DOING WHAT WE SAID WE’D DO

Over the last four years, we’ve been getting on with the projects and the policies we promised we would.

We’re upgrading every single regional rail line in the state to connect our country communities.

We established the landmark Regional Health Infrastructure Fund, the largest of its kind in our state’s history.

We’re fixing and widening our regional roads to get people home to their families safer and sooner.

And we’re doing it using local workers and local materials.

We’ve also kept our promise to end the ambulance crisis, rebuild our hospitals, and give our hardworking nurses and doctors the respect and recognition they deserve.

We’re building 70 new schools and upgrading 1300 more, while ensuring families doing it tough get the support they need.

We’ve cut stamp duty to help regional first homebuyers break into the market, while making renting fairer and easier for tenants.

And because we want to make our state even safer, we’re recruiting 3135 new frontline police officers and finally addressing our state’s number one law and order issue, family violence.

In every community and every corner of our state, we’ve been building and strengthening Victoria – just like we said we would.

This Budget continues to deliver on our positive plan, beginning or acquitting all of the commitments we made to the Victorian people.
This includes a brand-new Delivering for Regional and Rural Victoria Program, ensuring a whole-of-government focus on the needs of our regional communities. This Budget invests:

- $136 million to deliver 500,000 extra appointments with medical specialists for patients in regional Victoria
- $64.4 million to support stronger patient ratios and deliver an extra 542 nurses and midwives in our hospitals
- $100 million boost to the Regional Health Infrastructure Fund, ensuring Victorians can rely on quality care, wherever they live
- $1.6 billion for new hospitals and local healthcare services across our state, including kickstarting work on 10 new and upgraded Community Hospitals
- $882 million to kickstart the rollout of three-year-old kinder for every Victorian child
- $100 million to get on with the Western Rail Plan, the first step in fully separating regional and metropolitan services on the Geelong and Ballarat Lines
- $322 million to begin the rollout of free dental for students at our government schools
- $1.4 billion to keep building, upgrading and modernising schools across Victoria
- $132 million to continue our transformation of the TAFE system, with more modern facilities and more courses added to the Free TAFE list
- $214 million to ensure new parents have the support they need, with seven new parenting centres, extended sleep assistance and new baby bundles
- $545 million to expand Solar Homes and put the power back in the hands of Victorians

This is a Budget – and a Government – that keeps our promises and delivers for all Victorians.

Delivering for Regional and Rural Victorians

In its first term, the Andrews Labor Government delivered more than $13 billion towards the projects and programs that matter most to regional Victorians.

This Budget continues our commitment, with the brand-new Delivering for Regional and Rural Victoria Program.

This $2.6 billion investment is dedicated to ensuring a whole-of-government focus on the needs of our regional communities, and this will support an estimated 4,500 jobs.

With investments in local projects and local priorities, this Program will help make sure we continue to deliver for regional Victorians.
ROAD AND RAIL

ROADS

Our road network is the backbone of regional Victoria, connecting communities to work, study and to each other.

But after decades of underinvestment and inattention, we knew our country roads were in need of an overhaul.

It’s why over the past four years, we’ve invested $1.9 billion in our state’s regional roads, as well as establishing a dedicated country roads authority, Regional Roads Victoria, because nobody knows local roads like local people.

We promised to continue our work fixing and upgrading our regional roads. And this year’s Budget delivers on that commitment, investing $804 million across our regional road network.

That includes $425 million to carry out maintenance across regional Victoria to improve travel times and most importantly, get regional Victorians home safely.

The Andrews Labor Government is investing $400 000 to progress planning on the $318 million promised upgrade of Barwon Heads Road, duplicating four kilometres of road and constructing a new bridge over the train line north of Marshall Station.

An additional $121 million will progress the Towards Zero 2016-2020 Road Safety Strategy, continuing our efforts to reduce our state’s road toll particularly on our regional roads.

A further $52.9 million will deliver upgrades, traffic light installations, and pedestrian improvements to regional roads across the state. These intersection upgrades include:

- Gisborne-Kilmore Road and Saunders Road intersection in Gisborne, improving safety, access and connectivity
- Melbourne Road and Gisborne-Kilmore Road intersection in Gisborne, improving visibility and safety for local drivers
- Orton Street and Presidents Avenue in Ocean Grove, fixing this notorious intersection once and for all
- Hermsley Road and Curlewis Road in Curlewis, installing traffic lights and making this intersection safer for locals

A further $10.7 million will go towards upgrading and renewing bridges around our state, improving safety and boosting productivity in our freight network.

And, through our $30 million Regional Car Parks Fund, we’re building 2000 free public parking spaces in Ballarat’s CBD, Traralgon, Morwell, and a range of other regional locations.

The Victorian Budget 2019/20 also delivers on our promised $60.8 million investment to keep the growing city of Ballarat moving, upgrading the city’s key intersections and reducing bottlenecks for local drivers. This includes upgrades at:

- Learmonth Street/Ballarat-Carngham Road/ Wiltshire Lane/La Trobe Street intersection with new traffic lights, improving flow through the intersection
- Dyson Drive and Ballarat-Carngham Road intersection, delivering a new roundabout for local drivers
- Wiltshire Lane/Glenelg Highway/Smythes Road/Cherry Flat Road intersection, with new lanes making it safer and easier to access Delacombe Town Centre
- Learmonth Street and Sturt Street, adding new lanes to the roundabout and reducing queuing in peak periods
- Gregory Street and Gillies Street, installing traffic lights and taking the stress out of turning in and out of Gregory Street
- Cuthberts Road and Learmonth Street, with new lanes added to the roundabout
- Sturt, Russell and Morrison Streets, with new traffic lights ensuring a safer trip for local drivers

This work will also include improvements to the city’s southern gateway on Albert Street, widening the road from two to four lanes, installing new traffic lights at Hertford Street and building a new dual-carriage roundabout at Docwra Street.

