

COMMONWEALTH RESPONSE

On the 5 February 2009, the Prime Minister, Premiers, Chief Ministers and the President of the Australian Local Government Association, together with Commonwealth, State and Territory Treasurers, held a special meeting of the Council of Australian Governments (COAG) to ensure rapid delivery of economic stimulus measures to support employment and growth and to foster a more resilient Australia.

COAG welcomed and endorsed the decisive action being taken by the Commonwealth to strengthen growth and support jobs through the \$42 billion Nation Building – Economic Stimulus Plan. The Plan will help support and sustain up to 90,000 jobs over the next two years.

The Nation Building – Economic Stimulus Plan complements the Commonwealth's \$10.4 billion Economic Security Strategy announced in October 2008 and builds on the long-term reforms agreed by COAG in November 2008 and the Commonwealth's nation building agenda announced in December 2008. The Plan includes investment of \$28.8 billion in schools, housing, energy efficiency, community infrastructure and roads and support to small businesses.

Nation Building Agenda Announcement (10 December 2008)

- ARTC Equity Injection - \$1.2 billion (17 Projects)
- \$711 million bring forward for 14 road projects under Building Australia Program
- \$60 million additional funding for Black Spot Program
- \$195 million for Agricultural and Social Infrastructure – East Kimberley
- \$1.6 billion Education Infrastructure Investment

Nation Building and Jobs Package (4 February)

Building the Education Revolution

- \$12.4 billion for Primary Schools for the 21st Century
- \$1 billion for Science and Language Centres for 21st Century Secondary Schools
- \$1.3 billion for National School Pride program
- Bring forward up to \$110 million for Round 2 of the Trade Training Centres in Schools Program

20,000 Social and Defence Homes

- \$6 billion for new Social Housing

- Stage One - \$692million for existing projects
- Stage 2 - \$5,296million for additional projects
- \$400million for repairs and maintenance of existing social housing stock
- \$252 million for Defence Housing Australia

Energy Efficient Homes

- \$2.7 billion Insulation program
- \$507 million for increases to Solar Hot Water Rebate
- \$613 million Low Emissions Plan for Renters

Black Spots, Boom Gates and Community Infrastructure

- \$90 million additional Black Spots funding
- \$150 million Boom Gate Installation Program
- \$150 million Repairing Regional Roads
- \$500 million expansion to Regional and Local Community Infrastructure Program

Further information

For more information visit www.australia.gov.au/economicstimulus

HOUSEHOLD STIMULUS PACKAGE

The Australian Government has allocated \$12.2 billion towards targeted bonus payments to assist households and support economic growth in 2008-09.

The payments include a \$900 Single Income Family Bonus, \$950 Farmers' Hardship Payment, \$950 Back to School Bonus and a \$950 Training and Learning Bonus.

If your taxable income was less than \$100,000 in the 2007-08 financial year and you paid tax, you could be eligible to receive a tax bonus payment of up to \$900.

Most bonus payments will be paid between March and May 2009.

The package of measures includes:

[\\$900 Tax Bonus for Working Australians](#)

The Australian Government will provide eligible taxpayers with a tax bonus payment of up to \$900.

The Bonus will be available to Australian resident taxpayers who paid net tax in the 2007-08 financial year.

Taxpayers will not need to apply for the payment. The Australian Taxation Office will make the payment to taxpayers after determining eligibility for the 2007-08 financial year. Taxpayers must have lodged their tax returns for the 2007-08 financial year by 30 June 2009 to be eligible.

This measure will benefit around 8.7 million taxpayers.

[\\$900 Single Income Family Bonus](#)

The Government is providing additional financial assistance to families who rely on one main income earner. This includes, sole parent families and two-parent families where one parent chooses to stay at home or balance some paid work with caring for children.

The Bonus will be a one-off payment of \$900, paid to each family entitled to Family Tax Benefit Part B (FTB-B) on 3 February 2009, irrespective of the number of children.

The one-off payment will be made in the fortnight commencing 11 March 2009 for families who receive their family assistance as fortnightly instalments.

[\\$950 Farmer's Hardship Payment](#)

The Australian Government will make a one-off payment of \$950 to assist farmers and small business operators experiencing hardship due to drought conditions and receiving Exceptional Circumstances Relief Payment, Farm Help Income Support or Transitional Income Support.

It is estimated that this measure will benefit around 21,500 recipients of income support payments. The measure will cost \$20.4 million in 2008-09.

\$950 Training and Learning Bonus

The Australian Government's \$511.2 million Training and Learning Bonus provides a bonus to eligible student social security recipients to assist with the costs of education and training.

This will cover students undertaking approved courses that generally include secondary education courses, undergraduate courses, associate diplomas and some other diplomas, TAFE courses and some postgraduate courses.

The Training and Learning Bonus consists of two categories:

Category 1

The one-off \$950 bonus (for 2009 only) for recipients at 3 February 2009 of: Youth Allowance (student and apprentices); Austudy; ABSTUDY (living allowance), Veterans' Children Education Scheme, Military Rehabilitation and Compensation Act Education and Training Scheme, Family Tax Benefit Part A for a full time student aged 21-24 inclusive Sickness Allowance and Special Benefit (under age pension age on 14 October 2008).

If a student attracts the Government's Back to School Bonus they are not eligible for the one-off \$950 Learning and Training Bonus.

Category 2 (Applies from 1 January 2009 to 30 June 2010)

A temporary supplement to the Education Entry Payment (EdEP) of \$950. This is in addition to the existing EdEP payment of \$208. EdEP is currently paid to a range of social security recipients who are commencing study, including Newstart Allowance and Parenting Payment Partnered recipients.

