



NORTHERN TERRITORY



2024-25 BUDGET

WORKING FOR THE TERRITORY

BUDGET AND REGIONAL
OVERVIEW

BUDGET AND REGIONAL OVERVIEW

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Fiscal outlook

The fiscal outlook presented in the 2024 Budget reflects the Territory Government's significant operating and capital investment, combined with the effects of market factors and natural disasters that have reduced the Territory's own-source revenues, partially offset by improved GST revenue.

The 2024 Budget includes \$2.2 billion in new policy commitments over the budget cycle to support hospital services, schools, employment and training, public order and safety, and lifestyle, ease cost of living pressures, and create work opportunities through investment in infrastructure.

The fiscal balance is expected to remain in deficit over the budget cycle, with a return to surplus now anticipated in 2029-30.

The cumulative effect of the revised fiscal balance forecasts have also resulted in higher net debt and net debt to revenue ratios across the budget cycle.

Updated projections include:

- estimated general government net operating balance deficit of \$410 million in 2024-25, and surpluses in every year over the forward estimates
- forecast non financial public sector fiscal balance deficit of \$1.59 billion in 2024-25, reducing each subsequent year to a deficit of \$176 million in 2027-28
- record infrastructure investment of \$2.58 billion in 2024-25 with major projects including remote housing and upgrades to the Territory's road network
- estimated net debt in the non financial public sector of \$11.05 billion in 2024-25, increasing to \$12.33 billion in 2027-28

- an estimated net debt to revenue ratio of 126% in 2024-25, expected to peak at 135% in 2026-27, then forecast to decline to 133% in 2027-28.

Key fiscal indicators

	2023-24	2024-25	2025-26	2026-27	2027-28
	Revised	Budget	Forward estimate		
	\$M	\$M	\$M	\$M	\$M
General government sector					
Net operating balance	- 728	- 410	31	96	231
Non financial public sector					
Fiscal balance	- 1 559	- 1 585	- 661	- 444	- 176
Net debt	9 396	11 046	11 776	12 210	12 329
Net debt to revenue (%)	115	126	132	135	133

Revenue

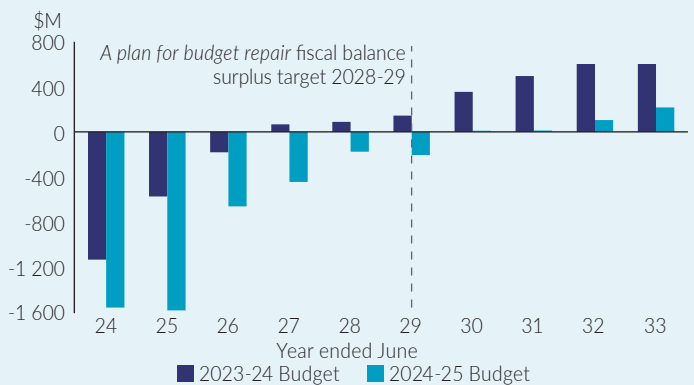
Territory revenue is expected to be \$8.76 billion for the non financial public sector in 2024-25, rising to \$9.26 billion by 2027-28. Compared to the 2023 Budget, this is \$429 million higher than estimated in 2024-25, and \$686 million per annum higher across the forward estimate years.

The increase is mostly due to new tied Commonwealth funding for schools, skills, remote housing, homelands infrastructure, Central Australia investment package, and one-year extension of the Northern Territory Remote Aboriginal Investment agreement, combined with additional GST revenue.

GST remains the Territory's largest revenue source, and represents around 48% of total revenue in 2024-25 and about 51% over the forward estimates.

Medium-term fiscal outlook

The Territory's medium-term fiscal outlook is for a projected fiscal balance surplus from 2029-30, one year later than the 2028-29 target in *A plan for budget repair*. The chart compares the 2024 Budget projections for the non financial public sector fiscal balance with those reported in the 2023 Budget. The chart shows that projected fiscal balance outcomes have weakened in all years as a result of significant operating and capital policy commitments.



GST revenue is expected to grow over the budget cycle, with the Territory forecasting growth of 3.8% in the GST collections pool in 2024-25, attributable to the flow-on effects of higher inflation and stronger taxable consumption. Also contributing to the anticipated growth in the Territory's GST revenue is an increase in the Territory's GST relativity from 4.98725 in 2023-24 to 5.06681 in 2024-25.

Taxes and royalty revenue represents the Territory's primary source of income that government can directly influence, constituting around 11% of total revenue in 2024-25 and over the budget cycle. Taxes comprise payroll tax, stamp duty on conveyances, taxes on gambling and insurance, and motor vehicle fees and taxes.

Revenue from taxes and royalties is expected to remain stable over 2023-24 and 2024-25 with an average total of \$911 million each year, and average \$1 billion per annum over the forward estimates period.

Notwithstanding, the softening of key commodity prices, impact of global and domestic inflationary pressures on operating costs of Territory mines, the announced closure of a mine operator and suspension of another mine operation due to the effects of Cyclone Megan have resulted in a net reduction to the Territory's mining royalties forecast over the budget cycle since the 2023 Budget.

Expenditure

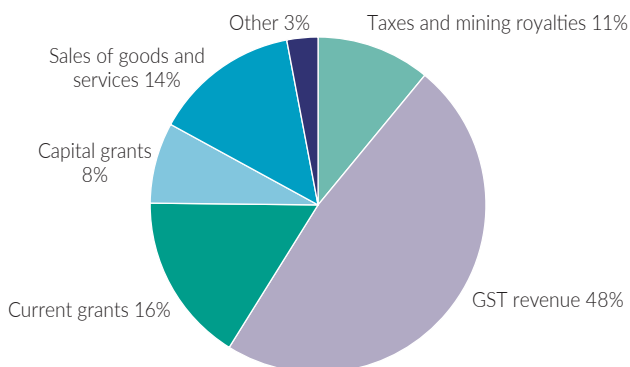
In 2024-25, total expenditure (comprising total expenses and net capital investment) for the non financial public sector is estimated to be \$11.12 billion, and then average \$10.3 billion per annum over the forward estimates.

Operating expenses are expected to total \$9.05 billion in 2024-25 and then average \$8.9 billion per annum over the forward estimates. When compared to the 2023 Budget, total operating expenses are on average \$819 million per annum higher reflecting government policy decisions including increases to support police resourcing and government schools, and expenditure associated with delivering new tied Commonwealth funding agreements.