Upgrades to Magpie Primary crossing, as well as an improved crossing at Ballarat High School, will also make these stretches of road safer for local students.
PUBLIC TRANSPORT

Regional rail is vital in connecting Victoria’s country communities.

Because we understand why it matters, the Andrews Labor Government has invested $3.5 billion in regional public transport over the past four years.

That includes funding towards the $1.7 billion Regional Rail Revival, which is delivering upgrades to every regional passenger train line in the state.

But we know there’s still more to do.

With a $615 million investment, this year’s Budget continues that effort, delivering connected and reliable public transport for our regional communities, including:

- $340 million for the purchase of up to 18 new VLocity trains, replacing older trains on Victoria’s busiest regional lines including Geelong and Ballarat, and increasing capacity and comfort for passengers

- $195 million to deliver additional regional and metropolitan train services following the completion of major transport projects across our state, including the Ballarat Line Upgrade

- $100 million to begin detailed planning for the Western Rail Plan, including the full separation of regional and metropolitan rail services on the Geelong and Ballarat Lines – the first step in delivering genuine fast rail to the regions

- $49.6 million to construct three new stations in and around Bendigo, located at Goornong, Raywood and Huntly. Funding will also go towards planning the Bendigo Line Upgrade to enable the operation of trains every 40 minutes during off-peak times, including the re-establishment of a station at Harcourt

- $19 million to support the largest investment in regional public transport in our state’s history, with expanded operations at stabling and maintenance facilities at Wyndham Vale, South Dynon, East Ballarat and Bendigo, improving the reliability and punctuality of regional passenger rail services

- $2 million for design and pre-procurement to upgrade track between South Geelong and Waurn Ponds Station, upgrading signalling equipment and removing level crossings at Fyans Road and the Surf Coast Highway, enabling Geelong to Melbourne services to start from Waurn Ponds, and providing better and more frequent services for local passengers

The Victorian Budget 2019/20 also continues our efforts to make life just that little bit easier for commuters, investing:

- $150 million to expand car parking for commuters at some of our busiest regional and suburban train stations

- $10 million for more frequent bus services across Victoria, including to connect to trains in Romsey and Lancefield, and a new bus service from Alexandra to Eildon
EDUCATION

Every child in every corner of Victoria deserves the best start in life.

It’s why over the past four years, the Andrews Labor Government has invested $10.8 billion in education across our state.

But when it comes to making sure our kids can reach their full potential, we know there is always more to do.

Through the Victorian Budget 2019/20, we’re making our positive plan a reality, delivering great local schools in communities across our state.

NEW AND UPGRADED SCHOOLS

In just four years, we have invested a massive $956 million to build, fix and improve Victoria’s regional and rural schools.

This year’s Budget continues that commitment, investing $149 million towards building two new schools, including a brand-new secondary school at Armstrong Creek, and a Bass Coast Junior Secondary School. An additional 17 schools will be upgraded, with planning to kickstart work on a further 12, as well as funding for planning at Clifton Springs Primary School.

Every child in every corner of Victoria deserves the best start in life. It’s why over the past four years, the Andrews Labor Government has invested $10.8 billion in education across our state.

School upgrades

- Avoca Primary School
- Beechworth Secondary College
- Bellbrae Primary School
- Benalla P-12 College
- Churchill Primary School
- Echuca Regeneration Project
- Epsom Primary School
- Geelong High School
- Inglewood Primary School
- Marong Primary School
- Matthew Flinders Girls Secondary College
- Mount Clear College
- Mount Rowan Secondary College
- New Gisborne Primary School
- Oberon Primary School
- Traralgon (Kosciuszko Street) Primary School
- White Hills Primary School

Planning for school upgrades

- Ararat Primary School
- Baimbridge College
- Bairnsdale Secondary College
- Ballarat High School
- Bellarine Secondary College
- Cowes Primary School
- Delacombe Primary School
- East Loddon P-12 College
- Miners Rest Primary School
- Newcomb Park Primary School
- Newcomb Secondary College
- Phoenix P-12 Community College
SUPPORT FOR EVERY STUDENT

A child’s potential should not be limited by their location, background or parents’ bank balance. This Budget invests $86.2 million to help make sure young Victorians get the most out of their education, including:

- $58 million to expand our School Breakfast Clubs and make sure more kids are learning on a full stomach. Building on the existing program, which provides free breakfasts in 500 schools across our state, the new investment will see free breakfasts, and lunches for eligible students, served up at 1000 primary and secondary schools

- $5 million to assist families facing financial hardship with school uniforms, textbooks and other essential items for their children, through State Schools’ Relief

- $1.2 million for the Active Kids program to ensure disadvantaged schools and their students have the opportunity to participate in interschool sports and other activities

- $1 million for the Music in Schools program, which includes grants to disadvantaged schools to purchase instruments and equipment, helping our kids to discover and develop their musical talent

ADDRESSING BULLYING IN OUR SCHOOLS

Our kids can’t be their best if they don’t feel happy, supported and included at school.

