.3
Population ³	0.7	1.0	1.1	1.2	1.2

a: actual; e: estimate; f: forecast

¹ Year-average percentage change.

² Year average.

³ Year-ended percentage change.

Source: Department of Treasury and Finance; ABS

Labour market

Employment growth is forecast to be 1.2% in 2024-25, easing to 0.8% in 2025-26 as several major investment projects are completed, although labour demand is expected to be supported by ongoing public investment. Over the forward estimates period, employment is expected to pick up as changes to worker uptake under the new Designated Area Migration Agreement (DAMA) come into effect.

Due to the current pipeline of projects, labour force participation is expected to remain elevated in 2025-26, before stabilising at a lower level over the forecast period.

The unemployment rate is expected to peak at 5% in 2025-26 as construction of the Barossa project is completed. Over the forward estimates period, unemployment is forecast to moderate as employment growth improves in line with solid underlying demand for labour and population growth.

Prices

Consumer price index (CPI) growth is expected to be 1.7% in 2024-25, reflecting a decline in electricity prices due to the Commonwealth Energy Bill Relief Fund and lower automotive fuel prices. CPI growth is expected to pick up to 2.9% in 2025-26 as the energy bill relief ends, before tracking towards the mid-point of the RBA target band at 2.5%.

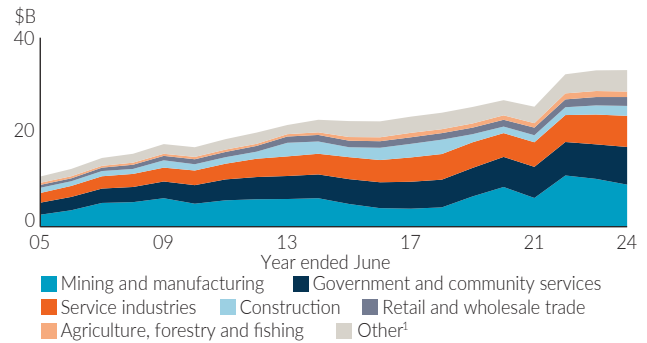
Underlying inflation in Darwin has eased more quickly than nationally, reflecting weaker underlying drivers of inflationary pressure, particularly for housing. Rent and dwelling construction costs were a key contributor to the post-covid inflation surge in Darwin and nationally, but have since moderated significantly in Darwin, outpacing the declines reported nationally.

Size of the Territory economy

In 2023-24, the Territory's GSP was \$34.6 billion. The mining sector was the largest contributor to the Territory economy accounting for around 28.5% of GSP, followed by the government and community sector.

The size of these sectors reflects the abundance of natural resources available in the Territory as well as added demands related to servicing a comparatively small population dispersed over a large area, with relatively high demand for government services.

GSP by industry, 2023-24



1 Tourism is not reported as an industry due to the nature of its output being derived from other industries.

Source: ABS, Australian National Accounts: State Accounts

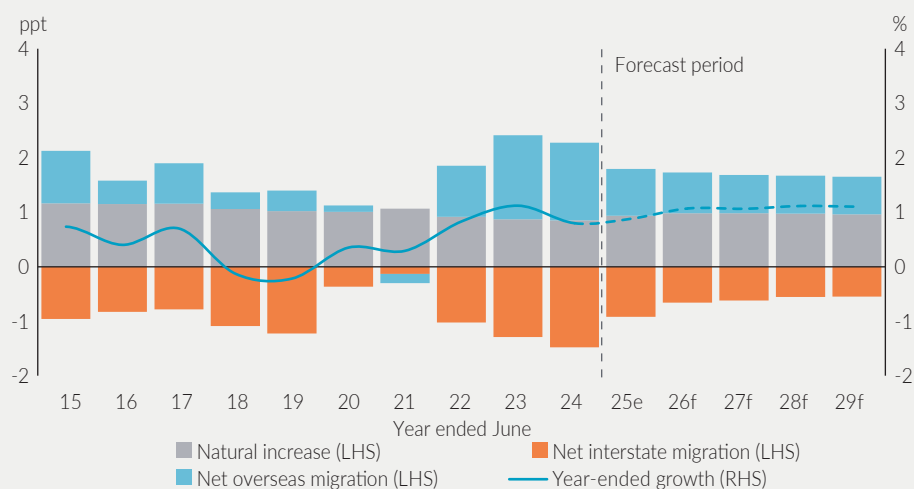
Population

The Territory's population is forecast to increase by 1% in 2025-26 as birth rates improve, reflecting stronger natural increase, and elevated public final demand supports interstate migration outcomes and ongoing overseas migration into the Territory.

Growth over the forward estimates period is expected to remain steady, averaging around 1.2% per year. Natural increase and overseas migration

are expected to remain steady contributors to population growth, while interstate migration is expected to return towards longer-term historic average levels. Recent changes to the Territory's DAMA are expected to improve the Territory's access to overseas labour and contribute positively to labour force and population growth.

Components of Territory population growth



e: estimate; f: forecast; LHS: left-hand side; ppt: percentage point; RHS: right-hand side

Source: ABS, National, state and territory population; Department of Treasury and Finance

Infrastructure investment

Following the publication of the former government's 2024 Budget, the total infrastructure program in 2024-25 increased substantially, from \$4.42 billion to \$5.43 billion, due to underestimation of costs for several major projects approved by the former government, revisions to major road projects funded under national partnership agreements that also require Territory co-contributions and bringing forward the five-year rolling remote police infrastructure program.

An increase in the capital works program of this magnitude, from already elevated levels, was beyond the Territory's fiscal capacity to deliver within a reasonable timeframe. The program also included legacy projects that had not progressed for a number of years, with limited prospects to proceed within approved allocations and scope. As a result, the new government undertook a major review of the infrastructure program, including reprioritising the program to align with government's strategic objectives and fiscal capacity.

The 2025-26 infrastructure program totals \$4.34 billion and includes projects to increase public order and community safety, rebuild the economy, improve transport links, and support the delivery of housing, health, education and other frontline government services across the Territory.

At more than \$2 billion, transport infrastructure projects comprise nearly half of the total infrastructure program. The housing and community amenities program is more than \$800 million and is the second largest allocation, comprising about 19% of the total program.

Of the total program, around 60% is allocated to new and upgraded infrastructure in remote and regional communities across the Territory.

Transport infrastructure

The 2025-26 program continues to invest heavily in transport infrastructure, with around \$2 billion for roads, aerodromes and jetties.

Key road and transport projects include:

- \$289 million for upgrades to the Tanami Road

- \$223.1 million for the Territory national network highway upgrades
- \$205.4 million for the Central Arnhem Road upgrade program
- \$181.3 million for Territory gas industry roads
- \$161 million for the Outback Way corridor to upgrade sections of the Plenty Highway and Tjukaruru Road
- \$122.6 million for the Northern Territory Strategic Roads Package – upgrade and sealing of remote and regional roads
- \$117.4 million for Buntine Highway upgrade program and rest areas
- \$89.7 million to upgrades on Port Keats Road between Wadeye and Palumpa
- \$80 million for the Arnhem Highway duplication between the Stuart Highway and Kostka Road
- \$66.2 million to upgrade roads within Kakadu National Park to support tourism growth.