The temporary supplement to the Education Entry Payment includes a temporary extension of EdEP to Youth Allowance (other) recipients and relaxation of eligibility to a one month qualifying period for all eligible recipients.

\$950 Back to School Bonus

The Australian Government will invest \$2.6 billion to help families with the costs of education in the 2009 academic year.

The Back to School Bonus is expected to assist 2.8 million children aged 4 to 18 in just over 1.2 million families across Australia eligible for Family Tax Benefit Part A (FTB-A) on 3 February 2009.

The Back to School Bonus is a one-off payment of \$950 per eligible child.

Further information

For more information visit www.australia.gov.au/economicstimulus

BUILDING THE EDUCATION REVOLUTION

The Australian Government will deliver a \$14.7 billion boost to the Education Revolution over the next three financial years. Building the Education Revolution (BER) begins this year and will provide new facilities and refurbishments in schools so Australia's schools can meet the needs of 21st century students and teachers.

Every Australian school will be able to access a part of the Australian Government's investment of \$987.2 million during the 2008–09 financial year, \$8.5 billion over 2009–10 and \$5.2 billion in 2010–11. BER complements the existing and planned investments by the states and territories and non-government systems and schools.

This is a critical component of the Australian Government's Economic Stimulus Plan, giving our schools the attention they so richly deserve. To ensure that BER has the greatest impact on job support, it is essential that construction and maintenance work commences as quickly as possible.

The program builds on the Australian Government's commitment to deliver a world-class education to all Australian schools.

The three key elements of BER are:

[Primary Schools for the 21st Century](#): \$12.4 billion to build or renew large scale infrastructure in all primary schools, special schools, and K–12s (primary component), including libraries, halls and classrooms.

[Science and Language Centres for 21st Century Secondary Schools](#): \$1 billion to build new science laboratories and language learning centres in secondary schools that can demonstrate both need and readiness and capacity to complete construction by 30 June 2010.

[National School Pride Program](#): \$1.3 billion to refurbish and renew existing infrastructure and build minor infrastructure of up to \$200 000, subject to the size of the school.

Implementation

A special meeting of COAG was held on 5 February 2009 to ensure rapid delivery of economic stimulus measures. Outcomes included a National Partnership Agreement on the Nation Building – Economic Stimulus Plan and a commitment to enter into bilateral agreements with each state, territory and Block Grant Authority (BGA) for the delivery of this major investment in Australia's schools. Funding will be provided through state and territory treasuries for distribution according to the signed bilateral agreements.

In early February the Australian Government met with states, territories and BGAs to outline the initiative and commence implementation. Each state, territory and BGA will be responsible for seeking project proposals from their schools and assessing these against the guidelines and criteria set by the Commonwealth. Those proposals selected will then be submitted to the Commonwealth for approval.

To ensure projects are able to get underway and meet completion dates, design templates will be used for many projects funded under the Primary Schools for 21st Century and the Science and Language Centres for the 21st Century Secondary Schools elements of BER. In some instances schools may choose not to use a design template if they can demonstrate that non-use of the template is reasonable, appropriate and that the building process can still be expedited and achieved in the prescribed timeframes.

Implementation timeframes

Primary Schools for the 21st Century

Schools will be prioritised into three funding rounds;

- Under Round 1 construction will start no later than June 2009. Schools with proposals that adopt existing design templates and/or demonstrated readiness and capacity to build will be included in the first round
- Under Round 2 construction must start no later than 1 July 2009
- Under Round 3 construction must start by 1 September 2009

All projects must be completed no later than 31 March 2011.

Science and Language Centres for the 21st Century

Schools will be funded on a competitive basis where schools can demonstrate need, readiness and capacity to complete construction by 30 June 2010.

National School Pride Program (minor infrastructure and maintenance)

Sixty percent of projects are to commence in 2008-09 and the remaining 40 percent in 2009-10.

Round 1 (60%) projects will commence between April-May 2009 at the latest and be completed by 20 December 2009.

Round 2 (40%) projects will commence by July 2009 at the latest and be completed by 1 February 2010.

Monitoring and reporting

To ensure that the delivery of BER is both transparent and compliant the Commonwealth will conduct annual compliance audits on a number of BER projects in each state and territory. Ongoing monitoring and reporting on project outcomes will be the responsibility of the Commonwealth, and all states, territories and BGAs.

Further information

For more information visit www.australia.gov.au/economicstimulus

EDUCATION INVESTMENT FUND

Fast Tracking University Funding

Funding of \$580 million will be fast-tracked into universities through the Education Investment Fund, targeting 11 successful projects.

The successful projects were selected from 55 eligible applications received through the 2009 funding round of the Education Investment Fund and focuses on capital expenditure and strengthening research facilities in Australian universities.

The proposals are across the teaching, learning and research spectrum, as well as a variety of disciplinary areas ranging from education and creative arts to medical research, engineering and science.

The successful projects include a \$35 million world-first comprehensive research and training SMART infrastructure facility at the University of Wollongong.

The project will deliver practical training for engineers, scientists, mathematicians and other relevant professions, at both undergraduate and postgraduate levels, to ensure a future supply of infrastructure professionals.

A full list of the successful projects is set out below and further information on the Education Investment Fund is available at: <http://www.deewr.gov.au/HigherEducation/EIF>

Education Investment Fund – Round One:

[The Centre for Obesity, Diabetes and Cardiovascular Disease at the University of Sydney – \\$95 million](#)

This project will result in the University of Sydney building the Centre for Obesity, Diabetes and Cardiovascular Disease – which is stage one of a major health and life sciences precinct at the university.