That’s why the Andrews Labor Government is ensuring our schools have the tools and resources they need to tackle bullying – improving the wellbeing of students and helping them achieve their best in the classroom.

In a national first, the Andrews Labor Government is investing $20.7 million to provide free tampons and pads in all government schools, ensuring students can focus on their studies and helping to ease the cost of living for families.
This year’s Budget includes $5.8 million to stamp out bullying in our schools, including funding for:

- The Bully Stoppers program, which addresses bullying and harassment in all its forms across our schools, including cyberbullying, racism and harassment of students with disability
- The Safe Schools program, to ensure our schools are safe places for everyone, including LGBTI students
- The I CAN Network, which provides mentoring for students with autism, promoting self-acceptance and belonging

ENSURING EVERY CHILD CAN BE THEIR BEST

The Andrews Labor Government believes that every child deserves a quality education.

The Victorian Budget 2019/20 invests $218 million to make our schools more inclusive, with more funding to support children with disability and additional needs. This includes:

- $180 million to assist approximately 5,400 extra students with high needs to attend mainstream government and specialist schools, through the Program for Students with Disabilities
- $18.4 million in extra support for students with disability and additional needs, including outside school hours care, equipment for schools and improvements to make buildings more accessible
- $10 million for playgrounds, outdoor sensory areas and quiet spaces to make our schools more inclusive
- $9.9 million to assist eligible Victorian school students with disability to travel to and from school

INVESTING IN THE EARLY YEARS

The Andrews Labor Government is determined to ensure our kids are ready for school – and ready for life.

All the experts tell us that begins with early education.

It’s why, as part of the largest early childhood reform ever undertaken in our state’s history, the Government is investing $882 million, delivering on our commitment to ensure every three-year-old has access to at least five hours per week of subsidised kinder by 2022 – increasing to 15 hours per week over the next decade.

That rollout begins in our state’s rural and regional communities.

From 2020, families in Buloke, Hindmarsh, Northern Grampians, South Gippsland, Strathbogie and Yarriambiack will be the first to benefit from this investment.

In 2021, the rollout will commence in a further 15 local government areas, at Alpine, Ararat, Campaspe, Central Goldfields, Colac-Otway, Corangamite, East Gippsland, Glenelg, Hepburn, Indigo, Loddon, Murrindindi, Southern Grampians, Towong and West Wimmera.

As this rollout continues, the Victorian Budget 2019/20 includes a further $38.5 million to ensure Victorian children can access inclusive early childhood education, giving them the very best start in life. This includes:

- $33.6 million for local councils and eligible providers to build, expand and improve local kindergarten facilities
- $3.4 million to support children with disability or developmental delay, including providing special education, therapy and assistance to access kindergarten and child care
- $1.6 million to help meet the needs of children with significant disability, as part of the Kindergarten Inclusion Support program

As part of the largest early childhood reform ever undertaken in our state’s history, the Government is delivering on our commitment to universal three-year-old kinder by 2022
HEALTH AND MENTAL HEALTH

CARE WHEREVER YOU LIVE

Every Victorian deserves great healthcare, regardless of where you live.

It’s why, in its first term, the Andrews Labor Government invested a record $11.7 billion in our healthcare services.

But we know that when it comes to your health, and the health of your loved ones, there is nothing more important.

We promised the people of Victoria that we would continue to build a health system that they – and their families – could rely on.

This year’s Budget delivers on that commitment, investing $160 million to ensure regional Victorians can get the best care, close to home, including:

► $59.5 million for a new rehabilitation centre at Bendigo Hospital, bringing together vital health services including physiotherapy, occupational therapy, prosthetics and orthotics all under the one roof
► An additional $100 million boost to our flagship Regional Health Infrastructure Fund, which has already supported 283 projects across our state

Thanks to this additional Budget boost, we’re making sure regional Victorians can get the care they need, when they need it. Additional investments include:

► $7 million to begin planning for the major development and expansion of the Latrobe Regional Hospital, with new operating theatres, maternity and intensive care units
► $2.4 million to plan for the ongoing redevelopment of Wangaratta Hospital, ensuring local doctors and nurses can deliver the very best care

IMPROVING QUALITY AND ACCESS TO HEALTHCARE

And as more people call Victoria home, we need to make sure our hospital system is keeping up. It’s why this year’s Budget invests in ensuring more Victorians can access the quality healthcare they need. That includes an extra $2.3 billion to support the two million patients expected to be admitted to our hospitals over the next 12 months. The Budget also invests:

► $117 million for medical research, including the Australian Clinical Trials Network ‘TrialHub’ to increase access to clinical trials, particularly for patients living in regional and rural Victoria
► $71.9 million to continue our support for patients at the end of their lives, including in-home care and specialist palliative services for patients in regional Victoria
► $11.4 million to establish an urgent care centre on Phillip Island, giving local families peace of mind that care is available 24 hours a day, seven days a week
► $4 million to ensure our state’s farmers can continue to rely on vital care from the National Centre for Farmer Health, an Australian-wide leader in health, wellbeing and safety
► $2.6 million to continue the Victorian Patient Transport Assistance Scheme, providing travel and accommodation support to rural and regional Victorians who need to travel long distances for specialist medical care

This Budget will also deliver on our commitment to build and expand 10 community hospitals across our state, including Torquay and Phillip Island, giving local families confidence that the very best care is just around the corner.
MORE SPECIALIST APPOINTMENTS

Delivering on the commitment we made to our regional communities, this Budget includes a $136 million investment to ensure every Victorian can get the care they need, closer to home.