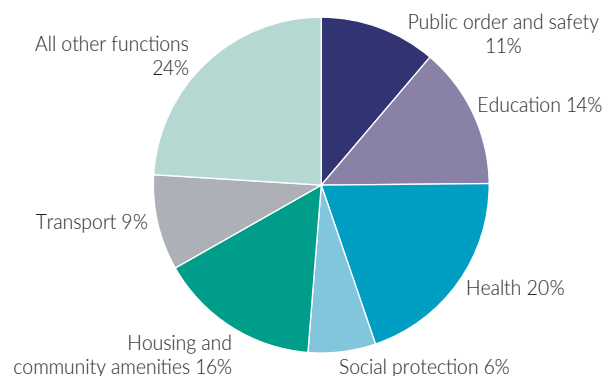
Net capital investment is forecast to be \$2.07 billion in 2024-25 and then average \$1.4 billion per annum over the forward estimates. When compared to the 2023 Budget, net capital investment is on average \$294 million per annum higher, mainly due to the additional \$250 million provided to progress projects on the capital works program, new Commonwealth funding for remote housing and increased capital replacement within the government owned corporations.

Health, housing and community amenities, education, and public order and safety remain the largest functions of government expenditure, constituting 61% of total estimated expenditure in 2024-25.

Components of Territory revenue 2024-25



Total expenditure by function 2024-25



Economic outlook

The Territory's economy is well supported by a pipeline of public sector investment projects and programs to support jobs.

Several large-scale private investment projects in the mining sector are also underpinning growth in 2023-24, led by the Barossa project and related investment at the Darwin LNG plant.

Economic growth

Gross state product (GSP) is forecast to grow by 2.3% in 2024-25, before accelerating to 7.1% in 2025-26 as LNG exports from the Barossa project commence.

State final demand (SFD), which excludes trade, is forecast to grow by 1.9% in 2024-25, before contracting modestly by 0.2% in 2025-26, as private investment eases following completion of Barossa construction and Darwin LNG plant life extension works.

Household consumption growth is expected to improve over the forecast period following a contraction in 2023-24 as inflation moderates, real wages improve and Commonwealth tax cuts flow to households from 1 July 2024.

Public consumption is expected to continue to support growth from 2024-25 and across the forward estimates, largely reflecting Commonwealth and Territory commitments to additional funding for education and housing across the Territory, particularly in remote Aboriginal communities.

Territory economic forecasts

	2022-23a	2023-24e	2024-25f	2025-26f	2026-27f	2027-28f
Gross state product ¹	- 5.3	4.9	2.3	7.1	4.1	2.1
State final demand ¹	1.9	1.7	1.9	- 0.2	2.1	1.9
Population ²	0.9	0.8	0.9	1.1	1.1	1.1
Employment ¹	2.6	1.5	1.1	0.9	1.3	1.3
Unemployment rate ³	4.3	4.4	4.6	4.8	4.7	4.6
Consumer price index ¹	6.4	3.6	2.9	2.5	2.4	2.4
Wage price index ¹	2.8	4.1	3.2	3.1	3.1	3.0

a: actual; e: estimate; f: forecast

¹ Year-on-year percentage change.

² Change in June quarter compared with June quarter the previous year.

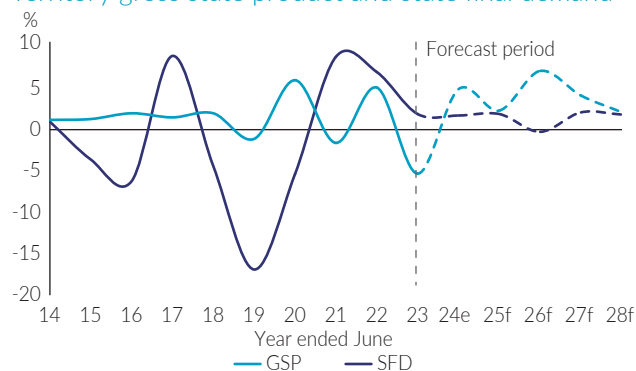
Prices

Inflation in Darwin declined to 3.3% in the March quarter 2024 and is expected to continue moderating, reaching the mid-point of the RBA's 2% to 3% target range in 2025.

Easing inflation to date has been driven by a decline in goods inflation as supply chain pressures abate. Services inflation remains high due to strong price growth in key inputs, which continues to be passed on to consumers and is a key risk to the inflation outlook, especially if labour costs continue to grow strongly.

Utility price increases, as measured in the CPI, have been modest in Darwin relative to Australia due to the Territory Government capping regulated tariff increases at 2.7% in 2022-23 and 2023-24. This has been a key driver of the lower level of inflation in Darwin compared with other capital cities in 2023.

Territory gross state product and state final demand¹



e: estimate; f: forecast; GSP: gross state product; SFD: state final demand

¹ Year-on-year percentage change.

Source: ABS, Australian National Accounts: State Accounts, Cat. No. 5220.0; Department of Treasury and Finance

³ Year average.

Source: Department of Treasury and Finance, ABS

Employment

Employment growth is expected to average 1.1% per annum over the forecast period, largely as a result of the Territory's investment growth profile, and population and labour force growth.

Employment in the Territory has trended up over the past 6 months, and is currently at the highest level on record (139,676 persons). Year-on-year employment growth is expected to increase by around 1.5% in 2023-24. The unemployment rate is expected to peak at 4.8% in 2025-26 before moderating to 4.6% in 2027-28, remaining below the 2018-19 (pre-covid) rate of 5.7%.

High interest rates and ongoing pressure on household budgets have contributed to lower demand for labour in retail trade and residential construction. This is being offset by high levels of investment from the Territory and Commonwealth governments with the pipeline of remote housing, road and utility works. In 2024-25, employment growth is expected to increase, supported by growth in household consumption and increases in public investment and expenditure including new Commonwealth and Territory education and housing funding commitments.

Since covid health measures were lifted in 2021-22, the number of job vacancies has trended down from a record high of 8,500 in February 2022 to 4,800 in February 2024. Despite some evidence of softening demand for labour, the ratio of job vacancies to unemployed persons remains elevated compared to pre-covid levels.