[The Peter Doherty Institute for Immunity and Infection at the University of Melbourne – \\$90 million](#)

The Peter Doherty Institute will co-locate the University's world-renowned Department of Microbiology and Immunology and a new Life Sciences Computation Centre, with a number of Victorian Government and World Health Organisation laboratories. The facilities will include a peak computing and bioinformatics capability; a high-throughput DNA sequencing facility; containment laboratories; and teaching and networking spaces.

[The Institute for Photonics and Advanced Sensing at the University of Adelaide – \\$28.8 million](#)

The University will create an internationally leading transdisciplinary Institute which will allow it to develop new fibre-based platform technologies to underpin paradigm-changing tools for human health, the environment, industrial processes and defence systems. It will also facilitate breakthroughs in physics, chemistry, biology and environmental science.

[The Hearing Hub at Macquarie University – \\$40 million](#)

Macquarie University will build a world-class hearing research and teaching facility, bringing together key university research groups in hearing and cognitive sciences, neurosurgery, special education, and electronic engineering with major organisations involved in developing hearing technologies and services.

[The RMIT Design Hub at RMIT University – \\$28.6 million](#)

The RMIT Design Hub is a 12,000m² building providing highly flexible design ‘warehouse’ spaces and collaborative technical workshops supporting cross disciplinary research and postgraduate education in design. Its scale, composition and range of facilities including workshops and a design archive make the Design Hub unique in Australia and the world.

[The Energy Technologies Building at the University of New South Wales – \\$75 million](#)

The UNSW will build the Energy Technologies Building as the focal point for its new Centre for Energy Research and Policy Analysis (CERPA). The proposed building will support UNSW’s world-leading work in photovoltaics as well as research into carbon capture and storage, reservoir characterisation, nanomaterials and policy and market analysis.

[New Horizons Centre at Monash University – \\$89.9 million](#)

Through physical and virtual collaboration, the New Horizons Centre brings together dispersed science and engineering expertise in a new, world-class research facility, at the heart of the Clayton Innovation Precinct.

[The International Microsimulation Centre at the University of Canberra – \\$11 million](#)

The University of Canberra will construct a purpose built teaching, learning and research training Centre for the National Centre for Social and Economic Modelling (NATSEM) on the main campus at Bruce. The building will include a public gallery and auditorium as well as teaching and research spaces for NATSEM students, staff and international visitors.

[The Materials and Minerals Science Learning and Research Hub at the University of South Australia – \\$40 million](#)

The university will construct a 5000m² dedicated building housing innovative, multidisciplinary laboratories and learning spaces designed to grow the next generation of engineering, material and mineral science graduates and provide the interface required to ensure effective knowledge transfer to regional, national and international industry.

[The University of Queensland School of Veterinary Science at Gatton Campus – \\$47.2 million](#)

University of Queensland will build three state-of-the-art new buildings - the Veterinary Science building, the UQ Veterinary Hospital and the Veterinary Teaching and Research Facility - as well as completely renovating an existing building to house modern pre-clinical teaching laboratories.

The SMART Infrastructure Facility at the University of Wollongong – \$35 million

The University of Wollongong will create the SMART Infrastructure Facility, a world-first comprehensive research and training infrastructure facility of integrated laboratories that will transform the way that infrastructure-related disciplines are taught and researched. Facilities will include lecture theatres, specialised research and teaching laboratories and collaborative research spaces.

Further information

For more information visit www.australia.gov.au/economicstimulus

HIGHER EDUCATION PACKAGE

The Teaching and Learning Capital Fund (Higher Education)

What is this project?

The Teaching and Learning Capital Fund (TLC) is a one-off \$500 million funding round targeting capital expenditure focussed on the development of teaching and learning spaces in Australia's universities that are physically and technologically appropriate for 21st century approaches to tertiary education.

TLC funding will be distributed among universities through grants taking into account each university's share of total domestic students. Institutions with large numbers of students will especially benefit. The Australian National University will receive an additional \$10 million in recognition of its unique mix of teaching and research. Universities will determine the projects to be undertaken consistent with their individual missions and campus needs.

Why is this education project important?

TLC will revitalise university teaching and learning spaces across Australia in a way that responds immediately to areas of demand. The fund will target the development of new infrastructure as well as the upgrading of existing facilities.

What is the total investment?

The Australian Government will invest \$500 million in 2009–10.

What is the project timeline?

TLC grants will be made from 1 July 2009 and all funds will need to be expended by 30 June 2012.

Benefits of this project?

TLC will transform teaching and learning spaces across the country in response to areas of demand. University campuses will be revitalised by the development of new infrastructure and upgrading of existing facilities. Critical infrastructure such as lecture theatres, tutorial rooms, auditoria and performance spaces, laboratories, libraries and student study spaces will be modernised to meet contemporary needs.

World class information and communications technology infrastructure, so integral to the 21st century teaching and learning experience, will also be delivered, as will infrastructure for vital student amenities.

The provision of world class teaching and learning faculties will boost student outcomes across a range of disciplines and increase Australia's reputation for delivering high quality education.