Patients in regional and rural communities will benefit from an extra 500,000 dedicated appointments with medical specialists.

Right now, many regional patients are required to travel to the city for appointments and treatment, or face big out-of-pocket costs for a local private appointment.

With private specialist appointments costing between $175 and $565, this investment has the potential to save Victorian patients thousands of dollars.

Just as importantly, it will mean regional patients won’t have to spend hours away from loved ones to access specialist care.
BACKING OUR HARDWORKING HEALTH PROFESSIONALS

Our nurses and doctors are at the heart of our regional hospitals. The Andrews Labor Government is determined to make sure these dedicated health professionals have the support they need. That’s why the Victorian Budget 2019/20 includes:

- $64.4 million to improve nurse to patient ratios and recruit an extra 542 nurses and midwives across our wards, taking the total number of nurses recruited under stronger ratios to 1100
- $50 million to provide up to 400 postgraduate scholarships for current nurses and midwives, as well as establishing a graduate program for more than 400 enrolled nurses for the very first time, and refresher programs for nurses wanting to re-enter the workforce
- $2.2 million to equip frontline health workers with the skills they need to recognise and respond to occupational violence
- $1 million to make 100 scholarships available to hospital cooks, cleaners, orderlies, security guards, administrative workers and other frontline staff to grow their careers in the health sector

SUPPORT FOR NEW PARENTS AND FAMILIES

Bringing your newborn home for the very first time is one of life’s most precious moments for any parent. But it can also be extremely daunting.

It’s why the Andrews Labor Government is delivering $214 million to ensure new parents have the support and care they – and their baby – need. This year’s Budget delivers on our promise to parents, including:

- Establishing seven early parenting centres across our state, with new locations in Ballarat, Bendigo and Geelong
- Home-based sleep support for 7,000 vulnerable families, giving sleep-deprived mums and dads the assurance and advice they need
- A dedicated maternal and child 24-hour phone line with specialists in sleep and settling issues
- Baby bundles for around 35,000 first-time parents to help make sure every Victorian child gets the best start in life
- Expanding the payroll tax exemption to all types of parental leave

Our nurses and doctors are at the heart of our regional hospitals. And the Andrews Labor Government is determined to make sure these dedicated health professionals have the support they need
RESPONDING TO AN EMERGENCY

When we came to government, we promised to end the war on our paramedics.

And that’s exactly what we’ve done – investing in more paramedics, more stations and more ambulances.

Because we know: in an emergency, seconds are worth hours – and minutes are worth a lifetime. It’s why ambulance response times matter so much. And why under our watch, over the past 12 months, 84 per cent of ambulances responded to Code 1 emergencies within 15 minutes of call-out – the best result in nine years.

This year’s Budget builds on our commitment, with an extra $191 million to meet the growing demands on our ambulance service, including continued support for Ambulance Victoria’s Secondary Triage service and services in Nagambie, Warracknabeal and Wedderburn.

An additional $109 million will deliver 23 new vehicles, giving Victorians confidence that in an emergency, they will continue to get the fast, life-saving care they need.

This investment will also see an extra 90 new paramedics – building on the 1000 new paramedics rolled out across the state over the past four years.

Local communities will also benefit under the Budget, with upgrades at our Ocean Grove and Gisborne ambulance branches, and transforming 15 single-officer branches to dual-officer crews, including:

- Avoca
- Beaufort
- Camperdown
- Charlton
- Foster
- Inglewood
- Murchison
- Rochester
- Rupanyup
- St Arnaud
- Terang
- Yarram
TRANSFORMING MENTAL HEALTH

Right now, there are thousands upon thousands of Victorians struggling with their mental health.

And the truth is, we don’t have the best mental health system we could – or should – have.

Regional and rural communities are particularly impacted, with limited access to services and support.

In last year’s Budget, we provided a record $705 million investment to address mental illness and addiction. But we know there is still so much more to be done.

It’s why the Andrews Labor Government has established our nation’s first Royal Commission into Mental Health, which commenced in our first 100 days – as promised. Examining the quality and cost of care across our state, this Commission will transform our mental health system and change lives.

As the Commission continues this vital work, the Victorian Budget 2019/20 includes $173 million to help make sure more Victorians are getting the support they need now, including:

- $8.5 million to provide treatment and support to Aboriginal Victorians with moderate to severe mental illness and other complex needs
- $5.7 million for the Mental Health Complaints Commissioner and the Mental Health Tribunal, to continue to safeguard patients’ rights and recommend improvements to Victoria’s mental health system

Examining the quality and cost of care across our state, this Commission will transform our mental health system and change lives

HEALTHY SMILES FOR OUR KIDS

Students right across the state will have a brighter smile, thanks to our rollout of free dental care at all public primary and secondary schools.

This year’s Budget begins that rollout, with an initial investment of $322 million, delivering on our promise to bring back dental vans.

This investment will save families around $400 a year per child, as well as the stress of taking time off work for appointments.