Population

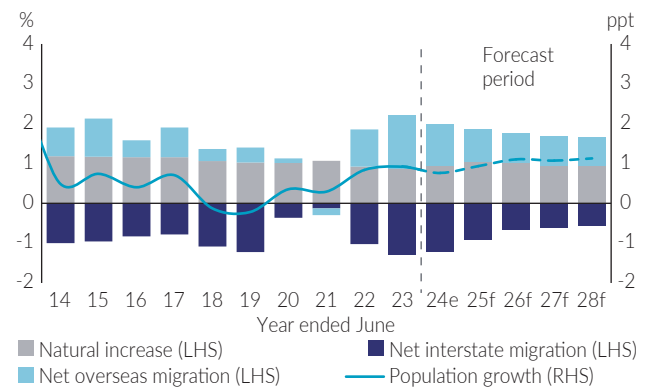
The Territory's population is estimated to increase by 0.8% in 2023-24 and 0.9% in 2024-25, before stabilising at around 1.1% per annum over the forward estimates period. Recent strength in net overseas migration into the Territory and net interstate migration out of the Territory is expected to ease over the forecast period as migration patterns normalise.

The Territory experienced a strong rebound in overseas migration inflows, in particular from temporary visa holders, following the reopening of Australia's international borders post-covid, and these have remained elevated in recent months.

Similarly, the Territory's net interstate migration declined following the removal of covid restrictions and strong labour demand across other jurisdictions of Australia.

Over the forecast period, natural increase and overseas migration are expected to contribute to population growth, while interstate migration is expected to detract from it.

Components of Territory population growth



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

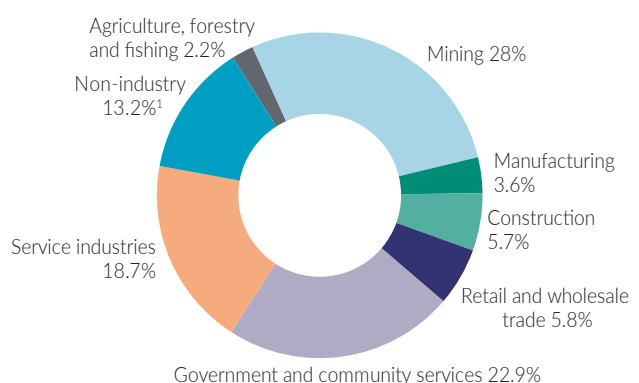
Source: ABS, *National, state and territory population*, Cat. No. 3101.0; Department of Treasury and Finance

Size of the Territory economy

In 2022-23, the Territory's GSP was \$30.1 billion. The mining sector was the largest contributor to the Territory economy in 2022-23 accounting for around 28% of GSP. The government and community sector was the second largest contributor.

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

Industry contribution to GSP, 2022-23



Source: ABS

Infrastructure investment

At \$4.42 billion, the 2024-25 infrastructure program provides a record commitment to investment across the Territory. Investments will contribute to the delivery of housing, health, education, community safety and other core government services, improve access across the Territory, develop the economy and create jobs.

Transport investment continues to comprise more than half the total infrastructure program, through significant funding from both the Territory and Commonwealth governments, followed by housing and community amenities investment at over 23%. Of the total infrastructure program, around 60% continues to be allocated to new and upgraded infrastructure in remote and regional communities.

Capital works by COFOG-A category 2024-25¹

	Capital works	
	\$M	%
Transport	2 334.0	52.9
Housing and community amenities	1 032.7	23.4
Health	251.0	5.7
Public order and safety	216.9	4.9
Recreation, culture and religion	205.1	4.6
Economic affairs	188.0	4.3
Education	72.2	1.6
Environmental protection	58.3	1.3
Social protection	50.3	1.1
General public services	8.8	0.2
Total general government	4 417.3	100

1 COFOG-A: Classification of the Functions of Government – Australia
Note: Totals are rounded.

New projects commencing in 2024-25 include investment in transport infrastructure to support tourism and industry and improve access to remote and regional communities, headworks and subdivision works to support land release, and construction and upgrade of housing and community infrastructure.

Transport infrastructure

The 2024-25 program continues to invest heavily in transport infrastructure, with around \$2.3 billion for roads, aerodromes, jetties and barge landings, including:

- \$340.5 million for priority industry roads to support economic development
- \$209 million for Central Arnhem Road upgrades
- \$189.3 million for upgrades to Plenty Highway, as part of the Outback Way corridor
- \$127.9 million for Northern Territory National Network roads
- \$112.4 million for Buntine Highway upgrades
- \$80.3 million for remote and regional roads
- \$80.1 million for Tanami Road upgrades
- \$77.7 million for construction of a new marine facility at Mandorah
- \$71.6 million for the Tiger Brennan Drive and Berrimah Road intersection
- \$66.8 million for Kakadu National Park roads
- \$60 million for upgrades to Port Keats Road
- \$51.8 million for upgrades to Tiwi Islands roads.

Infrastructure payments (cash)

In 2024-25, total infrastructure payments are expected to be \$2.58 billion, a record level of infrastructure expenditure, comprising \$1.9 billion in general government and \$681 million in public non financial corporations investment.

In 2023-24, total infrastructure payments are forecast to be \$2.02 billion, down slightly from the projected figure of \$2.11 billion in the 2023 Budget. This primary reflects revised timing of Commonwealth and Territory funded projects.

	2024-25 Budget	
	Program	Cash
	\$M	\$M
General government		
Capital works	4 417	1 446
Capital grants ¹		193
Repairs and maintenance ¹		241
Infrastructure-related expenses		18
Total		1 897
Government owned corporations		681
Total infrastructure payments		2 578

1 Excludes payments between Territory-controlled entities.

Economic infrastructure

The 2024-25 infrastructure program includes \$188 million for economic infrastructure, including:

- \$50.4 million for infrastructure upgrades to reposition Jabiru as a tourism and regional services hub
- \$30.3 million to develop the Katherine Logistics and Agribusiness Hub
- \$26 million for infrastructure upgrades and subdivision works at the Brewer industrial estate
- \$11 million for headworks to support the development of renewable energy hubs in Weddell
- \$9.1 million for detailed design, strategic environmental assessment and preliminary works for the Middle Arm Sustainable Development Precinct.

In 2024-25, the projected capital investment of public non financial corporations is at a record level of \$537.6 million. This includes \$113 million for Manton Dam return to service, \$25 million for a second Darwin-Katherine battery energy storage system and \$18 million for underground power.