Housing and community amenities

The 2025-26 infrastructure program provides more than \$833 million for new and upgraded remote and urban housing, infrastructure to support land release and improved community amenity.

Commitments include \$615.4 million for remote housing across the Territory to build and upgrade homes and service land.

There is continued investment in residential headworks and land release across the Territory, including \$49.6 million for infrastructure to support the development of Holtze, \$11 million for land development and community facilities at Kilgariff, \$11 million for infrastructure to support the development of Farrar West and \$3.95 million for headworks infrastructure and subdivision designs to support the development of land across regions.

A further \$150 million is committed for housing and community amenity-related capital grants, mostly for homelands and affordable housing projects, bringing the total value of housing and community amenity capital projects and grants to over \$983 million.

Capital works by COFOG-A category 2025-26

	Capital works	
	\$M	%
Transport	2 049.3	47.3
Housing and community amenities	833.2	19.2
Economic affairs	685.5	15.8
Public order and safety	270.9	6.3
Recreation, culture and religion	247.3	5.7
Health	158.7	3.7
Environmental protection	41	0.9
Education	32.2	0.7
Social protection	11.6	0.3
General public services	6.5	0.1
Total general government	4 336.2	100.0

1 COFOG-A: Classification of the Functions of Government – Australia

Economic affairs

The 2025-26 infrastructure program invests \$685.5 million for infrastructure to enable development of the Territory economy.

The most significant economic development project is the Darwin ship lift and marine facilities project.

There is \$10 million allocated for design, feasibility, approvals and preliminary works activities for the Middle Arm Sustainable Development Precinct and Tennant Creek to Darwin Infrastructure Corridor.

Other works include headworks infrastructure to support mixed-use developments, and commercial and industrial land release across the Territory.

Public order and safety

The 2025-26 infrastructure program invests \$270.9 million in community safety infrastructure to construct, expand and upgrade police and correctional facilities. Significant projects in 2025-26 include:

- \$143.5 million for the remote police infrastructure and housing upgrade program
- \$69.6 million for the corrections infrastructure masterplan
- \$35.7 million to construct a new multipurpose police complex in Maningrida
- \$6.6 million for upgrades to the Joint Emergency Services Communication Centre.

Infrastructure payments (cash)

The 2025 Budget includes a record level of infrastructure expenditure of \$2.74 billion. This includes \$1.99 billion in general government expenditure and \$751 million for Power and Water Corporation, Territory Generation, Land Development Corporation and Indigenous Essential Services Pty Ltd.

In 2025-26, payments for major projects in the general government sector are projected to be \$1.45 billion, an increase of \$150 million from the revised 2024-25 budget. This includes significant funding allocations across new and upgraded correctional facilities, remote policing infrastructure, housing, road and transport projects, school upgrades, and economic projects.

Infrastructure payments for projects in the public non financial corporations sector are forecast

to increase to \$602 million in 2025-26. Major projects driving this increase include the Manton Dam return to service project and a second Darwin-Katherine battery energy storage system.

Total infrastructure payments

	2025-26 Budget	
	Program	Cash
	\$M	\$M
General government		
Capital works	4 336	1 451
Capital grants ¹		196
Repairs and maintenance ¹		320
Infrastructure-related expenses		20
Total		1 986
Government owned corporations		751
Total infrastructure payments		2 737

1 Excludes payments between Territory-controlled entities.

Cost of living support for Territorians



A family with a school-aged child and a child under 5 years

- Around \$1,900 in 2025-26 in electricity subsidies through community service obligation funding to electricity retailers to maintain prices below cost of supply
- Up to \$1,560 under the early childhood subsidy scheme, paid directly to early childhood education and care providers to subsidise the cost of childcare
- Two \$100 Learn to Swim vouchers for children under five years old, to enrol them in swimming lessons with a registered activity provider
- \$200 back to school vouchers, to support children and their families with the costs of schooling
- Two \$100 sport vouchers each year to be used for sport, recreation and cultural activities

Total assistance: **\$4,060**

And they could benefit from:

- up to \$12,000 grant to buy and install batteries and inverters under the Home and Business Battery Scheme
- free meningococcal B vaccination program
- free swimming lessons for all primary school-aged children
- grants to daycare providers to assist in purchasing appropriate toys and play-based equipment
- no increase to car registration for 12 months
- free driver's licence for 12 months.



A senior Territorian (eligible for NTCS)

- Around \$1,400 in 2025-26 in electricity subsidies through community service obligation funding to electricity retailers to maintain prices below cost of supply
- \$550 prepaid card for Territory residents aged over 65 under the Seniors Recognition Scheme

The Northern Territory Concession Scheme provides concessions on a range of essential goods and services to help with living expenses, including:

- a further \$1,200 per annum for electricity
- \$800 per annum for water
- \$486 per annum for sewerage
- \$251 for concessioners and their registered dependants for spectacles
- \$200 per annum for council rates
- \$154 per annum for vehicle registration
- \$150 per annum for garbage
- free driver's licence renewal.

Total assistance: **\$5,191**

And they could benefit from:

- up to \$1,000 to buy and install an electric vehicle (EV) charger, and up to \$1,500 in EV stamp duty concessions on the registration of new and second hand battery EVs and plugin hybrid EVs
- no increase to car registration for 12 months.



Businesses

- Up to \$68,750 through the increased payroll tax-free threshold, as well as a payroll tax exemption for wages paid or payable to apprentices and trainees
- Up to \$12,000 grant to buy and install batteries and inverters under the Home and Business Battery Scheme
- Around \$2,900 for small and \$27,000 for large businesses in 2025-26 in electricity subsidies through community service obligation funding to electricity retailers to maintain prices below cost of supply

Total assistance: up to **\$107,750**

And they could benefit from:

- up to \$2,500 to buy and install an electric vehicle charger
- up to \$15,000 for security improvements under the Biz Secure program.



Apprentices and trainees

- Around \$1,400 in 2025-26 in electricity subsidies through community service obligation funding to electricity retailers to maintain prices below cost of supply

Total assistance: **\$1,400**

And they could benefit from:

- free TAFE and vocational education and training courses
- up to \$1,000 for first-year apprentices and trainees to buy workwear and equipment as part of the workwear and gear bonus
- payroll tax exemption for trainee and apprentice wages, encouraging employers to invest in the Territory workforce
- no increase to car registration for 12 months
- free driver's licence for 12 months.



A couple building their first home

- Around \$1,800 in 2025-26 in electricity subsidies through community service obligation funding to electricity retailers to maintain prices below cost of supply
- Up to \$50,000 to build a new home under the HomeGrown Territory grant
- Up to \$12,000 grant to buy and install batteries and inverters under the Home and Business Battery Scheme

Total assistance: up to **\$63,800**

And they could benefit from:

- stamp duty exemption for eligible individuals who acquire a house and land package from a registered building practitioner under the House And Land Package Exemption
- HomeBuild access loans to support the supply of new and affordable homes through access to low deposit home loan options
- no increase to car registration for 12 months
- free driver's licence for 12 months.