Distribution of Teaching and Learning Capital Fund

Higher Education Provider	Approximate Grant \$m
The Australian National University	18.2
University of Canberra	5.4
Australian Capital Territory Total	23.6
Australian Catholic University	8.3
Multi-State Total	8.3
Charles Sturt University	14.9
Macquarie University	12.9
Southern Cross University	6.6
The University of New England	7.9
The University of New South Wales	22.2
The University of Newcastle	15.0
The University of Sydney	27.0
University of Technology, Sydney	16.0
University of Western Sydney	20.4
University of Wollongong	10.1
New South Wales Total	153.1
Batchelor Institute of Indigenous Tertiary Education	0.4
Charles Darwin University	3.0
Northern Territory Total	3.5
Bond University	2.4
Central Queensland University	6.4
Griffith University	19.3
James Cook University	8.0
Queensland University of Technology	23.2
The University of Queensland	22.7
University of Southern Queensland	8.0
University of the Sunshine Coast	3.3

Queensland Total	93.2
The Flinders University of South Australia	8.8
The University of Adelaide	11.1
University of South Australia	14.9
South Australia Total	34.8
University of Tasmania	10.5
Tasmania Total	10.5
Deakin University	17.4
La Trobe University	16.5
Melbourne College of Divinity	0.5
Monash University	26.0
RMIT University	16.7
Swinburne University of Technology	7.6
The University of Melbourne	24.1
University of Ballarat	3.6
Victoria University	10.5
Victoria Total	123.0
Curtin University of Technology	15.3
Edith Cowan University	10.9
Murdoch University	7.8
The University of Notre Dame Australia	4.2
The University of Western Australia	11.7
Western Australia Total	49.9
TOTAL	500.0

Note - totals may not add due to rounding

TRADE TRAINING CENTRES

The Australian Government's Building the Education Revolution package brings forward \$110million to fund quality proposals under the Trade Training Centres in Schools Program.

This builds on the Australian Government's commitment to improve the quality of schooling offered to secondary students undertaking trade-related pathways, assisting them in making a successful transition from school to work or further education and training.

This funding boost will allow more than 110 additional schools and their communities to benefit sooner from funding to build new trade training facilities, upgrade existing facilities and purchase trade-related equipment.

The Trade Training Centres in Schools Program will benefit from an increase of up to an additional \$110 million for Round 2. This builds on the significant investment of \$277 million available for Round 2.

In the first phase of funding, projects totaling over \$90 million were approved and, in the second phase, which will be announced shortly, the Government will fund up to \$310 million worth of projects. An increase in the number of projects funded in Round 2 will further stimulate building investment in local economies.

The Trade Training Centres in Schools Program gives more secondary students access to high quality trade training facilities that meet industry needs, a key step in increasing the proportion of students achieving Year 12 or an equivalent qualification.

Eligible secondary schools are able to apply for between \$500,000 and \$1.5 million over the life of the Program to establish Trade Training Centres.

Applications for Round 2 are now open and will close on 9 June 2009.

Further information

For more information visit www.australia.gov.au/economicstimulus

ENERGY EFFICIENT HOMES PACKAGE

The Australian Government will deliver a \$3.9 billion Energy Efficient Homes Package over the next three years.

This package is part of the \$42 billion Nation Building – Economic Stimulus Plan announced by the Prime Minister in February 2009.

The Energy Efficient Homes Package will install ceiling insulation in up to 2.7 million Australian homes and help over 300,000 households install a solar hot water system.

These practical steps will help millions of households reduce their energy use, cut their power bills by around \$200 a year, and increase the comfort and value of their homes.

This is a critical component of the Government's Economic Stimulus Plan. It will support thousands of jobs in manufacturing, distribution and installation in the midst of an economic downturn.

The Plan will modernise Australian homes, helping to set households up for a low carbon future. If all of the assistance in the package is taken up, almost all Australian homes will operate at a minimum two star energy rating.

In the Carbon Pollution Reduction Scheme White Paper the Government committed to help all households take practical action to reduce energy use and save on energy bills.

The Energy Efficient Homes package delivers on that promise.

The Package is made up of three elements:

- The Homeowner Insulation Program installs ceiling insulation (capped at \$1,600) in the homes of eligible owner-occupiers.
- The Low Emission Assistance Plan for Renters provides assistance of up to \$1,000 to install insulation in private rental properties.
- The Solar Hot Water Rebate provides rebates of \$1,600 to install a solar hot water system. It replaces the old \$1,000 rebate and removes the means test.

Implementation and timeframes

The Government has fast-tracked the Plan to stimulate jobs and get people saving energy and money straight away.

Insulation

The two insulation programs will start on 1 July 2009 and will run until December 2011. In the meantime, an early installation process has been established. Eligible householders can get their insulation installed now, keep their receipts and claim a reimbursement from the Government.

Guidelines for this early installation process were released on 26 February 2009. Guidelines for the full insulation programs will be released before the 1 July start date.

Solar hot water

The Solar Hot Water Rebate was increased to \$1,600 on 3 February 2009 and that offer runs until 30 June 2012. Guidelines for the solar hot water rebate were released on 26 February 2009.

Homeowner Insulation Program

This program offers ceiling insulation worth up to \$1,600 to eligible owner-occupiers.

The program targets homeowners who are currently uninsulated, or have ceiling insulation with an R-value of 0.5 or less.

The full program starts on 1 July 2009 and will run until 31 December 2011, but eligible homeowners don't have to wait. The Government has released early installation guidelines so people can access this assistance now.

Who is eligible for early installation?

Check the early installation guidelines for full eligibility details at www.environment.gov.au/energyefficiency

What conditions apply for early installation?

Eligible homeowners who have ceiling insulation installed between 3 February and 30 June 2009 can send in their receipts to claim a reimbursement of up to \$1,600 within eight weeks. The home must be within Australia or its territories.

The insulation must be installed by a skilled tradesman (eg a builder, plasterer or specialist insulation installer) who is working for a business with an Australian Business Number. Details of the process to follow are in the early installation guidelines on the website.

The \$1,600 insulation assistance is an alternative to the \$1,600 solar hot water rebate. People cannot access both \$1,600 rebates for the same home.