Once fully rolled out, this initiative will also free up more than 100,000 places in the public dental care system each year.
INVESTING IN EVERY CORNER OF THE STATE
$882 million to kickstart the rollout of three-year-old kinder for every Victorian child
$322 million to rollout free dental for government school students
$1.3 billion over 10 years to continue our rollout of Solar Homes, putting panels on homes across Victoria
$57 million for the Building Better TAFEs Fund
$58 million for School Breakfast Club Program expansion
$210 million to make our schools more inclusive
$33.6 million to expand and improve kinder facilities
$29.4 billion in road and rail projects
$64.4 million to support further improvements to patient ratios
$214 million to provide new parents with the information, support and care their family needs
$109 million ambulance and paramedics package including a 23-vehicle surge fleet to ensure our paramedics can respond in an emergency
$802 million to improve safety on our roads and help Victorians get home safely
$477 million to support sport and racing infrastructure and local athletes across the state
$70.6 million to upgrade the emergency services digital radio
$100 million to expand the Regional Health Infrastructure Fund
$50.1 million for bus services across the state
$71.9 million to continue to support Victorians requiring end-of-life care
$150 million to boost jobs through the establishment of the Victorian Jobs and Investment Fund
$143 million for biosecurity, ensuring our clean and green reputation, supporting Victorian producers and jobs
$106 million to boost camping in Victoria’s great outdoors
$102 million to improve safety on our roads and help Victorians get home safely
$477 million to support sport and racing infrastructure and local athletes across the state
$70.6 million to upgrade the emergency services digital radio
$100 million to expand the Regional Health Infrastructure Fund
$50.1 million for bus services across the state
$71.9 million to continue to support Victorians requiring end-of-life care
$150 million to boost jobs through the establishment of the Victorian Jobs and Investment Fund
$143 million for biosecurity, ensuring our clean and green reputation, supporting Victorian producers and jobs
$106 million to boost camping in Victoria’s great outdoors
LOCAL JOBS

Wherever you live, every Victorian deserves the security of a good, stable job with a decent wage. It’s more than just a pay cheque – it’s about being able to provide for yourself and your family.

The Andrews Labor Government has made job creation our priority: slashing regional payroll tax, introducing Free TAFE and putting Victorian workers and Victorian jobs first.

These efforts have seen more than 66,000 new jobs created in regional Victoria since November 2014.

Now, we’re building on that work – ensuring even more people living in regional Victoria have the dignity and security of a job.

THE SKILLS OUR STATE NEEDS

As we continue to invest in road and rail, education and health, skilled workers are in demand.

Our Big Build needs apprentices. Our hospitals need nurses. Our kinders need educators.

And across our state, our investments are driving the creation of thousands of new jobs.

Through our historic investments in Victoria’s skills sector, we’re making sure our kids are first in line for these good new jobs.

Last year’s Budget included a transformative $172 million to make priority TAFE and pre-apprenticeship courses free.

These are courses focused on the skills our state needs – building infrastructure projects and caring for our communities.

And it’s working. By March 2019, over 19,000 students had commenced in these courses – including a 116 per cent increase in commencements in regional Victoria compared to the same time last year.

The Victorian Budget 2019/20 maintains our momentum, investing $46.3 million to upgrade and redevelop TAFEs across regional Victoria, including:

- $20.3 million for a new library and learning hub at South West TAFE’s Warrnambool campus
- $2.5 million to deliver a new facility for health and community services training at GOTAFE in Seymour

A further $28.5 million will see selected early childhood qualifications added to the list of Free TAFE courses, reducing financial barriers for students, encouraging enrolment and supporting the Government’s rollout of universal three-year-old kinder.

We also promised to support the next generation of farming jobs. And with this Budget we’re delivering, investing $7.2 million to ensure young Victorians have the skills they need to secure lifelong careers in the agricultural industry.

This includes supporting the delivery of the Certificate III in Shearing at sites across Victoria from 2020. And to ensure getting a great education doesn’t mean moving to the city, agricultural colleges at Longerenong, Dookie and Glenormiston will also receive upgrades to their education and accommodation facilities.

The Andrews Labor Government is backing the future of farming, with an extra $500,000 to continue the Young Farmers Scholarship, helping young farmers develop their skills and put those new skills into practice.
INVESTING IN AGRICULTURAL COMMUNITIES

Across our state, our hardworking farmers underpin our status as the food and fibre powerhouse of the nation.

The Victorian Budget 2019/20 invests in the future of our agricultural communities, providing:

- $143 million to expand the biosecurity services system, ensuring our state’s clean and green reputation, and protecting the livelihoods of Victorian producers

- $3 million to improve health and safety on our farms, increasing health checks for farmers and support for the Victorian Farmers Federation to employ new Farm Safety Officers

- $500,000 to pilot the use of digital food regulation, building Victoria’s reputation as a leader in digital agriculture and growing our local industry
HELPING BUSINESS GROW

In every corner of Victoria, there are thousands of businesses making their mark – and making some of the world’s best produce.

In this Budget, we’re supporting local businesses to grow even bigger, helping them to reach new markets and create new local jobs. This includes:

- $10.2 million in grants to assist Victoria’s small-scale agribusinesses to scale up their operations and take their produce to the world
- $5 million to ensure our state’s booming wine industry continues to grow, with boosted marketing, targeted trade campaigns and support for local producers
- $5 million to support inbound trade missions and enable our state’s participation in the 2020 World Expo, connecting up to 550 international delegates with Victorian businesses and industry

Over the last two Budgets we halved the payroll tax rate for regional businesses to 2.425 per cent.