Reducing crime

The 2025 Budget invests a record \$1.5 billion in public order and safety, and \$780 million in social protection to reduce crime and improve public safety through addressing the root causes of crime and justice reform.

Supporting police

The Territory Government is committed to supporting police to restore law and order, make the territory safer and keep our communities secure, including through expanding police powers. The 2025 Budget provides \$608 million for police services, which includes:

- \$95 million to continue the police funding package
- \$10.2 million for the Remote Policing Implementation Plan
- \$4.7 million for the airwing police aircraft replacement and leasing

- \$3.5 million for school-based policing
- \$3 million for the police, fire and emergency services wellbeing strategy
- \$1.3 million for increased closed-circuit television (CCTV) monitoring staff
- \$1 million per annum for the police banned drinker order support team.

Strengthening corrections

The 2025 Budget is boosting funding for corrections to address pressures associated with rising prisoner numbers and make the community safer.

The 2025 Budget provides a record \$495 million for corrections, investing additional funding of \$126 million in 2025-26 and \$176 million ongoing, including:

- \$80 million in 2025-26 and \$120 million ongoing to address rising prisoner numbers through additional staffing and operational capacity
- \$40 million in 2025-26 and \$50 million ongoing held in contingency and drawn down to address corrections pressures as needed
- \$6 million ongoing from 2025-26 for additional electronic monitoring capacity.

Restoring confidence in the justice system

The 2025 Budget provides additional funding of \$78 million over four years from 2024-25 and \$20.9 million ongoing to address pressures in the justice system, including:

- \$8.2 million over four years and \$1.6 million ongoing for the Crime Victims Support Unit, including additional grant funding for the victims fund, vehicle re-secure program and counselling for victims of crime
- \$3.5 million in 2024-25 and \$5.5 million ongoing for Legal Aid NT support

Joint Emergency Services Communications Centre

The 2025 Budget includes \$9.55 million over three years from 2024-25, and \$1.5 million ongoing to relocate the Joint Emergency Services Communications Centre (JESCC) critical technology infrastructure to the Government Data Centre and upgrade the integrated computer aided dispatch system.

A further \$6.6 million is provided to expand the JESCC and CCTV unit located at the Peter McAulay Centre.

This investment will ensure digital services and operations are consistently available, functioning optimally and experiencing minimum interruptions, and will reduce manual processes for JESCC staff to improve productivity.

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 JESCC.

- \$3.1 million in 2024-25 and \$5.3 million ongoing for local courts
- \$2.4 million in 2024-25 for higher courts
- \$1.6 million in 2024-25 and \$8.5 million ongoing for the Director of Public Prosecutions
- \$1.3 million in 2025-26 to continue community courts.

As part of the ongoing investment into the court system, the Territory Government has:

- appointed an additional full-time Local Court judge and more court staff
- recruited additional prosecutors and support staff to boost prosecution capacity
- transitioned a number of Director of Public Prosecution staff onto permanent contracts to retain skilled local workers
- launched the Targeted Intervention Group – Early Resolution Taskforce to fast-track remand cases and reduce court backlogs.

Early intervention

The 2025 Budget includes \$6.6 million ongoing for the new Circuit Breaker program, which provides intensive support to young people aged 10 to 17 and their families in Alice Springs, Katherine and Darwin. The program offers:

- intensive case management support for young people at risk of entering the youth justice or child protection system
- a safe place to sleep if no family or safe housing options are available
- frontline supervision in Alice Springs, Katherine and Darwin.

The Territory Government is further supporting early intervention through a range of reforms addressing the root causes of crime, starting with increasing school attendance rates to protect vulnerable children from falling through the cracks in our education system, and ensure every child in the Territory has access to the education they deserve.

School attendance officers will support holding parents to account for sending their children to school, which includes issuing compliance and infringement notices

to parents of students who do not attend school on a regular basis.

Families who deprive their child of an education will also be referred to income management with the Commonwealth. This will ensure Commonwealth-funded benefits are prioritised towards children's needs such as food, clothing, health and education.

The Territory Government is also expanding school-based policing to keep our students and teachers safe by having school-based constables present to intervene and stop crime.

Crime reduction

The Territory Government has introduced new laws to reduce crime and improve community safety. They include:

- the strongest bail laws in Australia including extending the presumption against bail for serious offences, such as assault with intent to steal and sexual offences, requiring the court to prioritise community safety when assessing bail, removing detention as a last resort for youth, making any breach of bail an offence and mandatory electronic monitoring for repeat offenders.
- mandatory minimum sentences for assaulting workers to enhance protection for frontline workers
- new offences for ram raids, and posting and boasting online to strengthen penalties and prevent these activities
- lowering the age of criminal responsibility to ensure young offenders get the help they need
- a new public drinking offence, giving police additional powers to fine, charge and arrest for nuisance drinking in prohibited public places
- more police powers to detect knife crime (Declan's Law) including expanded wandering powers.

Rebuilding the economy

The Territory Government is taking immediate action to deliver a stronger economic future for all Territorians.

Backing business

The Territory Government is growing the Territory's economy by backing Territorians and making it the best place in Australia to do business.

Attracting investment

The 2025 Budget includes \$6.4 million for the Office of the Territory Coordinator, established to drive economic growth in the Territory, and accelerate private sector jobs and opportunities for all Territorians. As an independent statutory role, the Territory Coordinator will:

- fast-track major investments, making it easier for investors to bring big ideas to life
- streamline approvals across government, removing roadblocks to economic progress
- boost the Territory's competitiveness, attracting large-scale investments to fuel growth and development.

The Territory Coordinator will ensure compliance remains a priority, and will work closely with regulatory agencies so projects meet necessary requirements without unnecessary delays. This will ensure the Territory remains competitive in attracting and securing major investments.

The government has also passed the Petroleum, Planning and Water Legislation Amendment Bill, paving the way for certainty and investment in the Territory's economy.

The changes remove the ability for third parties to seek merits review of decisions made under the petroleum, planning and water acts. This will reduce uncertainty, delays and disruption to the decision-making process.

From 1 July 2025, businesses with wage bills between \$2.5 million and \$7.5 million will see their payroll tax bill decrease, saving eligible businesses up to \$68,750 per year. It means the Territory has the highest payroll tax-free threshold in Australia.

The Territory Government has also introduced a payroll tax exemption for wages paid to 3,700 trainees and apprentices, saving businesses thousands of dollars more while encouraging them to invest in growing Territory talent by offering more apprenticeship and trainee positions.

Further, the Territory Government is making it simpler for charities and not-for-profit organisations to claim exemptions from payroll tax and stamp duty, reducing red tape and making it easier to do business in the Territory.

Building a bigger, better workforce

The 2025 Budget includes \$120 million for training and higher education to ensure the skill requirements of the Territory economy are met through responsive training and higher education sectors that are aligned to the needs of Territorians and Territory employers.