Low Emission Assistance Plan for Renters

The Government is offering up to \$1,000 per home to help people install ceiling insulation in existing rental properties. The plan targets rental properties that are currently uninsulated, or have ceiling insulation with an R-value of 0.5 or less.

An application can come from either a landlord or a tenant, although a tenant must obtain permission from their landlord before installing insulation.

The program starts on 1 July 2009 and will run until 30 June 2011, but eligible landlords and tenants don't have to wait. The Government has released early installation guidelines that allow people to access this assistance now.

Who is eligible for early installation?

Check the early installation guidelines for full eligibility details at www.environment.gov.au/energyefficiency

What conditions apply for early installation?

Eligible landlords or tenants who have ceiling insulation installed between 3 February and 30 June 2009 can send in their receipts to claim reimbursement of up to \$1,000 within eight weeks.

Landlords can access the \$1,000 offer for multiple rental properties, provided each property is someone's primary residence. The home must be within Australia or its territories.

The insulation must be installed by a skilled tradesman (e.g. a builder, plasterer or specialist insulation installer) who is working for a business with an Australian Business Number. Details of the process to follow are in the early installation guidelines on the website.

Solar Hot Water Rebate

The \$1,600 rebate is available for people who replace an existing electric hot water system with a solar or heat pump hot water system between 3 February 2009 and 30 June 2012.

This includes owner-occupiers, landlords or tenants. Tenants must obtain the permission of their landlord before installing the hot water system.

The Government has been processing rebates since 1 March 2009 and people should expect to receive their rebate within eight weeks of submitting a correct application form.

Who is eligible for the rebate?

Check guidelines for full eligibility details at www.environment.gov.au/energyefficiency

What conditions apply?

The system installed must be eligible for at least 20 renewable energy certificates and be installed by a suitably qualified person (e.g. an electrician or plumber). The home must be within Australia or its territories.

The \$1,600 solar hot water rebate is available as an alternative to the \$1,600 offer through the Homeowner Insulation Program. People cannot access both \$1,600 rebates for the same home.

Monitoring

To ensure the Energy Efficient Homes Package is delivering the right results a rolling audit program is being established.

A portion of all households will be inspected to ensure the right insulation and solar hot water systems are in place and have been installed correctly.

Further information

For more information and copies of the available guidelines call 1800 808 571 or visit www.environment.gov.au/energyefficiency

Or visit www.australia.gov.au/economicstimulus

DEFENCE HOUSING PACKAGE

The Australian Government has approved \$251.6 million in funding for Defence Housing Australia (DHA) to construct an additional 802 new houses as part of the Nation Building – Economic Stimulus Plan.

Providing benefits to local communities

Announced in February 2009, this initiative will stimulate the building and construction industry in many regional areas. It will provide increased employment opportunities and flow-on effects to the broader economy.

The homes will be located in areas that support Defence operational requirements in Adelaide, Brisbane, Canberra, Darwin, Victoria, Hobart, Townsville, Cairns, Hunter Valley, Ipswich, Sydney, Wagga Wagga, Wodonga, Nowra and Toowoomba. The additional housing in these regions will materially increase the supply of residential housing at a time of historically low national rental vacancy. This will assist with improving rental accommodation availability for these communities.

Supporting our Australian Defence Force personnel

This Government stimulus recognises the importance of providing high-quality housing to Australian Defence Force (ADF) members and their families, and will be in addition to the approximate 1,500 houses that were already in DHA's construction schedule for the period July 2008 to June 2011.

DHA seeks to deliver the best service to ADF members and their families recognising that ADF members, particularly those deployed, should not be distracted by housing and relocations matters affecting their families at home. This additional funding will allow DHA to further support Defence's operational initiatives.

DHA currently manages approximately 17,400 properties across Australia worth about \$7.6 billion. DHA seeks to provide housing in locations to support the lifestyles of ADF members, taking into consideration transportation routes, community infrastructure (such as schools) and proximity to Defence bases.

DHA also arranges approximately 24,500 relocations for Australian Defence Force (ADF) members and their families each year.

Delivering results quickly

The new houses will be constructed from April 2009 to June 2011.

The first seven contracts for the construction of new homes under the Nation Building – Economic Stimulus Plan have been signed for the construction of 100 Defence houses in Brisbane, Adelaide and Ipswich and work associated with construction has now commenced.

Further information

For more information visit www.australia.gov.au/economicstimulus

SOCIAL HOUSING INITIATIVE

In February 2009, the Australian Government announced the provision of additional funding for social housing under the Nation Building – Economic Stimulus Plan. This initiative will provide funding of \$6 billion over three and a half years from 2008-09 to 2011-12 for the construction of new social housing and a further \$400 million over two years for repairs and maintenance to existing public housing dwellings. It is being conducted in partnership with the State and Territory Governments. It will provide a boost to public housing and housing administered by the not-for-profit community sector and is designed to assist low income Australians who are homeless or struggling in the private rental market.

Questions and Answers

How many people will benefit?

Around 20,000 low-income households will be assisted by having access to secure and affordable public or community housing.

The initiative will boost the supply of public and community housing for people who are homeless, at risk of homelessness, or who are paying very high rental costs.

How will this initiative benefit the economy?

The initiative will also stimulate the building and construction industry, both through funding additional dwellings and increasing expenditure on repairs and maintenance. This will help stimulate businesses which supply construction materials and help to retain jobs in the industry.

When will the initiative take effect?

The initiative will begin immediately. It will provide \$200 million this financial year for repairs and maintenance and \$60 million for new construction.

How will the initiative increase the number of dwellings available?