This year, we’re providing further tax relief to rural and regional businesses, including:

- Further reducing regional payroll tax – to create new regional jobs, the regional payroll tax rate will be reduced to 1.2125 per cent, or 25 per cent of the metropolitan rate by 2022-23. The reduction will be phased in over three years, reducing by around 0.4 percentage points each year in 2020-21, 2021-22 and 2022-23, giving payroll tax relief to around 3 500 regional businesses
- Expanding eligibility for the regional payroll tax rate – eligibility for the regional payroll tax rate will also be expanded, helping more businesses qualify as regional employers, with the current ‘business location test’ removed from 1 July 2019.
- Increasing the payroll tax free threshold – the current payroll tax-free threshold of $650 000 will be increased to $700 000 from 2022-23, lifted incrementally by $25 000 in both 2021-22 and 2022-23
- Introducing a land transfer duty concession in regional Victoria – to provide support to regional businesses and encourage businesses to relocate and expand in regional areas, a land transfer duty concession will be provided for commercial and industrial property transactions. A 10 per cent concession will be provided for contracts signed from 1 July 2019, increasing by 10 percentage points each year to ultimately provide a full 50 per cent discount by 1 July 2023.

BOOSTING REGIONAL TOURISM

Tourism is pivotal to the strength of regional economies and regional communities.

Recognising this importance, this year’s Budget includes new investments to attract even more visitors from interstate and overseas, and encourage Victorians to explore everything regional Victoria has to offer, with investments in local attractions, including Hanging Rock and the Gippsland Plains Rail Trail.

An additional $32 million will go towards attracting international, interstate and intrastate visitors, growing our state’s tourism industry – and the jobs that go with it.

The Andrews Labor Government will also ensure Victoria remains the number one racing state in Australia, with $72 million to deliver club upgrades, integrity measures, training facilities and race day attraction programs across our state.

Recognising racing’s role as a key employer – supporting more than 33,000 jobs across Victoria – the Budget also includes a $40 million boost to prizemoney, ensuring this important industry can continue to prosper.
PUTTING POWER BACK IN THE HANDS OF VICTORIANS

We promised to put power back in the hands of Victorians. And through our landmark Solar Homes program that’s exactly what we’re doing.

The Victorian Budget 2019/20 delivers on the Andrews Labor Government’s positive plan for solar, investing $1.3 billion over 10 years, on top of the $74 million already provided.

This includes offering rebates for solar panels, solar hot water systems, or battery storage to more than 770,000 homes around Victoria over the next decade. The program has been expanded to renters, and funding will be provided for training, safety and quality audits to ensure the safety and sustainability of the rollout.

To make sure Victorians are getting the best possible deal on their electricity bills, we will extend the existing Power Saving Bonus to 30 June 2020, providing a $50 payment to households that use Victorian Energy Compare to search for the cheapest electricity.

The Budget also includes $27.3 million to deliver fairer energy regulation, including the Government’s Energy Fairness Plan, the biggest regulatory shake-up of the energy sector in Victoria’s history.

This plan will ensure Victorians get a fairer deal on their energy needs, introducing stronger protections for consumers and tougher penalties for retailers who do the wrong thing.

A fourth Essential Services Commissioner will also be appointed – an energy cop on the beat – whose focus will be on prosecuting misbehaving energy retailers who’ve had it too easy for too long.

We promised to put power back in the hands of Victorians. And through our landmark Solar Homes program that’s exactly what we’re doing.
KEEPING REGIONAL COMMUNITIES SAFE

We know how much the safety of our state matters.

That’s why, over the past four years, the Andrews Labor Government has delivered record investments: recruiting more police than ever before, tackling family violence and supporting our emergency services.

But when it comes to ensuring the safety and security of our state, we know there’s always more to do.

This year’s Budget continues our important investments, delivering on the projects and policies that will keep local communities safe.

CONTINUING OUR COMMITMENT

As we recruit and deploy an extra 3,135 new frontline police, the Victorian Budget 2019/20 further invests in the technology and training needed to keep Victorians safe, including:

- $121 million to crackdown on dangerous driving, including planning for new road safety technology
- $4.7 million to ensure our police have access to drug crime intelligence to assist them to disrupt methamphetamine manufacture, supply and distribution in Victoria, helping to put a stop to the evil ice trade
- $2.5 million to keep our state safe with Counter Terrorism and Protective Security training and infrastructure maintenance

Alongside our investment in police, we’re working to recognise and respond to the root causes of crime, while building a justice system that effectively holds offenders to account and supports the needs of victims.

In addition to these changes – which have delivered stronger sentencing and tightened the bail and parole system – the Victorian Budget 2019/20 includes:

- $152 million for the Bendigo law court development, a multi-jurisdictional court facility that will continue the Government’s transformation of central Bendigo
- $28.8 million to prevent reoffending and keep communities safe with programs targeting people at risk
- $12.4 million in security upgrades to strengthen court safety and keep people safe
KEEPING WOMEN AND CHILDREN SAFE

The Andrews Labor Government remains dedicated to addressing family violence, and implementing every single one of the 227 recommendations of the Royal Commission.