Further, the 2025 Budget includes additional funding of \$2 million per annum in 2025-26 and 2026-27 to attract workers and students to grow the Territory's population and address workforce shortages.

The funding will deliver skilled migration programs, worker attraction and retention activities, ensure timely processing of visa applications, and international education marketing and program delivery to attract and retain international workers and students.

Growing the tourism industry

The Territory Government is investing in the tourism sector with funding of \$88.4 million in 2025-26 to accelerate tourism growth in the Territory to drive greater interstate and international visitation, economic activity and investment.

The 2025 Budget includes new funding of \$8 million per annum from 2025-26 to provide an ongoing sustainable budget for tourism. This includes:

- \$4 million to maintain in-market presence in the Territory's primary western hemisphere markets of the United States, United Kingdom and Germany
- \$1.5 million for cooperative campaigns with key domestic trade partners
- \$1 million for promotional activities in interstate markets to build awareness of the Territory as a holiday destination
- \$1 million to support tourism activities
- \$0.5 million to support continued operation of the Visitor Information Centre at Yulara, and maintain the Visitor Information Centre network in Darwin, Katherine, Tennant Creek and Alice Springs.

The 2025 Budget also includes a \$3 million boost to military tourism with an updated Military Heritage Tourism Action Plan. The first stage is the new \$1 million Military History Tourism Grant program to help tourism operators develop new military heritage tourism products, expand existing offerings, and enhance visitor experiences.

In addition, government extended the Territory tourism discount scheme and continued the Visitor Experience Enhancement Program.

Unlocking gas

The Beetaloo Sub-basin has moved towards commercial production, including gas sales agreements for Tamboran Resources and Empire Energy to supply gas to the Territory Government.

Empire Energy commenced drilling on its full-scale pilot development well in November 2024. In 2025, Empire is due to commence construction of the Carpentaria gas plant and associated infrastructure, and is aiming to begin gas deliveries in 2025.

Tamboran Resources commenced its Shenandoah South pilot project drilling program in August 2024 and in February 2025, announced it had successfully completed stimulation activities. Tamboran remains on schedule to deliver appraisal gas to market in 2026.

Building a new home

The Territory Government is delivering the most generous home builder program in the country with targeted incentives to grow the population and get the workforce the Territory needs to rebuild the economy. The scheme includes:

- the HomeGrown Territory grant, which provides \$50,000 for first home buyers building or buying a new home, or \$10,000 for buying an established home
- the FreshStart new home grant, which provides \$30,000 to buy or build a new home. In an Australian first, this includes anyone who has previously owned or currently owns a home.

The Territory Government is also supporting land release to boost construction and increase home ownership. The 2025 Budget includes \$49.6 million to deliver the required district-level enabling infrastructure to facilitate the Holtze land release area to create Greater Darwin's next urban suburb.

The 2025 budget also includes \$11 million for headworks infrastructure to support the development of residential land in Farrar West.



Restoring our lifestyle

Cost of living support

The 2025 Budget includes a range of concessions, subsidies and incentives aimed at reducing the cost of living for Territorians. This includes:

- \$8.7 million to continue to deliver the \$200 back to school vouchers
- \$6.9 million to continue to deliver the two \$100 sports vouchers each year
- \$5.7 million to continue the early childhood services subsidy
- \$3 million per annum to support free swimming lessons for all primary school students
- \$1.36 million for the learn to swim program for children aged 0 to 5
- free meningococcal B vaccination program
- free driver's licence for 12 months
- no increase to car registration costs for 12 months
- HomeGrown Territory and FreshStart housing incentives.

Major events

The 2025 Budget includes \$36.5 million to support major events in the Territory, including:

- Triple Crown Supercars
- BASSINTHEGRASS
- Parrtjima – A Festival in Light
- Million Dollar Fish
- Red CentreNATS
- Territory Day
- Alice Springs Masters Games
- FIM Motocross World Championship
- the first ever T20 international men's cricket competition in Darwin
- AFL women's Dreamtime match in Darwin.

The 2025 Budget also provides \$30.7 million to recognise the important contribution of seniors, support carers and concession holders through concession and recognition schemes.

Aboriginal participation in sport

The 2025 Budget includes \$2 million over four years to support Aboriginal participation in sport programs across the Territory. Funding will be allocated to NT Cricket to support Aboriginal cricket development officers to increase Indigenous and female participation in sport and make cricket more accessible in regional and remote communities.

Recreational fishing

The government is delivering more support for recreational fishing through the 2025 Northern Territory Recreational Fishing Grants Scheme. Fishing is a huge part of the Territory's lifestyle, creating thousands of jobs for Territorians and generating millions of dollars for the local economy every year.

The grants scheme is part of the RecFishing Futures program and will help deliver a variety of activities, including fishing education programs, infrastructure projects, and recreational fishing events that engage and benefit local communities.

The second round of funding will open in August 2025, providing grants of up to \$75,000 for larger infrastructure projects aimed at expanding recreational fishing opportunities across the Territory.

Empowering the bush

The Territory Government has signed a landmark partnership agreement with the Commonwealth and Aboriginal peak organisations to strengthen service delivery in remote Aboriginal communities in the Territory.

The Commonwealth will commit \$842.6 million over six years to deliver the Northern Territory Remote Aboriginal Investment agreement to drive priority reforms and improve socioeconomic outcomes under the National Agreement on Closing the Gap.



The 2025 Budget also includes funding of \$25.1 million over four years for the Remote Community Water Security and Water Quality program, which aims to improve drinking water infrastructure in remote Aboriginal communities.

Health investment

The 2025 Budget provides \$2.5 billion for health services across the Territory, including a \$100 million boost per annum to the Department of Health budget to deliver safe and high quality health services for Territorians. Key health investments in 2025-26 include:

- \$1.5 billion for hospital services
- \$313.4 million for primary health care
- \$135 million for mental health
- \$60.3 million for alcohol and other drugs services.

The 2025 Budget includes an additional \$16 million ongoing for operating costs of the new mental health in-patient ward at Royal Darwin Hospital. A further \$0.5 million is provided in 2025-26 to purchase the medical equipment required to operate the new ward once construction is completed, anticipated to be early 2026.

The 2025 Budget also includes an additional \$6 million per annum in 2025-26 and 2026-27 to continue implementing the Acacia digital health solution. When fully implemented, the Acacia digital health solution will enable the Department of Health to deliver improved health outcomes for all Territorians and particularly will benefit the most disadvantaged members of the community with the poorest health outcomes.

Affordable energy

The Territory Government will secure the Territory's energy future by progressing vital reforms to improve grid reliability, keeping prices affordable, and ensure a stable and well-managed energy transition. To protect households and businesses, retail electricity price increases for most customers have been capped at 3% in 2025-26, benefiting around 85,000 households and businesses.

The 2025 Budget provides funding of \$206 million in community service obligation (CSO) funding to the Power and Water Corporation and electricity retailers to subsidise utility costs. This includes:

- \$191.7 million to maintain electricity supply to households and small business customers at uniform prices across the Territory, at below cost of supply
- \$14.4 million for various pensioner and carer concessions
- \$0.4 million to subsidise water and sewerage services for a number of religious and charitable organisations.