An additional \$7.9 million is provided in capital grants, including the Home Business and Battery Scheme and tourism industry development grants.

Social infrastructure

The 2024-25 infrastructure program includes \$205.1 million for works to construct new and upgrade existing arts, recreation and parks facilities. Key investments include:

- \$54.1 million to progress the National Aboriginal Art Gallery in Alice Springs
- \$52.7 million to construct the Northern Territory Art Gallery in the Darwin central business district
- \$19.2 million for upgrades at the Darwin Convention Centre
- \$17.2 million to enhance recreational fishing infrastructure
- \$11 million for arts trail and cultural upgrades in East Arnhem and Tennant Creek
- \$3 million to create a commemorative space at the site of the Kahlin Aboriginal Compound
- \$3 million for accessibility upgrades at the Hidden Valley Motorsports complex.

Housing

The 2024 Budget provides over \$900 million to construct new and refurbish existing housing in remote and urban areas. This includes \$682.2 million for remote housing, comprising:

- \$430.6 million for Remote Housing Investment Package works, including land servicing and HomeBuild NT
- \$223 million for new HomeBuild and land servicing under the remote housing agreement
- \$28.6 million ongoing works for new and improved housing through other national partnership agreements for remote housing.

The 2024 Budget continues investing in residential headworks across the Territory, allocating over \$200 million to infrastructure projects to support the release of land, including development in Holtze, Katherine East, Kilgariff and Tennant Creek.

There is also over \$100 million provided for housing related grants in 2024-25, including \$79.5 million for the homelands housing and infrastructure upgrade grant program.

Public order and safety

The 2024-25 infrastructure program includes \$216.9 million in community safety infrastructure to expand and upgrade police, corrections and youth justice facilities. Significant projects include:

- \$57 million to construct new interim standalone women's therapeutic prison facilities in Darwin and Alice Springs, and an interim men's training prison facility in Darwin
- \$36.4 million to construct a new multipurpose police complex in Maningrida
- \$34 million for upgrades to critical infrastructure at the Alice Springs Correctional Centre
- \$25 million per annum for a five-year rolling police infrastructure and housing upgrade program
- \$19 million to construct a multipurpose police complex in Peppimenarti
- \$11.5 million to construct the Tennant Creek watch house.

Making the Territory safer

The 2024 Budget invests \$1.2 billion in public order and safety, and \$723 million in social protection to deliver a range of initiatives to build safer, fairer and more resilient communities.

Business Growth, Resilience and Security Package

The 2024 Budget includes \$8 million over two years to deliver a refreshed and expanded business growth, resilience and security package, providing grants to enable small Territory businesses to improve safety and security, and reduce commercial crime.

The 2024 Budget also provides:

- \$8 million over two years to continue transit safety initiatives across the bus network to deter and manage antisocial behaviour, including funding for on-board security officers
- \$3 million in 2024-25 and \$1.1 million per year thereafter to enhance emergency services
- \$1.4 million to establish cyber security training and outreach capability and a new Cyber Invest Business Grant program for small businesses to improve cyber security protections
- \$1 million to provide additional support to the Director of Public Prosecutions
- \$0.55 million to increase the capacity of the Independent Commissioner Against Corruption.

Domestic, family and sexual violence

The Territory Government continues its commitment to generational change and safer communities for women and children by providing \$70 million in the 2024 Budget to reduce domestic, family and sexual violence (DFSV) across the Territory.

The 2024 Budget includes an additional \$30 million over two years to continue implementation of Action Plan 2 under the DFSV Reduction Framework, supporting health, justice and policing initiatives aimed at preventing DFSV and reducing the impacts of violence on victim survivors. This funding builds on existing investment of around \$98 million since 2017-18 for various strategies and initiatives, including the DFSV Action Plan 1 and Action Plan 2.

Youth justice

The Territory Government is funding a new model of care for youth detention, supporting young people to receive the specialised care they need to build confidence and capability to make safe, responsible decisions that reduce the likelihood of reoffending and lead to successful adult lives.

The 2024 Budget includes \$44.2 million over two years to establish and operate residential youth justice facilities in Darwin, Katherine, Alice Springs and Tennant Creek. These will be live-in facilities to ensure court sentences and orders are enforced, while also providing training and education services to help young people get their lives back on track with a pathway into the workforce.

The new residential youth justice facilities will complement existing youth justice centres under development in Darwin and Alice Springs.

Resourcing correctional services

The 2024 Budget invests in correctional services to ensure facilities are fit for purpose and that offenders face consequences for their actions but also have training and skills to support rehabilitation through:

- \$65 million over five years and \$10 million per year thereafter for costs associated with rising prisoner numbers
- \$57 million to establish two new interim standalone women's prisons in Darwin and Alice Springs and refurbish the existing Don Dale Youth Detention Centre for use as an interim training facility for male prisoners to get them work ready. Demolition of the former Don Dale Youth Detention Centre is expected to commence in July 2024
- \$34 million to deliver improvements and security upgrades at the Alice Springs Correctional Centre
- \$4 million to support the establishment of an alternative to custody facility in Central Australia for up to 30 Aboriginal male domestic and family violence offenders.

Supporting police

The Territory Government is committed to providing police with the support and resources required to keep Territorians safe.

The 2024 Budget invests an additional \$570 million over five years to respond to recommendations from the independent Police Review and fully establish the Territory Safety Division. This is the largest increase in police resourcing in the Territory's history.

The funding includes \$445 million over five years for an additional 200 sworn officers and 71 non-sworn operational support staff across the Territory, including 120 officers for general duties to boost frontline policing in the Greater Darwin and Katherine regions and ensure a minimum of three police officers in each remote station.

A further \$125 million is provided for a five-year rolling police infrastructure program that aims to give Territory police the best facilities to continue keeping the Territory safe. Key areas of focus for the police infrastructure program will be new and upgraded police stations, watch houses and housing, particularly in remote and regional areas.