We’ve already made a massive $2.7 billion investment – more than any other state or federal government in the nation.

So far, we’ve implemented 120 recommendations, with another 107 underway.

We know that addressing family violence will take a long-term commitment. This Budget continues that effort, with a $185 million investment, including:

▸ $85 million to ensure perpetrators are held to account, including through behavioural change programs and intensive management of perpetrators with complex needs

▸ $28.7 million for the Dhelk Dja 10-year Aboriginal Family Violence agreement, including $9.9 million for three Orange Door access points for Aboriginal Victorians, ensuring culturally appropriate victim responses provided by Aboriginal family violence services

▸ $23.9 million to better respond and meet the needs of victim survivors in emergency accommodation statewide, including additional funding for regional services in Ovens Murray, Barwon, Western District, Gippsland and the Wimmera

▸ $20.9 million to make sure victim survivors of family violence and sexual assault have the support they need to rebuild their lives, including specialist support for Aboriginal Victorians

Recognising a growing need, this Budget also includes $3.1 million to continue the expansion of the family violence workforce.

SUPPORTING OUR EMERGENCY SERVICES

The Andrews Labor Government is investing in our emergency services, to support the Victorians who put themselves on the line for us. The Victorian Budget 2019/20 provides:

▸ $70.6 million to upgrade the emergency services radio, transitioning Ambulance Victoria from an outdated analogue system to digital communication and enabling our paramedics to respond more effectively to emergencies around the state

▸ $60 million to increase the retirement benefits of police and emergency services personnel, ensuring those who protect us are protected in their retirement

▸ $17 million for the upgrades or the construction of new CFA stations at Armstrong Creek, Phillip Island, Riddells Creek and Junortoun. Provision of capped grants will also be provided for upgrades of Surf Life Saving Clubs at Jan Juc, Carrum and Barwon Heads

▸ $14.5 million for our paramedics, police, Protective Services Officers, firefighters and SES workers, to ensure they get the mental health support they need, without the wait

▸ $5.4 million to support the national emergency alert warning system, which allows emergency services to send messages to landlines and mobile phones within a defined area

▸ $1 million to expand the Surfers Rescue 24/7 program, teaching surfers critical CPR skills, how to perform board rescues and how to apply basic first aid on the water
PROTECTING OUR ENVIRONMENT

Our rural and regional communities understand better than anyone: protecting the environment means protecting livelihoods.

It’s why we’ve banned fracking for good and are tackling climate change head on with real action.

Ten years on from the devastating 2009 Bushfires, this Budget builds on the Andrews Labor Government’s critical investments to protect families and their communities, with:

- $43.3 million for the Managing Bushfire Risk program, which works with local communities to reduce their bushfire risk and upgrade radios for forest fire management firefighters
- $34.9 million for support for immediate measures to strengthen the Victorian recycling sector
- $15 million for the Environment Protection Authority to protect Victoria’s environment from pollution and waste

The Victorian Budget 2019/20 will also deliver:

- $3 million for Victoria’s Coastcare program, supporting local volunteers and their important work along our coastlines
- $2.7 million in grants to rural and regional councils to manage the spread of weeds and pests and protect Victoria’s agricultural industry
- $1.5 million for a new statutory authority to protect the Great Ocean Road, its environment and communities
- $1 million to contribute to a 10-megawatt solar farm for Newstead, transitioning the town to 100 per cent renewable energy

In addition, the Government is providing $23.7 million to protect our waterways and assist drought-affected communities, including:

- $12.6 million to help farmers affected by drought, including support for infrastructure and the extension of hardship payments
- $6 million to support integrated water management projects that allow smarter use of water in our cities and towns

Our rural and regional communities understand better than anyone: protecting the environment means protecting livelihoods. It’s why we’ve banned fracking for good and are tackling climate change head on with real action.
A STRONG VICTORIA

Victoria rightly has a reputation as Australia’s artistic, sporting and multicultural capital.

This year’s Budget builds on that reputation, while also making sure that – in every corner and every community – Victoria continues to be proudly progressive, inclusive and fair.

HOUSING FOR THOSE IN NEED

Every Victorian deserves a safe place to sleep at night.

It’s the reason the Andrews Labor Government has invested over $800 million to help fight homelessness over the past four years.

This year’s Budget continues that commitment, investing $209 million to build 1,000 new public housing properties across our state.

In regional Victoria, properties will be built in Geelong and Ballarat to provide support for Victorians escaping violence and homelessness.

The Budget also provides $50.4 million to continue much-needed assistance for Victorians experiencing homelessness. This includes:

► Onsite treatment services in three supported accommodation centres, helping more than 1,900 people every year
► Assistance for more than 6,000 people as part of the Private Rental Assistance Program to prevent and end homelessness

OUR CREATIVE STATE

Regional Victoria is home to some of Victoria's most popular events, from the Grampians Grape Escape to the Wild Harvest Seafood Festival in Mallacoota.

Every year, these events attract thousands and thousands of visitors, boosting local businesses, supporting local economies, and creating local jobs.