In 2025-26, the increased investment in the CSO means an average electricity subsidy of around \$1,700 per household. Average small businesses will save around \$2,900, and large businesses will save around \$27,900, compared to if no CSO was provided.

Addressing domestic, family and sexual violence

The 2025 Budget includes \$36 million per annum in additional ongoing funding to sustainably address domestic, family and sexual violence (DFSV) in the Territory.

Courts, prosecution and witness support

- \$9.6 million over five years and \$2.6 million ongoing to continue the specialist DFSV court at the Alice Springs Local Court and expand to two more sites.
- \$3.9 million over five years and \$0.8 million ongoing to reduce the impacts for victim survivors of DFSV arising through criminal proceedings by improving the capacity of the Director of Public Prosecutions to take a specialist approach to DFSV prosecutions.

Programs for prisoners

- \$19.8 million over five years and \$4 million ongoing to continue delivery of family violence programs, and new culturally safe offender programs that address people's offending behaviours while in prison.
- \$2.7 million over five years and \$0.4 million ongoing for culturally safe, gender-specific, trauma informed DFSV counselling and healing options for women prisoners.

Programs in community settings

- \$18 million over five years and \$3.8 million ongoing to continue men's behaviour change programs in Darwin, Wadeye, Alice Springs and Katherine.

Remote safe houses

- \$2 million over five years and \$0.2 million ongoing to support the transition of remote women's safe houses to providers in remote locations to enhance service delivery.

Early intervention

- \$35.7 million over five years and \$7.9 million ongoing for the Alice Springs co-responder model and to implement new models in Darwin, Katherine, Tennant Creek and a remote location.
- \$32.8 million over five years and \$6.6 million ongoing for the Circuit Breaker program, to provide intensive support for young people aged 10 to 17 and their families to address DFSV before escalation to offending.

Specialist DFSV health response

- \$2.1 million over five years and \$0.4 million ongoing to increase the reach and capacity of the health system to recognise, respond and refer victim survivors and those at risk through an after-hours specialist DFSV response.

Family Safety Framework

- \$6.1 million over five years and \$1 million ongoing to strengthen the Family Safety Framework as an integrated response for people experiencing or at risk of serious DFSV harm or death.

Community innovation projects and events

- \$3.3 million over five years and \$0.3 million ongoing for community-led prevention projects that challenge social and cultural attitudes, practices and structures underpinning DFSV.
- \$0.8 million over five years and \$0.1 million ongoing to support community grants to raise awareness about DFSV.

DFSV risk assessment by universal services

- \$1.3 million over five years and \$0.3 million ongoing to continue implementing the Risk Assessment Management Framework by universal services.

DFSV policy, coordination and governance

- \$8.6 million over five years and \$1.5 million ongoing to strengthen the whole of government DFSV coordination mechanism to lead consistent and evidence-based DFSV policy and practice.

DFSV training and resource centre

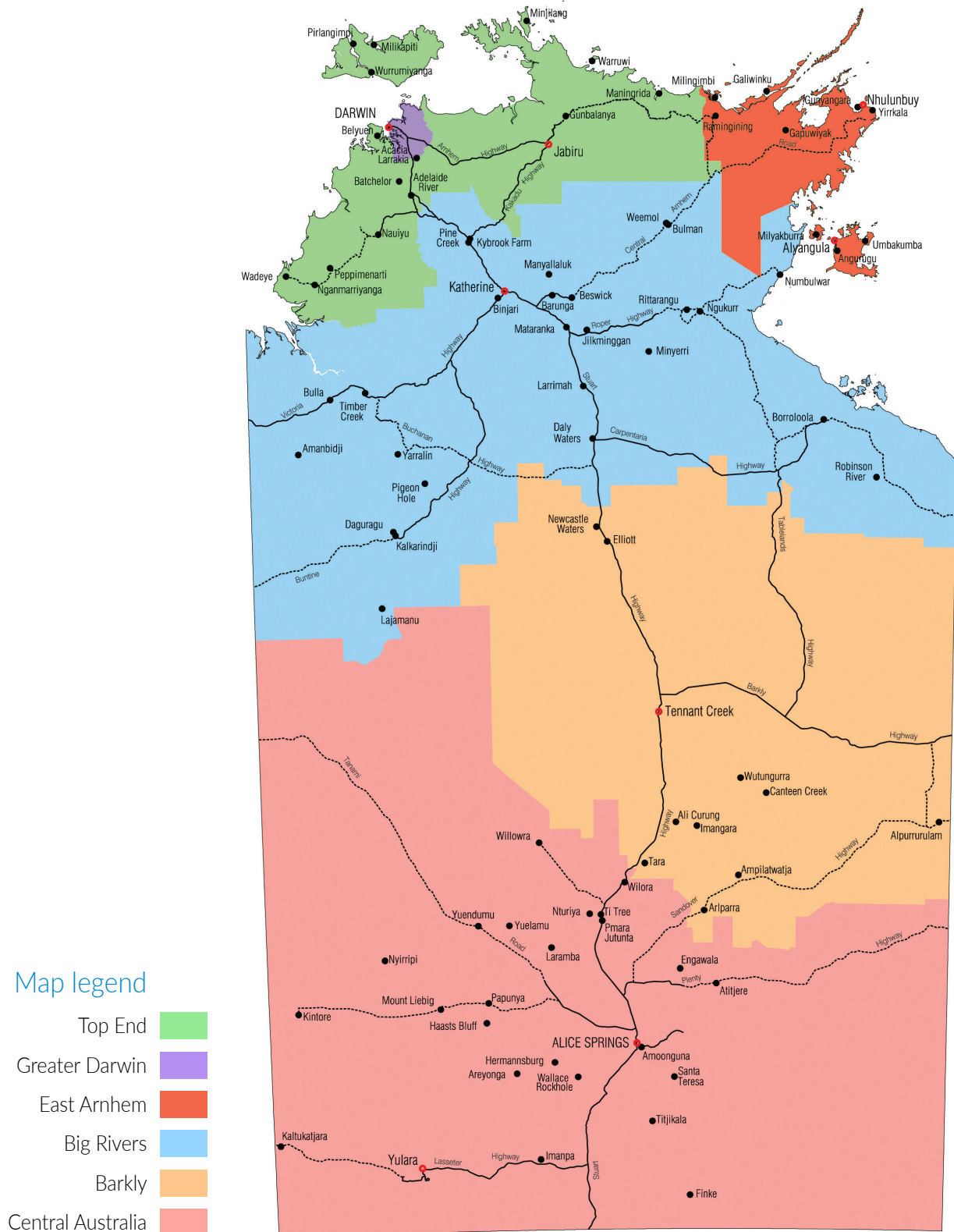
- \$7.5 million over five years and \$1 million ongoing to establish a centralised structure for DFSV training and workforce support.

Specialist services funding for an integrated response

- \$26 million over five years and \$5.2 million ongoing to increase and standardise investment for DFSV specialist services as part of an integrated service delivery system.