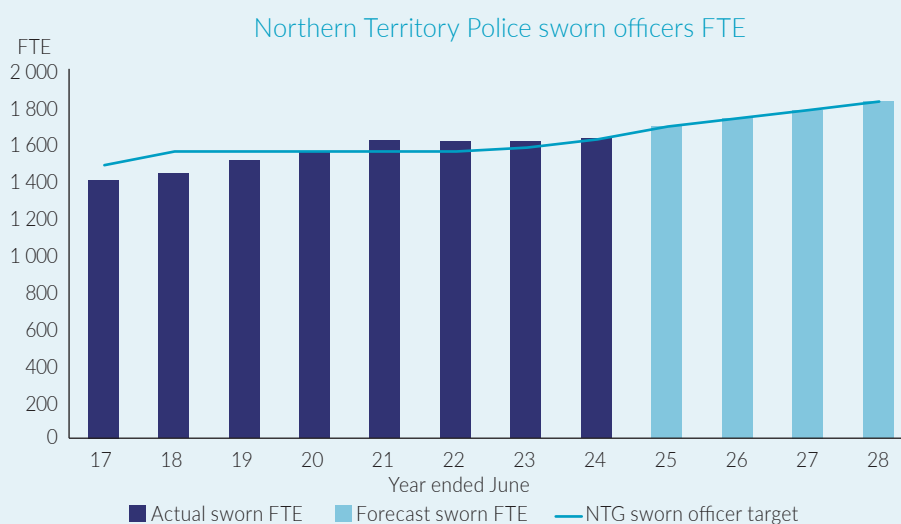
Further police infrastructure investments in the 2024 Budget include:

- \$36.4 million for a multipurpose police complex in Maningrida, including police housing
- \$19 million for a Peppimenarti police complex
- \$11.5 million for a watch house in Tennant Creek.

The full establishment of the Territory Safety Division, which is based at the Nightcliff Police Station, will enable high visibility policing in Greater Darwin and provide a rapid response to alcohol-related offending, antisocial behaviour and other social order issues. The Territory Safety Division will also provide surge response capacity across the Territory.

The increase in non-sworn staff includes an additional 25 FTE call takers and CCTV operators to support the Joint Emergency Services Communication Centre.

The additional staff will be recruited over a 4-year period and result in the Territory Government's sworn officer target increasing to 1,842 FTE by 2027-28.



1 2023-24 FTE year to March.

2 Sworn officers include police, Aboriginal community police officers, police auxiliaries and recruits.

Implementation of the government's response to the Northern Territory Police Review will also strengthen the agency's ability to support frontline staff in their day-to-day work. This includes career pathways for Aboriginal

community police officers, digital transformation, data-informed service provision, bolstering capacity of the Police College, and recruitment of senior, experienced police from other states to build capability in the ranks.

Work opportunities for Territorians

The 2024 Budget creates employment opportunities for Territorians through support for the tourism industry, attracting investment, promoting economic growth and facilitating workforce development through training and employment opportunities.

Attracting and assisting investment

The Territory Government continues to ensure investment conditions in the Territory are attractive by facilitating future economic growth and promoting work opportunities. The 2024 Budget includes:

- \$30 million over three years to support activation of the Middle Arm Sustainable Development Precinct and development of the Tennant Creek to Darwin infrastructure corridor
- \$15.5 million to develop the Marine Industry Park – Precinct 1, to support the Darwin ship lift project
- \$9.5 million per annum for Resourcing the Territory, to increase mineral and resource exploration activity and open new areas of the Territory for exploration
- \$4.7 million to continue to attract private investment, maximise conversion of existing major and significant projects, and develop new advanced manufacturing opportunities
- \$2.5 million toward developing a renewable hydrogen industry in the Territory
- \$2 million to progress the Territory's facilitated investments project pipeline
- \$1.5 million over two years to support establishment of a carbon capture, utilisation and storage industry.

The 2024 Budget also commits \$0.5 million for a bronze partnership with the Commonwealth to showcase the Territory at the 2025 World Expo in Osaka, which is expected to attract over 28 million visitors, across 160 participating countries and 25 international organisations.

Remote housing

The Commonwealth and Territory governments are boosting jobs and creating more remote housing through a landmark joint \$4 billion investment for housing in remote communities across the Territory.

The 10-year commitment to improve remote housing will see up to 270 homes built each year, with the goal of halving overcrowding. As well as supporting improved housing outcomes, this unprecedented investment will also create local employment opportunities and support the sustainability of Aboriginal business enterprises.

Employment support

The 2024 Budget is addressing workforce shortages and supporting employment opportunities through:

- \$109.2 million to support vocational education and training and ensure the skill requirements of the Territory economy are met through training, workforce growth and skilled migration initiatives
- \$8.5 million for Indigenous jobs development funding, supporting Aboriginal staff working in local government service delivery.

Additionally, the Territory Government's Local Jobs Fund, a co-investment model that supports economic transformation projects and helps business with high growth potential, provides access to capital of up to \$10 million to help expand and create opportunities to generate local jobs and increase exports.

Tourism in the Territory

The tourism sector is worth \$1.2 billion per annum to the Territory economy and directly employs 7,500 people. The 2024 Budget includes \$68.4 million to support tourism, including:

- \$13 million over three years for the Territory Aviation Attraction Scheme to fund passenger rebates and airport out-of-hours opening costs
- \$12.8 million for targeted tourism, business events and international education marketing
- \$3 million to support tourism recovery in international markets
- \$3 million for the Visitor Experience Enhancement Program
- \$1.9 million for Aboriginal tourism industry development activities.

Getting Territory students work ready

Support for schools

The 2024 Budget continues to support the future of Territorians through a record \$1.5 billion investment in education and training across the Territory, including:

- \$31.7 million to continue implementing the Indigenous Education Strategy, jointly funded with the Commonwealth
- \$24 million for apprenticeships and traineeships in 2024-25, to offer Territorians the opportunity to study and earn an income while undertaking a qualification
- \$8.7 million to construct a new early years preschool space and administration building at Alekarenge School
- \$2 million to plan for enrolment growth in secondary and special education in the Palmerston growth area
- \$1.9 million to refurbish/purchase new equipment at the Yirrkala School.

The Territory Government continues to build a skilled and capable workforce to meet the needs of industry and business, and fill job opportunities created by continuing strong economic growth in the Territory, through the:

- higher education scholarship program, which encourages local school leavers to complete tertiary studies that lead to employment in the Territory. Up to 20 scholarships are awarded annually to eligible year 12 graduates, providing up to \$5,000 in financial support each year for Territory students to complete their first undergraduate degree
- workwear and gear bonus that provides up to \$1,000 to support first-year apprentices and trainees buying workwear and equipment
- apprenticeship and traineeship travel and accommodation subsidy scheme, which supports apprentices and trainees who live more than 50 kilometres (one way) from the nearest registered training organisation that provides off-the-job training for their qualification
- new student skills centre in the remote community of Tjuwanpa, located near Ntaria (Hermannsburg).