With the Andrews Labor Government already supporting more than 100 events across our state, this year’s Budget continues our investments in the industries and individuals that underpin Victoria’s success, with:

► $14 million for Victoria Live, a 10-day winter music festival extending across the state that showcases Victoria’s live music scene, food, wine and craft beer, while boosting local jobs
► $10 million to restore and redevelop the iconic Her Majesty’s Theatre in Ballarat
► $1 million in grants for more silo art and large-scale murals on buildings across our state, revitalising communities, boosting tourism and supporting local jobs
► $1 million to establish a Community Arts Hub in Barwon Heads to support local artists and boost the local economy

INVESTING IN LOCAL SPORTS

Our local sporting clubs are the heart and soul of regional communities.

This year’s Budget builds on the Andrews Labor Government’s record investments in sport, while delivering on our commitments to local communities with new and upgraded sporting facilities. This includes:

► $58.5 million in grants for community sport infrastructure, giving local regional athletes the facilities they deserve
► $11.8 million to upgrade Eureka Stadium and the broader Ballarat Sports and Entertainment Precinct, including six new courts for basketball, netball, volleyball and badminton
► $7.5 million to support and grow Victoria’s golf clubs with infrastructure and equipment upgrades
► $5 million to develop our next generation of sporting stars, establishing seven basketball hubs, including new hubs in Geelong, Ballarat, Bendigo, Shepparton and Traralgon
► $2.8 million towards increasing netball participation in our regional communities
► $2.3 million for planning, design and early work for the final stage of the Kardinia Park Redevelopment
► $1.8 million to rebuild facilities at the Alexandra Showgrounds and Recreation Reserve, delivering modern sporting facilities for local clubs and the local community
THE GREAT OUTDOORS

The Andrews Labor Government is making sure more Victorians can enjoy our state’s great outdoors.

That’s good news for families – but it’s also good news for regional economies and regional jobs.

This year’s Budget includes a record $106 million, delivering 30 brand new campsites, 30 upgraded campsites, better 4WD tracks and walking trails, reduced camping fees, a new coastal park for the Bass Coast and planning for an iconic Sea to Summit hiking trail in East Gippsland.

The Andrews Labor Government is also making it cheaper and easier for Victorian families to get out on the water, with an $82.1 million investment, including:

► $47.2 million to upgrade boat ramps at a number of locations across the state, including Queenscliff, Point Richards, Hastings, Rhyll and Cowes Jetty and remove boat ramp parking and launching fees at Victorian public boat ramps

► $34.9 million to deliver phase two of Target One Million. This includes initiatives that promote and support recreational fishing in Victoria, including continuation of the Vic Fish Kids program, a buy-out of the remaining Gippsland Lakes commercial netting licenses, and increasing the stocking of fish to 10 million a year by 2022

A further $14 million will support recreational hunting, improving community facilities and events.

► $5 million to make Sebastopol an even better place to work and live. The project will be delivered in consultation with the community and could include new community spaces, streetscaping works, tree planting and improved footpaths

► $2.5 million for new lighting and upgrades at Ballarat’s Steve Moneghetti Track at Lake Wendouree, as well as running tracks at nearby Victoria Park

► $1.5 million to develop a new on-water café on Bullock Island in partnership with the Lakes Entrance Fishermen’s Co-Operative Society

► $800 000 for the Benalla Splash Park, to provide a fun and free recreational park and connect visitors to local businesses and cafes

► $700 000 for the final stage of the Romsey Ecotherapy Park, including a sensory garden, play spaces, billabong and a community gathering place for local arts and events

Through this year’s Budget, the Andrews Labor Government continues its commitment to the city of Geelong, with $192 million in dedicated funding.

Building on our work to deliver the new Convention Centre, progress the Shipwreck Coast Masterplan and revitalise the city’s centre, this investment will grow local tourism, support emerging industries and create nearly 1 000 jobs every year.

Just as importantly, this investment – delivered as part of the Geelong City Deal – will ensure Geelong and the Great Ocean Road remain great places to live and work.

STRONG COMMUNITIES

We promised to invest in the local projects that matter to local families. With this year’s Budget, we’re delivering on that commitment and delivering for our regional communities, with:

► $16.7 million to provide free public wi-fi for residents, visitors and businesses in the Latrobe Valley and Ararat regions
REGIONAL PARTNERSHIPS

It’s more important than ever that local people get a say in local priorities.

The Andrews Labor Government established nine Regional Partnerships that bring together locals, businesses and councils to talk about the needs of their communities.

The Victorian Budget 2019/20 delivers on key Regional Partnerships priorities, incorporating a number of regional and statewide initiatives, including:

- $152 million for the Bendigo law court development, continuing our work in revitalising the heart of the city

- $134 million for a range of regional development priorities, including free public Wi-Fi in Ararat and the Latrobe Valley, and restoring Her Majesty’s Theatre in Ballarat

- $49.6 million to build three new train stations in and around Bendigo, providing a better service for local communities

- $10.2 million for the new Hope Restart facility in Gippsland, providing extra rehab beds for Victorians recovering from addiction

- $7 million to begin planning a bigger and better Latrobe Regional Hospital

- $5.7 million for collaborative Aboriginal cultural heritage management, including supporting the nomination of the Budj Bim Cultural Landscape for World Heritage listing

- $2 million to plan Stage Two of the Waurn Ponds Track duplication, ensuring better and more frequent services for local passengers

- $1.5 million for the Great Ocean Road action plan, to protect this national icon and its local communities

- $1 million for more silo art and large-scale murals, boosting local tourism and local jobs

The Andrews Labor Government established nine Regional Partnerships to work on the priorities that matter most to local people.