Regional overview

The following is an overview of key regional initiatives and programs in the 2025 Budget. It complements the extensive information contained in the other budget papers by presenting budget details of particular relevance to the communities in each of the Territory's six regions.



Central Australia

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
 - \$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 Alice Springs region through investment to support a program of land release, including:

- \$11 million for headworks infrastructure and subdivision works to support the development of Kilgariff residential land
- \$9.4 million for infrastructure 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.

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 Tjukurura 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 provide improved and expanded 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 that considers the cultural and natural values of the landscape, while delivering a quality walking experience for locals and visitors.

St Mary's land development

The 2025 Budget includes \$14 million to construct 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.

Barkly

The Barkly is the Territory's third largest region and extends along the Stuart Highway from Tara to Elliott and east across the Barkly Tablelands to Queensland.

The Barkly region is made up of small communities separated by long distances and is home to around 6,100 people, of whom around 69% are Aboriginal. Tennant Creek is the main centre with a population of around 3,500 people. A high proportion of people living in the region are young, with around 39% aged 24 years and under, and about 8% aged 65 or older.

Major industries in the region include government services, agriculture, construction and mining. The Barkly and Tennant Creek pastoral district accounts for a substantial proportion of the Territory's total cattle industry. The Territory Government is also investing to develop Tennant Creek as a mining and mineral services centre.

Roads

The 2025 Budget includes \$57.5 million to upgrade the Tennant Creek to Townsville road corridor, including sealing, strengthening, widening and road safety improvements.

The Tennant Creek to Townsville corridor is a key economic freight route that supports major industries including mining, agriculture and tourism. The upgrades will:

- ensure key freight roads efficiently connect agricultural and mining regions to ports, airports and other transport hubs
- provide a more reliable and safe road network, especially during the wet season
- improve access for higher capacity vehicles
- facilitate other economic opportunities, especially tourism.

The 2025 Budget also includes \$28 million for the Sandover Highway to upgrade, widen and seal 20 kilometres of unsealed road.

The Sandover Highway upgrades will enhance social and economic conditions in the Barkly, improving access to essential services and bolstering economic growth through reliable transport for regional development and cattle logistics.

Housing milestone for Tennant Creek

Works have been completed on 12 newly built social and affordable homes in Tennant Creek as part of the joint partnership between the Territory and Commonwealth under the Barkly Regional Deal.

The \$6.9 million partnership marks the first Territory project to be funded by Housing Australia, through the Commonwealth's National Housing Infrastructure Facility (Social and Affordable Housing).

Five of the homes, built by Habitat NT, will be allocated to residents on the Territory's social housing waitlist. The other seven will be affordable homes leased at subsidised rents to eligible working households on low to moderate incomes to support key workers who deliver critical services to Tennant Creek and the Barkly region more broadly.

Venture Housing will also be constructing three new social housing dwellings in Tennant Creek.

Reducing crime

The Tennant Creek Youth Justice Facility has commenced operations under the Department of Corrections, with clients transferred and the new facility operational from March 2025.

The 2025 Budget provides \$10.2 million to construct a new visitor park in Tennant Creek, which includes \$5 million from the Commonwealth. The facility will provide access to a range of safe accommodation options for transitional and seasonal visitors from outside Tennant Creek.

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 24 dwellings are expected to be delivered across communities in the Barkly, including Ali Curung, Ampilatwatja, Canteen Creek, Epenarra and Imangara.



Mining centre

The Territory Government is investing to develop Tennant Creek as a mining, mineral and energy resources services centre to support a range of new projects across the region.

Tennant Mining, which has been acquired by global miner Pan African Resources, is establishing a gold processing facility at Nobles Nob that will support the reinvigoration of Tennant Creek as a key centre for gold production in the Territory. Construction is due to be complete in mid-2025, with first gold produced in the second half of 2025.

Major works overview

	Capital works
	\$000
Transport	88 197
Housing and community amenities	10 221
Recreation, culture and religion	1 681
Economic affairs	945
Education	319
Total Barkly	101 364

Industrial subdivision

The 2025 Budget allocates \$1 million to progress design works to support the development of stage 2 of the Parnttali industrial subdivision in Tennant Creek.

Nyinkka Nyunyu Art and Cultural Centre

The 2025 Budget includes investment in the Barkly region's developing tourism industry.

The Nyinkka Nyunyu Art and Cultural Centre will reopen in 2025 providing a new artist studio, upgraded gallery, performance and storage spaces, and immersive audio visual displays and experiences that share history, stories, arts and culture.

Big Rivers

Big Rivers is the Territory's second largest region, covering almost 25% of the Territory's land mass from the Joseph Bonaparte Gulf and Lajamanu in the west to Numbulwar and Borroloola in the east.

The Big Rivers region is made up of small communities separated by long distances and is home to around 21,500 people, of whom around 57% are Aboriginal. The town of Katherine is the region's main centre with a population of around 10,800 people. About 38% of the region's population is aged 24 years and under, while around 8% is aged 65 years and over.

Major industries in the Big Rivers region include tourism, horticulture, pastoral, mining and defence. The region has a significant defence presence, including the Royal Australian Air Force (RAAF) Base Tindal, Bradshaw field training area and Delamere air weapons range. Key tourist attractions include Nitmiluk Gorge, Leliyn (Edith Falls), Mataranka and recreational fishing in the region's big rivers.

Beetaloo Sub-basin

The Beetaloo Sub-basin has moved towards commercial production, including the signing of gas sales agreements for Tamboran Resources and Empire Energy to supply gas to the Territory Government.

Empire Energy commenced drilling on its full-scale pilot development well in November 2024. In 2025, Empire is due to commence construction of the Carpentaria gas plant and associated infrastructure, and is aiming to begin gas deliveries in 2025.

Tamboran commenced its Shenandoah South pilot project drilling program in August 2024, and in February 2025, announced they had successfully completed stimulation activities. Tamboran remains on schedule to deliver appraisal gas to market in 2026.

Improving access across the region

The 2025 Budget continues to enhance accessibility across the Big Rivers region to improve freight efficiency, connectivity, road safety and economic productivity by investing \$168 million, including:

- \$117.4 million for the Buntine Highway upgrades, including \$5 million to upgrade five heavy vehicle rest areas
- \$41.6 million for new and continuing works to upgrade the Newman to Katherine road corridor including sealing, strengthening and widening, and road safety improvements
- \$8.5 million for continuing works to upgrade the Carpentaria Highway, a key route for supplies and transport for Glencore's McArthur River Mine, major access road to the Beetaloo Sub-basin and Borroloola, and an important service route for the Borroloola community and pastoral, tourism, agricultural and mining sectors
- \$0.8 million to construct a compliance inspections shed at the Katherine heavy vehicle facility.

New multipurpose multicultural facility in Katherine

The 2025 Budget includes \$1.5 million for the Katherine multipurpose multicultural facility.

The multipurpose facility will serve both multicultural and broader community events, promoting social inclusion and participation. Having a safe space for multicultural events, educational programs, and community-building activities will encourage retention of the overseas-born population, providing opportunities for social interaction and cultural expression, which helps develop a sense of belonging and enhances workforce stability.