Fully resourcing Territory schools

All government schools across the Territory will be fully and fairly funded by the Territory and Commonwealth governments following a historic agreement to increase funding to 100 per cent of the Schooling Resource Standard, by 2029.

Under the agreement, the Commonwealth will invest at least an additional \$738 million from 2025 to 2029 and the Territory Government has committed at least an additional \$350 million over the same period. The additional funding will also enable the Territory to move to enrolment-based funding.

Education funding for government schools totals a record \$890 million in 2024-25, a \$100 million increase since the 2023 Budget.

The 2024 Budget also invests \$34 million over three years and \$2.5 million ongoing from 2027-28 to replace the out-dated Student Administration and Management System. A new fit-for-purpose Education Management System will be operational by 2027 and provide more streamlined and accurate records of student enrolment, attendance and performance.

Mini Woolies

The Territory Government has partnered with Woolworths to open the first Mini Woolies at Henbury School, which simulates a supermarket setting.

This partnership supports Territory students' education through hands-on-learning experiences and provides them with transferrable skills for future VET pathways and employment opportunities.



Cost of living support

The 2024 Budget continues to support Territorians, families and Territory businesses by reducing cost of living pressures through a range of concessions, subsidies and incentives.

Reducing the cost of living for families

The 2024 Budget continues to put downward pressure on the cost of living throughout the Territory by providing a range of subsidies, voucher and concession schemes, and grants, including:

- \$8.2 million to continue delivering Back to School vouchers that support children and their families with the costs of schooling
- \$5.7 million to continue the early childhood services subsidy for long day care, three-year-old kindergarten and family day care services to assist parents and families with childcare costs
- \$5.7 million to continue delivering the Sports Voucher Scheme, which includes Learn to Swim vouchers.



The annual \$200 Back to School voucher is available for all enrolled Territory students from preschool to year 12 to assist with paying back-to-school expenses such as uniforms, stationery, excursions, camps and elective activities.

The early childhood services subsidy is paid directly to operators of childcare services to reduce the cost of child care for families and encourage parents and carers to participate in the workforce or study.

The Sport Voucher Scheme is available to children enrolled in school from transition to year 12 for sports, recreation, cultural and music programs, and the Learn to Swim program for children aged 0 to 5 to participate in water safety programs. The scheme provides two \$100 vouchers each year to assist Territory families to reduce participation costs for their children.

The 2024 Budget also includes \$150,000 to support long day care providers and three-year-old kindergarten services through the toy and equipment grant program to assist in the purchase of appropriate toys and play-based equipment.

Utilities

The 2024 Budget provides an additional \$55.2 million in community service obligation funding to Power and Water Corporation and electricity retailers to subsidise utility costs. This brings the total allocation in 2024-25 to \$164.2 million, including:

- \$149 million to maintain electricity supply to households and small business customers at uniform prices across the Territory at below cost of supply
- \$14.4 million for various pensioner and carer concessions
- \$0.8 million to subsidise water and sewerage services to customers at uniform prices across the Territory at below cost of supply.

Since 2022-23, the government has adopted below-CPI tariffs on utilities. In 2024-25, this is expected to save households between \$163 and \$311 on electricity and around \$151 on an average water and sewerage bill. Average small business customers will save around \$768.

Supporting seniors, carers and concession holders

In 2024-25, the budget provides \$31.2 million to recognise the important contribution of seniors, and support carers and concession holders through concession and recognition schemes, which deliver prepaid cards and concessions on a range of essential goods and services to help reduce cost of living pressures.

The \$8.4 million Seniors Recognition Scheme provides an annual prepaid card for Territory residents aged over 65 and recognises the valuable contribution senior Territorians make to our community. The card can be used on a variety of items and is valid at almost any business. In 2024-25, the Territory Government is increasing the annual value of the prepaid cards from \$500 to \$550, to assist senior Territorians with cost of living pressures.

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

- \$1,200 per annum for electricity
- \$800 per annum for water
- \$502 every two years for Territorians and their registered dependants for spectacles
- \$486 per annum for sewerage
- \$200 per annum for council rates
- \$154 per annum for vehicle registration
- \$150 per annum for garbage
- free drivers licence renewal.

Housing support

The 2024 Budget supports affordable housing investment, including:

- \$12 million over two years to support the delivery of the YWCA and Shiers Street social and affordable housing projects
- \$3 million in 2024-25 to support affordable housing for eligible key worker households in the Territory through the Rent Choice Program.

The 2024 Budget helps Territorians access private rental properties through the bond assistance scheme, which provides interest free loans to help pay the initial bond for a private rental property. Eligible Territorians can apply for up to four weeks rent as a security deposit and an option to cover two weeks rent in advance.

The 2024 Budget also supports international students moving to Darwin by providing grants of up to \$750 to assist with flight costs for their relocation to the Territory, and grants to cover the first six weeks of an international student's accommodation fees at either UniLodge or International House Darwin.

Homeowner incentives

The Territory Government continues to provide targeted home owner assistance to support new homeowners to enter the housing market through:

- the House and Land Package Exemption, providing a stamp duty exemption for eligible home buyers who acquire a house and land package on newly developed land
- the \$10,000 first home owner grant to buy or build a new home
- HomeBuild access loans to support the supply of new and affordable homes through access to low deposit home loan options.

Sustainability incentives

The Territory Government continues to provide cost of living support for sustainability incentives including:

- up to \$1,500 in electric vehicle (EV) stamp duty concessions on the registration of new and second-hand battery EVs and plugin hybrid EVs. The concession effectively removes stamp duty on purchase costs of up to \$50,000. The same vehicles are also exempt from the registration component of Territory vehicle registration fees
- the Home and Business Battery Scheme, saving homeowners and businesses up to \$5,000 on the purchase and installation of rooftop solar batteries and inverters to reduce electricity costs.

Investing in Territory healthcare

The 2024 Budget provides \$2.2 billion to deliver safe and high quality health services to meet current and projected future needs of Territorians, including an additional \$300 million over 2023-24 and 2024-25 to support hospital and health services across the Territory. Key health investments include:

- \$1.4 billion for hospital services
- \$259 million for primary health care
- \$108 million for mental health
- \$58 million for alcohol and other drugs support.