Around 20,000 new social housing dwellings will be built. The actual number of new dwellings will depend on a range of factors, such as their size, type and location and the capacity of states and territories and the not-for-profit sector to leverage additional funds from other sources.

The initiative will also enable over 10,000 social housing dwellings to be refurbished so that they can remain available for occupancy.

New social housing will enable more Australians to rent housing that meets their needs. Secure, long-term housing significantly improves the economic and social outcomes for those who are homeless or at risk of homelessness.

How will funding for the initiative be allocated?

The funding will be allocated to State and Territory Governments on a per capita basis subject to the jurisdiction submitting suitable proposals that meet the requirements of the initiative.

The funding for building/construction will be available in two stages.

In Stage 1, funding will be allocated in 2008-09 to projects that are already in the development pipeline and can be brought forward. In some cases these may be joint ventures between states and community housing organisations. Many projects will use private sector builders to build new homes. The Commonwealth will advise states/territories of funding approvals by 1 April 2009. Dwellings will need to be completed before 30 June 2010.

In Stage 2, states and territories will be required to conduct a competitive tender process towards the end of 2008-9 to identify suitable projects. States/territories will be required to identify suitable proposals for funding by 30 June 2009, and will be working closely with the housing industry to find quality projects that can be completed quickly.

Community housing organisations and industry are encouraged to approach their State and Territory Governments for advice on how to participate, particularly for Stage 2 of the process.

Will this funding lead to any changes in the way public housing is managed?

Through the commitment of the Australian Government the State and Territory Governments have agreed to a number of reforms as a condition of receiving funds under this program. These include (but are not limited to):

- integration of public and community housing waiting lists;
- better social and economic participation for social housing tenants by locating housing closer to transport, services and employment opportunities;
- implementation of support arrangements to assist social housing tenants to transition from social housing arrangements to affordable private rental and home ownership as their circumstances change;
- reducing concentrations of disadvantage through appropriate redevelopment to create mixed communities that improve social inclusion;
- introduction of a national regulatory and registration system for not-for-profit housing providers to enhance the sector's capacity to operate across jurisdictions;
- increased transparency through the establishment of consistent and comparable accounting and reporting standards across jurisdictions that allow clear and objective assessments of performance that meet public accountability requirements;
- social housing providers to be subject to independent prudential supervision to protect public investment in the sector;
- improved tenancy management and maintenance benchmarks for social housing;
- improved efficiency of social housing including better matching of tenants with appropriate dwelling types and the introduction of rent-setting policies that reflect the type of dwellings occupied by tenants;
- introducing contestability in the allocation of funds to encourage a range of new providers and create diversification in the not-for-profit sector to enhance the ability of providers to offer housing options to a broader range of client types;
- leveraging of government capital investment to enhance the provision of social housing;
- better use of government owned land to provide more affordable housing opportunities for low income earners;

- improved procurement practices that promote competition between proponents and provide participation opportunities for small and medium enterprises; and
- measures to enhance the capacity of the not-for-profit sector.

Assessment of proposals will include consideration of the following key requirements:

- increase the supply of social housing dwellings within a jurisdiction;
- increase the allocation of housing to people with highest needs on public housing waiting lists;
- facilitate or support the transition of persons, who are homeless or at risk of homelessness to secure, long term accommodation;
- adhere to universal design principles to facilitate better access for persons with disability and older persons;
- constructed dwellings are environmentally sustainable, with dwellings built in Stage 2 of the package achieving a Six Star Energy Efficiency rating where possible, and
- promote activity in the short term using a variety of procurement arrangements, including spot purchases of house and land packages, purchases 'off the plan'.

Further information

For more information visit www.australia.gov.au/economicstimulus

TRANSPORT AND COMMUNITY INFRASTRUCTURE PROJECTS

Community infrastructure investment is a key component of the Australian Government's \$42 billion Nation Building – Economic Stimulus Plan that will help support Australian jobs.

The Australian Government has allocated \$800 million to the Community Infrastructure Program to fund local government to build and renew local infrastructure such as community centres, town halls, park and playgrounds, pool and sports facilities.

This is the largest single investment in community infrastructure in the nation's history. It is being delivered in two components: \$250 million allocated between all councils and shires; and \$550 million to be determined on a competitive basis (applications closed on March 6 2009) for larger-scale projects.

Funds are already flowing to councils for projects under the earlier \$250 million allocation. These projects range from new playgrounds and sports facilities to renovations for halls and community centres. Priority is being given to local community infrastructure projects that can proceed quickly. The Australian Government is also conscious of the additional needs of local communities affected by the Victorian bushfires and the Queensland floods and is consulting with councils to determine options for assisting the rebuilding effort in their communities.

Construction of local community infrastructure will commence almost immediately.

The key elements of the Infrastructure and Community project package are:

[Australian Rail Track Corporation \(ARTC\) Rail Investment – 17 projects](#)

The Government will provide a \$1.2 billion equity investment into the Australian Rail Track Corporation to deliver a massive program of track upgrades and construction that will significantly improve Australia's rail network. This is in addition to \$1.9 billion already committed to rail infrastructure through the Nation Building Plan.

[Nation Building program – 14 road projects](#)

The Government will bring forward an additional \$711 million in 2008–09 and 2009–10 to accelerate construction of 14 roads projects already announced under the Nation Building Program (formerly AusLink 2). Examples include the Tarcutta bypass on the Hume Highway in New South Wales and the Midland Highway – Brighton Bypass in Tasmania.

Black Spot Program

An additional \$150 million (\$90 million in 2008-09 and \$60 million in 2009-10) to target projects that reduce the risk of accidents at dangerous locations on our roads. The funding will target specific sites around Australia where there have been serious crashes or where there is a high risk of serious crashes.