Hosting cultural events and community activities also drives local spending, enhances Katherine's cultural scene, and builds vibrant, diverse and inclusive communities. Investing in this infrastructure will attract cultural festivals and community events that stimulate local businesses, boost tourism, and increase community engagement.

STEAM centre

Work will continue on the \$16.7 million Katherine High School science, technology, engineering, arts and mathematics (STEAM) centre. The project includes a mix of upgrades to existing facilities and development of new areas and purpose-built classrooms, art and music studios and a tiered performance space.

Major works overview

	Capital works
	\$000
Transport	168 355
Health	19 765
Recreation, culture and religion	1 976
Education	1 210
Total Big Rivers	191 306

Katherine amphitheatre

The \$7.6 million transformation of Godinymayin Yijard Rivers Arts and Culture Centre has been celebrated at the grand opening of its new amphitheatre in Katherine in April 2025.

The completion of the expanded stage and open-air venue for professional outdoor performances is an exciting milestone for the Katherine arts and culture centre, which now boasts more modern facilities for performers and visitors.

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 41 dwellings are expected to be delivered across communities in Big Rivers, including 20 in Lajamanu. New subdivisions are also planned in 2025-26 for Minyerri.

Nitmiluk National Park

To provide a further boost to tourism in the region, the 2025 Budget provides \$1.7 million to establish new walking and bike trails linking with mountain bike trails in the Nitmiluk National Park.

Borroloola health centre and morgue

The 2025 budget includes \$19.8 million for the construction of a new health centre in Borroloola to enhance delivery of health services.

The new centre will assist in attracting and retaining clinical staff. It will include clinical and pharmacy spaces, emergency resuscitation equipment, consulting spaces, morgue facilities and a separate patient and visitor entrance from staff.



East Arnhem

The East Arnhem region is situated in the far northeastern corner of the Territory and covers East Arnhem Land, Groote Eylandt, Bickerton Island and Elcho Island.

The region is home to around 14,700 people, of whom around 70% are Aboriginal, with major population centres in Nhulunbuy and Alyangula, and several other large communities. The population in East Arnhem is relatively young and dispersed, with around 40% aged 24 years and under and only around 4% aged 65 years and over.

Due to seasonal road accessibility constraints, transport for travellers and freight to East Arnhem is mainly by air or sea. Major industries in the region include mining, buffalo farming, tourism, aquaculture and fishing.

Mining is the main contributor to economic activity in the region, with the production of manganese at the GEMCO mine at Groote Eylandt and bauxite at the Rio Tinto and Gulkula mines on the Gove Peninsula. Traditional Aboriginal cultural experiences, Aboriginal art, and the remote and natural wilderness attract tourists to the region, providing economic and employment opportunities.

Central Arnhem Road upgrades

The Territory Government is planning for and delivering long-term upgrades along the 685 kilometre Central Arnhem Road corridor that connects the services centre of Nhulunbuy to the Stuart Highway. The road services a number of communities and homelands, and through the dry season is a key tourism drive and freight route.

More than 85% of the road is unsealed and road users experience frequent restrictions or closures throughout the wet season. The Commonwealth and Territory governments have committed \$355 million to upgrade the corridor over coming years. The upgrades include sealing, widening and flood immunity improvements to priority sections of the route.

The 2025 Budget includes \$205 million for new and continuing works along the corridor. Upgrading and sealing Central Arnhem Road will unlock further economic potential in the region, and open a range of new long-term economic and social opportunities.

Garrthalala Bush University

Laynhapuy Homelands Aboriginal Corporation and Charles Darwin University have partnered to strengthen training delivery on Laynhapuy homelands and at the Garrthalala Bush University.

The memorandum of understanding will allow CDU Aboriginal pathway programs in health, arts, education, engineering, science, law, business or accounting to be offered at the university, and other identified sites across 30 homelands, for the first time.

The new agreement will also explore co-creation of micro-credentials for Yolngu and balanda models of leadership and governance and practical training for employment. CDU educators will run most of the training, education and research at the Garrthalala Bush University, located on Laynhapuy homelands.

This partnership will help increase access to tertiary education across the region and provide another avenue for the people of the region to have a say in the training that is accessible to them.

Major works overview

	Capital works
	\$000
Transport	206 620
Health	19 906
Housing and community amenities	15 903
Recreation, culture and religion	4 000
Total East Arnhem	246 429

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 75 dwellings are expected to be delivered across communities in East Arnhem, including 33 in Galiwinku and 22 in Ramingining. New subdivisions are also planned in 2025-26 for Galiwinku.



Employment pathway trainee pilot program

The Territory Government continues to grow a skilled and sustainable Aboriginal health workforce in the Territory by delivering training locally.

For the first time, an employment pathway trainee pilot program for Aboriginal health workers and practitioners is being delivered on Groote Eylandt to provide a closer-to-home learning pathway for Aboriginal people in the region to pursue a career in health.

The program is designed to build foundational knowledge and skills over time, offering a flexible and supportive training environment, and will assist in growing our own local workforce and ensuring Aboriginal Territorians can access culturally appropriate healthcare delivered by people they know and trust.

Trainees can progress at their own pace, with pathways available right through to Certificate IV in Aboriginal Primary Health Care Practice – the qualification required to become a registered Aboriginal health practitioner.

New ward structure for Groote Archipelago Regional Council

The Territory Government is delivering on its commitment to restore local control of communities to Aboriginal people, strengthen service delivery and foster self-determination through important reform.

Previously comprised of one ward, the new ward structure for the Groote Archipelago Regional Council will now have three wards representing distinct areas of the archipelago – West Ward, Central Ward and East Ward, to offer fairer and more localised representation to residents.

Introduction of additional wards ensures all communities in the Groote Archipelago region are represented in local governance, including residents in smaller communities such as Milyakburra.

Top End

The Top End region encompasses the Tiwi Islands, Daly and West Arnhem regions, extending from Wadeye in the west to Maningrida in the east.

Around 18,400 people live in the Top End region with major population centres in Wadeye and Jabiru. The region’s population is relatively young, with around 37% aged 24 years and under, and only about 9% aged 65 years or older.

Major industries in the region include tourism, horticulture and forestry. Tourism is a significant contributor to economic activity in the Top End, with world-renowned attractions, such as Litchfield and Kakadu national parks, as well as the Daly River for recreational fishing and camping.

Mandorah marine facility

Works on the \$84 million project to construct new marine facilities to improve and maintain public transport services for residents and visitors to Mandorah, Wagait Beach and Belyuen are expected to be completed by July 2025.

The new facilities located at Mandorah will be compliant with the *Disability Discrimination Act 1992* to improve safety and access for ferry users and people with disability to get on and off the ferry.

The project includes:

- two breakwater structures to provide protection from sea swells and wave action
- access improvements for people with disability and people who need mobility assistance, including wheelchairs and prams
- modifications to the car park layout to add car/trailer parking and additional bays for people with disability
- upgrade existing building to provide shade and toilet facilities for ferry passengers
- new boat ramp.