Health infrastructure

The 2024 Budget includes \$238.8 million for upgrades to hospitals and health infrastructure across the Territory, including:

- \$107 million to upgrade Royal Darwin Hospital. This investment will deliver additional clinical spaces, a new modular multipurpose facility and a mental health stabilisation assessment and referral area unit, expand the mental health inpatient unit, and upgrade the forensic mortuary, pathology and bereavement facility
- \$33.7 million to upgrade Alice Springs Hospital. This investment will deliver a new ambulatory care centre, hybrid operating theatre and emergency electrical upgrades
- \$33.2 million to upgrade central sterilisation services departments across Territory hospitals
- \$20 million to upgrade fire safety systems at Gove District Hospital
- \$20 million for the Gunbalanya health centre and morgue
- \$1.3 million for the Wadeye renal facility
- \$1.3 million for the Tennant Creek Hospital staff accommodation block.

The 2024 Budget also includes \$20 million to construct a new health centre in Borroloola, which will include fit-for-purpose consulting rooms, emergency bays, dental facilities, x-ray facilities, hearing booth, renal facilities and a morgue. A further \$500,000 is provided for new medical equipment at the centre.



Other health investment

The 2024 Budget continues to support health services across the Territory to ensure Territorians are able to access care and treatment if and when they need it, through:

- \$15.5 million as part of the banned drinker register for assessment, withdrawal and specialised alcohol treatment services to assist people with alcohol misuse issues and dependence
- \$8.1 million for the Royal Darwin Hospital positron emission tomography (PET) service, cyclotron and radiopharmacy facility and expanded chemotherapy and related services
- \$5 million to deliver the Sustained Nurse Home Visiting for Vulnerable Families program
- \$4.5 million to implement the bilateral agreement for mental health
- \$3 million to acquire new capital equipment to improve patient outcomes
- \$2.8 million to deliver health-related Early Childhood Development Plan initiatives
- \$2 million to support improved service delivery of the Public Guardian and Trustee.

The 2024 Budget also includes \$1.5 million to commence planning and design works for the construction of a new emergency ambulance station in Greater Darwin. The new facility will provide a central hub for maintenance, stocking, staffing, control and management, and enhance the efficiency of emergency medical response services in the region.

Health benefits and rebates

The Territory Government provides a range of health benefits and rebates to assist families with health expenses, including:

- up to \$502 every two years for each eligible Territorian and their registered dependants for spectacles
- free dental services for children and eligible concession card holders
- free mouthguards for children participating in organised sports to protect their teeth
- financial assistance for travel and accommodation expenses for patients needing to travel long distances to see approved medical specialists
- free hearing services to urban and regional areas for Territorians suffering from hearing loss.

Residential aged care

The Territory has Australia's fastest ageing population and the number of Territorians aged over 65 is projected to increase from around 20,000 in 2021 to around 35,000 in 2041. The 2024 Budget includes \$12 million for land servicing and design of a new 120-bed residential aged care facility in the Palmerston Regional Health Precinct to meet demand.

The site is in close proximity to the Palmerston Regional Hospital and the land servicing works will also support developing the broader Holtze area.



Operation Thrive

There are over 10,000 current and former serving veterans living in the Territory.

The 2024 Budget provides \$2.6 million over three years for initiatives under the Northern Territory Defence Veterans Strategy – Operation Thrive action plan, which aims to make the Territory a more attractive and supportive environment for veterans and their families to live and work.

Operation Thrive delivers a range of projects to support veterans and their families with transition, employment and education opportunities, health and wellbeing services, and respect and recognition initiatives for veterans.



Women in the Territory

The 2024 Budget supports better outcomes for women and girls through a range of initiatives. The Territory Government also applied a gender lens to all new initiatives as part of the 2024 Budget development process to ensure consideration of potential impacts of new proposals on women.

Health and wellbeing

The 2024 Budget supports the health and wellbeing of Territory women through:

- \$47 million for maternity services in Territory hospitals, including 28 beds at Royal Darwin Hospital and 16 in Alice Springs, and 10 same-day beds
- \$5 million for the Maternal Early Childhood Sustained Home Visiting program to engage and support mothers and their families to get the best possible care in raising their babies and small children
- \$3.2 million for free mammograms with BreastScreenNT for women aged 50 to 74, with services available in urban centres. A mobile service also provides screening to over 1,000 women every year in up to 20 communities across the Territory
- \$1.2 million for YWCA Australia to provide advocacy, programs and services for women, including affordable accommodation
- \$1.2 million to support young mothers to obtain ongoing long-term employment or take up flexible learning pathway opportunities, and support the Strong Young Dads program
- \$0.2 million for cervical cancer screening.

Reducing domestic, family and sexual violence

The Territory Government continues its commitment to generational change and safer communities for women and children by providing \$70 million in the 2024 Budget to reduce domestic, family and sexual violence (DFSV).

The 2024 Budget includes an additional \$30 million over two years to continue and expand implementation of Action Plan 2 under the DFSV Reduction Framework, as part of the 10-year plan to reduce the impact of DFSV.

Education and training

The 2024 Budget invests in education and training for women, including:

- \$24 million for apprenticeships and traineeships to offer Territorians the opportunity to study and earn an income while undertaking a qualification. Of the 3,788 current apprentices across the Territory, 1,285 are female (34%). Women also receive additional incentives, such as pastoral care, and are targeted for traditional trades such as carpentry, electrical and plumbing
- \$2.4 million for Stars Foundation programs for girls to provide school-based mentoring and wellbeing support across 16 schools to increase attendance and assist female students to complete year 12
- \$2 million for the Remote Aboriginal Teacher Education program enabling remote residents, particularly women, to pursue a teaching career in schools and early childhood care
- \$65,000 to fund seven Minister for Equality Scholarships for tertiary and vocational education and training through Charles Darwin University
- up to 20 higher education scholarships of \$5,000 for year 12 graduates to study their first degree. In 2024, 56% of the scholarships were awarded to women.