Boom Gates Installation

The Australian Government will deliver \$150 million over the next two years to accelerate the installation of boom gates and other active rail crossing control mechanisms at high risk level crossings throughout Australia. This funding will be provided under the new Boom Gates for Rail Crossings program. This program builds on the Government's commitment to improve the safety and efficiency of the transport system in Australia.

All states and the Northern Territory have submitted proposals for the Government to consider and the Minister for Infrastructure, Transport, Regional Development and Local Government is expected to approve all projects before the end of March.

Community Infrastructure Program

The Australian Government announced an \$800 million Community Infrastructure Program – the largest single investment in community infrastructure in the nation's history. It is being delivered in two components: \$250 million allocated between all councils and shires based on a formula; and \$550 million to be determined on a competitive basis (applications closed on March 6 2009) for larger-scale projects. Funds are already flowing to councils for projects under the earlier \$250 million allocation. These projects range from new playgrounds and sports facilities to renovations for halls and community centres. Priority is being given to local community infrastructure projects that can proceed quickly. The Government is also conscious of the additional needs of local communities affected by the Victorian bushfires and the Queensland floods and is consulting with councils to determine options for assisting the rebuilding effort in their communities.

East Kimberley Development Package

Under this initiative, the Government has agreed to contribute \$195 million over 2008-09 and 2009-10 to support economic development in the East Kimberley region. The East Kimberley Development Package will support economic development through investment in social and community infrastructure. The Government's investment in the East Kimberley region follows the Western Australian Government's decision to proceed with investment in the expansion of the Ord River irrigation scheme around the town of Kununurra.

Implementation Timeframes

ARTC Rail Investment – 17 projects

A number of the projects have already commenced (see attachment). All projects will be underway by end of 2009.

Nation Building program – 14 road projects

State governments are required to provide detailed project information to allow projects to be approved. Project commencement varies with a majority of projects expecting construction commencement in 2009. Project completion dates range between mid 2010 and early 2014.

Black Spot program

States and territories were required to submit project nominations by the end of February. Projects are due to be announced shortly and works commenced soon after announcement. It is expected that projects funded in 2008-09 be completed by December 2009. Projects funded in 2009-10 are expected to be completed by June 2010.

Boom Gates installation

Funding is to be paid in advance in three equal tranches. Tranche 1 will be paid as soon as the final list of projects has been agreed with each state and the Northern Territory while the second and third tranches will be paid in the first and third quarters of 2009-10 respectively.

Regional and Local Community Infrastructure Program

Councils and shires had until Friday 6 March 2009 to submit new or revised applications for the Strategic Projects component. Projects must be ready to go and be able to proceed within six months of signing a contract. First payments are expected to commence in May 2009. Applications under the \$250 million program closed on 30 January 2009. These are currently being reviewed with payments to Councils already underway.

East Kimberley Development package

The Commonwealth's contribution is conditional on a joint Commonwealth and Western Australian Government assessment of the most effective infrastructure projects to meet the social and economic development needs of the region. The Prime Minister and the Premier of Western Australia will receive the results of the joint assessment on 31 March 2009. Once approved, proposed investments will be undertaken as soon as practicable, with most to be completed by 2010.

Further information: www.australia.gov.au/economicstimulus

RAIL PACKAGE

The Australian Government will provide a \$1.2 billion equity investment into the Australian Rail Track Corporation to help finance a massive investment program of track upgrades and construction that will significantly improve Australia's rail network. This is in addition to \$1.9 billion already committed to rail infrastructure through the Nation Building – Economic Stimulus Plan.

Initiatives include:

[Sydney – Brisbane New, Extended and Upgraded Loops \(NSW\)](#)

This project will provide additional long loops to break-up long sections on the Sydney – Brisbane corridor, and complete upgrading of loops to high-speed turnouts.

[Melbourne – Junee Passing Lanes \(Vic/NSW\)](#)

This project will construct two additional passing lanes to improve opportunities on the Melbourne – Junee corridor for trains to pass each other at speed.

[Seymour – Wodonga Track Upgrade \(Vic\)](#)

This project will provide for the completion of concrete sleepers along the entire length of the Melbourne – Sydney corridor.

[Cootamundra – Parkes Track Upgrade \(NSW\)](#)

This project will upgrade the Cootamundra – Parkes section to a standard consistent with the rest of the interstate network.

[Western Victoria Track Upgrade \(NSW/Vic\)](#)

This project will upgrade sections of poor quality track in Western Victoria, including re-railing, increasing ballast depth and providing for the completion of concrete sleepers between Melbourne and Adelaide.

[Wodonga Bypass Duplication \(Vic\)](#)

This project will lead to the construction of the Wodonga Bypass as double track.

[Cootamundra – Crystal Brook New and Extended Loops \(NSW/SA\)](#)

This project will allow for two additional long loops by 2010 and a further four by 2011 in the corridor between Cootamundra and Crystal Brook to ensure transit times are maintained as volume grows.

[Melbourne – Adelaide Extended Loops \(SA\)](#)

This project will allow projected growth to be accommodated while maintaining current transit times, and increase maximum train length in the Melbourne – Adelaide corridor to 1800 metres.

[Adelaide – Kalgoorlie New and Extended Loops \(SA/WA\)](#)

This project will provide additional crossing loops of 1800 metres length to allow projected growth to be accommodated while maintaining current transit times.

[Border – Acacia Ridge Track Upgrade \(QLD\)](#)

This project will complete concrete sleepers on the Sydney – Brisbane corridor and provide narrow gauge access between Acacia Ridge and Bromelton.