Works will be scheduled during daylight hours to minimise potential noise impacts. More than 73% of the subcontractors and suppliers engaged for the project are Territory businesses.

Road upgrades

The 2025 Budget continues to enhance accessibility across the Top End to improve freight efficiency, connectivity, road safety and economic productivity by investing \$201 million in roads, including:

- \$90 million for selected upgrades on Port Keats Road between Wadeye and Palumpa. The project is expected to commence in 2025 and will be completed by late 2027
- \$66 million to upgrade roads within Kakadu National Park to encourage private investment, improve visitor safety and access, and increase the length of the main tourist season to support tourism growth
- \$43 million to upgrade roads on the Tiwi Islands to connect communities, address access and safety issues, and improve flood immunity
- \$2 million for road upgrades and modifications as part of Rum Jungle rehabilitation project stage 3.

Major works overview

	Capital works
	\$'000
Transport	220 188
Economic affairs	93 500
Public order and safety	35 745
Housing and community amenities	9 734
Total Top End	359 167

Maningrida police complex

Maningrida is the largest Aboriginal community in the Territory with a population of over 2,600.

The 2025 Budget includes \$35.7 million to construct a multipurpose police complex in Maningrida.

Stage 1 of the project includes a new police complex with capacity for 14 officers, holding cells, employee housing and visiting officer quarters, multifunction room/court house, secure vehicle compound, boat and storage sheds, and a communications tower.

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 53 dwellings are expected to be delivered across communities in the Top End, including 17 in Gunbalanya. New subdivisions are also planned in 2025-26 for Maningrida (Stage 3).

Sealink ferry service

The government has signed a new five-year agreement with SeaLink to operate passenger ferry services between Darwin, Mandorah and the Tiwi Islands (Wurrumiyanga).

SeaLink has delivered the Darwin, Mandorah and Tiwi Islands ferry services for over a decade, providing safe and reliable transport services for residents, tourists and local businesses in the Top End region.

Gunlom Falls reopening

Gunlom Falls is set to reopen in May 2025, following a six-year closure. A new lease between Kakadu Traditional Owners and the Commonwealth, including Commonwealth funding of \$55 million over four years, was announced in the Commonwealth's 2025 Budget.

Gunlom Falls, originally named UDP Falls and later Waterfall Creek Falls, features seasonal cascades from 85-meter-high cliffs, peaking after the wet season, into a plunge pool that is a popular swimming hole. There are also swimming holes at the top of the falls.



Greater Darwin

The Greater Darwin region includes the cities of Darwin and Palmerston, the Litchfield Shire, East Arm and Robertson Barracks.

The region is home to around 152,500 people, representing about 60% of the Territory’s population. Greater Darwin has the lowest proportion of young people among the regions, with around 32% aged 24 years and under, and the highest proportion of population aged 65 years and over, at around 10%.

Darwin is the Territory’s capital city and the main administrative centre. Major industries include construction, defence, retail, tourism, education and training, public administration, community safety and health care. Darwin is a key gateway to the Territory’s regional centres and tourist attractions, and an important strategic hub for trade and defence.

Major industries in Palmerston and the Litchfield Shire include construction, aquaculture, horticulture, cattle and crocodile farming, defence and LNG production.

The Robertson Barracks army base, located near Palmerston, hosts ongoing rotations of the United States marines in the Territory.

Economic infrastructure

The 2025 Budget invests in infrastructure to support the growth of the Greater Darwin region including:

- \$93.5 million for the Strauss to Middle Arm pipeline
- \$13.7 million for East Arm utilities upgrades.

The Territory Government continues to support land release across the Greater Darwin region, including:

- \$49.6 million for headworks infrastructure to support the development of Holtze
- \$11 million for headworks infrastructure to support the development of Farrar West
- \$2 million for a rolling program of headworks infrastructure and subdivision designs to support the development of land across the region
- \$1.2 million for headworks infrastructure to support the development of the Berrimah North area plan.

Royal Darwin Hospital upgrades

The 2025 Budget includes funding to progress upgrades to the Royal Darwin Hospital, including:

- \$49.3 million for a mental health inpatient unit and stabilisation assessment and referral area facility
- \$17.7 million for a new modular multipurpose facility.

The 2025 Budget also includes \$16 million ongoing for operating costs of the new mental health facility and \$500,000 to purchase medical equipment.

Kulaluk town camp upgrade

The 2025 Budget includes \$11 million for works at Kulaluk town camp in Coconut Grove to upgrade the stormwater drainage system, infrastructure and access road.

The works will create an underground stormwater system that will alleviate localised flooding, water ponding and associated biting insect issues. The works include:

- new underground stormwater drainage
- upgrade the dual lane access road, water, power and street lighting
- new footpath through to the town camp
- improve vehicle entry and exit from Dick Ward Drive.

Works are due to start mid 2025 (weather dependant) and be completed by February 2026.

Major works overview

	Capital works
	\$000
Economic affairs	567 039
Transport	121 496
Health	70 674
Housing and community amenities	70 605
Recreation, culture and religion	55 628
Environmental protection	13 652
Education	9 101
Public order and safety	6 600
Social protection	4 619
General public services	2 663
Total Greater Darwin	922 076



Lifestyle

- \$4.6 million for the new northern suburbs Youth Hub at Leanyer Recreation Park
- \$3.3 million for track and service modifications at Hidden Valley Motor Sports Complex
- \$2.8 million for Stokes Hill Wharf upgrades.

Transport

The 2025 Budget includes \$103 million for upgrades to roads in Greater Darwin, including:

- \$80 million for Arnhem Highway duplication – Stuart Highway to Kostka Road
- \$23 million for Roystonea Avenue duplication – Terry Drive to Lambrick Avenue.

Upgrades to schools

The 2025 Budget includes \$9.1 million for new and continuing works to upgrade school infrastructure and facilities in Greater Darwin, including:

- \$3.8 million for new preschool facilities at Parap Primary School
- \$1.7 million for planning for enrolment growth in secondary and special education in Palmerston
- \$1.6 million for administration block upgrades at Leanyer Primary School
- \$1 million for a special education centre for middle and senior students in Palmerston
- \$1 million for priority roof replacement at Wulagi Primary School.

Youth Hub

The 2025 Budget includes \$4.6 million to support the delivery of a new Youth Hub in Darwin's northern suburbs.

The Youth Hub will be built at the Leanyer Recreation Park precinct following community feedback about the previously proposed site at the former Casuarina Fire Station.

The new site, based within a popular recreational precinct with existing public transport links, allows the Youth Hub to be easily accessible for young people and families across Darwin's northern suburbs.

The current SHAK Youth Drop-In Centre at Sanderson Middle School, which has been running since October 2021, will continue to operate as an interim youth hub providing essential referral pathways and early intervention to support young people.

The new Youth Hub will complement design work currently being undertaken on Leanyer Recreation Park precinct amenities, including a pump track (for cycling, scootering and roller blading), an undercover basketball court and upgrades to skate park amenities.

Acknowledgements

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