[Hunter Valley: Liverpool Range New Rail Alignment \(NSW\)](#)

This project will see the development of a new rail alignment across the Liverpool Range that will ease expected capacity restrictions when forecast increases in coal demand are realised.

[Hunter Valley: Bidirectional Signalling, Maitland to Branxton \(NSW\)](#)

This project involves the upgrading of signalling systems through replacement of old unreliable equipment with modern equipment. This will improve productivity by allowing trains to travel in either direction on either track, ensuring that Hunter Valley coal volume production and export capacity is optimised.

[Hunter Valley: Minimbah Bank – Third Rail Line \(NSW\)](#)

This project will provide a significant boost to capacity on this congested section of the Hunter Valley rail network and contribute to optimising Hunter Valley coal volume production and export capacity with the construction of a third track along the length of the Minimbah Bank starting from the north of Whittingham Junction.

[Hunter Valley: St Heliers to Muswellbrook Duplication \(NSW\)](#)

This project will contribute to the improved Hunter Valley coal volume production and export capacity by extending the existing double track, which currently ends in St Heliers as far as Muswellbrook.

[Hunter Valley: Minimbah to Maitland – Third Rail Line \(NSW\)](#)

This project will contribute to improved coal volume production and export capacity in the Hunter Valley by increasing rail capacity and eliminate bottlenecks with the construction of an additional track between Maitland and Minimbah.

[Hunter Valley: Ulan Line Passing Loops and Duplication \(NSW\)](#)

This project will involve the construction of new passing loops at Bylong, Warondi, Aerosol Valley and Radio Hut to increase the number of return paths available to coal trains and improve operational flexibility of trains travelling between Ulan and Muswellbrook.

[Advanced Train Management System \(Phase 2\)](#)

The trial of this system will potentially remove the need for physical land based signalling infrastructure across the network through the use of satellite based Global Positioning System (GPS) and Broadband Data and Voice communications to manage train movements.

Further information

For more information visit www.australia.gov.au/economicstimulus

ROADS PACKAGE

The Australian Government will invest an additional \$711 million in 2008–09 and 2009–10 to accelerate construction of 14 roads projects announced under the Nation Building Program (formerly AusLink 2). The Australian Government will also invest an additional \$90 million in the Black Spots Program in 2008–09 and \$60 million in 2009–10.

Initiatives include:

[Bulahdelah Bypass \(Pacific Highway, NSW\)](#)

This project will provide an 8.6 kilometre bypass with divided carriageway. It will also improve safety and amenity for the Bulahdelah community.

[Sextons Hill Section, Banora Point \(Pacific Highway, NSW\)](#)

This project provides a 2.4 kilometre realignment outside the urban area. The upgrade project will improve the efficiency and safety of travel on the Pacific Highway.

[Tarcutta Bypass \(Hume Highway, NSW\)](#)

The completion of the Tarcutta Bypass will provide a duplicated bypass of 6.8 kilometre section and remove the 50 kilometre per hour speed restriction that currently applies through Tarcutta.

[Woomargama Bypass \(Hume Highway, NSW\)](#)

This project will provide for the completion of the Woomargama Bypass, a duplicated bypass of 8.9 kilometre section (1.5 kilometres shorter than the current route of the road through Woomargama) and remove a 70 kilometre per hour speed restriction across a 1 kilometre length.

[Ipswich Motorway Upgrade – Dinmore to Goodna \(QLD\)](#)

The project involves widening of the existing Ipswich Motorway from four to six lanes between Dinmore and Goodna, a distance of approximately 8 kilometres.

[Duplication of the Douglas Arterial Road – Townsville \(QLD\)](#)

This project will result in the duplication of the existing two lane Douglas Arterial Road to a four lane motorway standard from Angus Smith Drive to Riverway Drive.

[Pacific Motorway Transit Project \(Section B\) – Springwood South to Daisy Hill \(QLD\)](#)

This project will upgrade the Pacific Motorway from Springwood South to Daisy Hill, including the Loganlea Road Interchange.

Goulburn Valley Highway – Nagambie Bypass (Vic)

The project will improve the efficient flow of traffic along this section of the Goulburn Valley Highway which currently carries 7,500 vehicles per day (of which 21 per cent are commercial vehicles) and thus reduce travel times and improve reliability.

Princes Highway East – Traralgon to Sale Duplication (Vic)

This project will upgrade the Princes Highway East to a four lane, two carriageway freeway between Traralgon and Rosedale (approximately 20 kilometres) and Rosedale and Sale (approximately 25 kilometres).

Western Highway – Anthony’s Cutting Realignment (Vic)

This project will lead to the construction of a four lane two carriageway freeway on a new alignment approximately 5 kilometres in length between Harkness Road West Melton and Bacchus Marsh between the western end of the Melton Bypass and the eastern end for the Bacchus Marsh Bypass.

Western Ring Road Upgrade and Capacity Improvement (Vic)

The proposed works include additional lanes and enhanced traffic management systems over the 38 kilometre length of the Western Ring Road.

Mandurah Entrance Road (WA)

This project involves construction of a 7 kilometre road from the New Perth-Bunbury Highway to the City of Mandurah.

Northern Expressway (SA)

This project involves the accelerated construction of the new four-lane freeway standard 22 kilometre road between Gawler and Port Wakefield Road and an upgrade of an 11 kilometre section of Port Wakefield Road to the Salisbury Highway.

Midland Highway – Brighton Bypass (Tasmania)

This project will lead to the construction of a new alignment for the Midland Highway to bypass Brighton to the west.

Further information

For more information visit www.australia.gov.au/economicstimulus