Working women

The 2024 Budget supports working women through:

- \$5.7 million to subsidise childcare operators to reduce child care costs for parents, enabling women to get back into the workforce or pursue study
- \$1.5 million for Screen Territory to support local screen practitioners, attract productions and provide upskilling opportunities for locals. This includes grants of up to \$100,000. In 2023-24, 62% of all successful applications were awarded to women or female owned companies
- \$278,000 to support women to undertake study in the fields of construction and engineering
- \$193,000 for the Working Women's Centre to provide free and confidential advice to Territory women on industrial relations and workplace issues

- sponsoring the National Association of Women in Construction Awards to grow women's careers in construction
- Hostplus, the government's default superannuation fund, providing dedicated seminars for women on superannuation, focusing on strategies women can use to increase their superannuation balances and prepare for retirement.

Leadership and diversity

The 2024 Budget supports women's leadership and equality through the *Gender Equality Action Plan 2022-2025*, including:

- \$114,300 in grants to support projects, services and activities that promote gender equality
- \$92,000 in grants to support a range of organisations for various events and activities to mark International Women's Day
- the Women's Leadership Network, including monthly inspirational speakers, formal mentoring program and training events to grow leadership capabilities for women in the public sector.

Women's therapeutic prison facilities

The 2024 Budget provides \$57 million for new adult correctional facilities including two new interim standalone women's therapeutic prison facilities in Darwin and Alice Springs.

Incorporated in this new trauma-informed approach are women-specific educational and therapeutic programs, including vocational training, psychosocial programs and culturally relevant, clinical treatment. The model will support rehabilitation, built on healing and therapeutic outcomes, with evidence-based, culturally responsive programs.

Women's motocross championship

The 2024 Budget provides funding to secure the rights for the Territory to host FIM Motocross World Championship from 2025 to 2029, including the women's world championship. The Territory will become Australia's home of this world-class event.

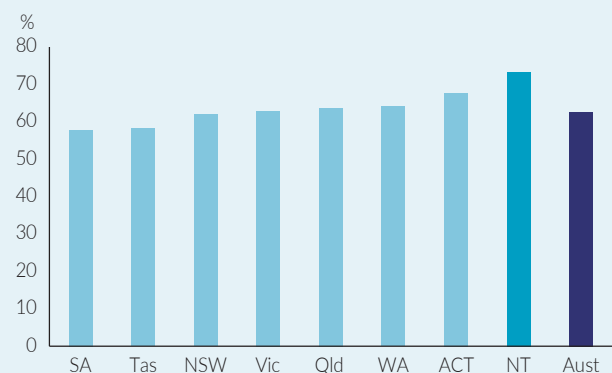
There are currently 198 registered female competitors in motocross clubs across the Territory and this is the first time the women's event will take place in Australia.

Statistical snapshot

Compared with the national female population, Territory women are younger (33.8 years old versus 39.2 nationally), proportionately more are Aboriginal (31.6% versus 3.8% nationally) and have a higher fertility rate (1.66 births versus 1.58 nationally).

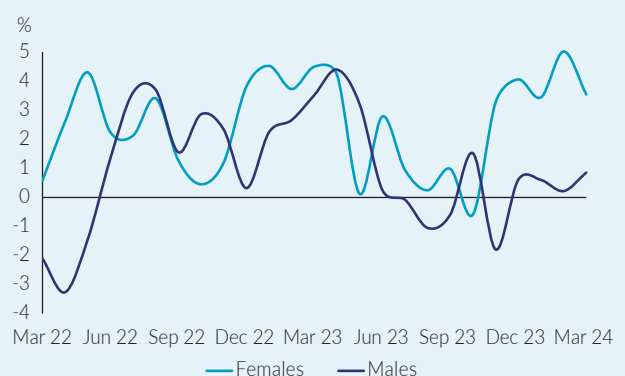
The Territory has the highest proportion of employed females of all jurisdictions, with 101.6 for every 100 employed males in March 2024. Female participation is comparable to male participation in the Territory (73.3% compared with 73.7%), in contrast to the national results (62.6% for females and 70.6% for males).

Female workforce participation rate by jurisdiction



In March 2024, annual growth in Territory employment (up by 2.2%) was largely driven by growth in female employment (up 3.5%, compared with 0.9% for males). The number of employed females in the Territory is now at a record high.

Annual growth in employment by gender



The Northern Territory Public Sector workforce is 64% female, with women comprising 56% of those in senior management. Government services, such as teaching and health care, tend to be female-dominated sectors.

Protecting the Territory lifestyle

Sports

The 2024 Budget continues to grow sporting opportunities for Territorians and attract top class sporting events to the Territory, through:

- \$6.5 million over two years for infrastructure upgrades at Woodroffe Oval for a multi-sport facility
- \$3 million to upgrade playing fields at the Tracy Village Sports Precinct to support a new home ground for Hellenic Athletic Club
- \$3 million for disability access upgrades at the Hidden Valley Motor Sports Complex
- \$1.7 million for permanent track and service modifications to Hidden Valley to support the FIM Motocross World Championship.

Events

The 2024 Budget provides \$41.5 million to support the Territory's festivals and major events, including:

- BASSINTHEGRASS
- Parrtjima – A Festival in Light
- Supercars, Finke Desert Race, Red CentreNATS and FIM Motocross World Championship
- National Rugby League and Australian Football League matches
- Darwin Festival
- community festivals and events
- million dollar fish competition
- Territory Day.

Darwin Convention Centre hotel

The Darwin Convention Centre hotel is a key part of the masterplan to redevelop the Waterfront into one of Australia's leading integrated lifestyle and tourism destinations.

The hotel will offer 236 rooms and provide new, upscale accommodation options for corporate and leisure visitors. The hotel is expected to open late 2026, and have positive flow-on effects for local businesses and tour operators.

Screen industry

The 2024 Budget supports the screen industry with funding of \$5.2 million in 2024-25, including an additional \$3 million over two years from 2024-25 to support the Screen Territory Funding Program, which includes the Production Attraction Incentive Program, story and games development, project production, career development and industry partnerships.

Screen Territory has a strong pipeline of screen productions spanning feature films, series and documentaries which are looking to film in the Territory over the next few years.

Territory parks

The Territory is well known for its spectacular nature, culture and adventure experiences throughout our national parks and reserves. The 2024 Budget supports the Territory's natural assets, through:

- \$10.8 million for Alice Springs parks and tourism infrastructure upgrades
- \$5.6 million for a new multi-day walking track at Watarrka National Park
- \$2 million for water security planning and design at Tjoritja (West MacDonnell) National Park.

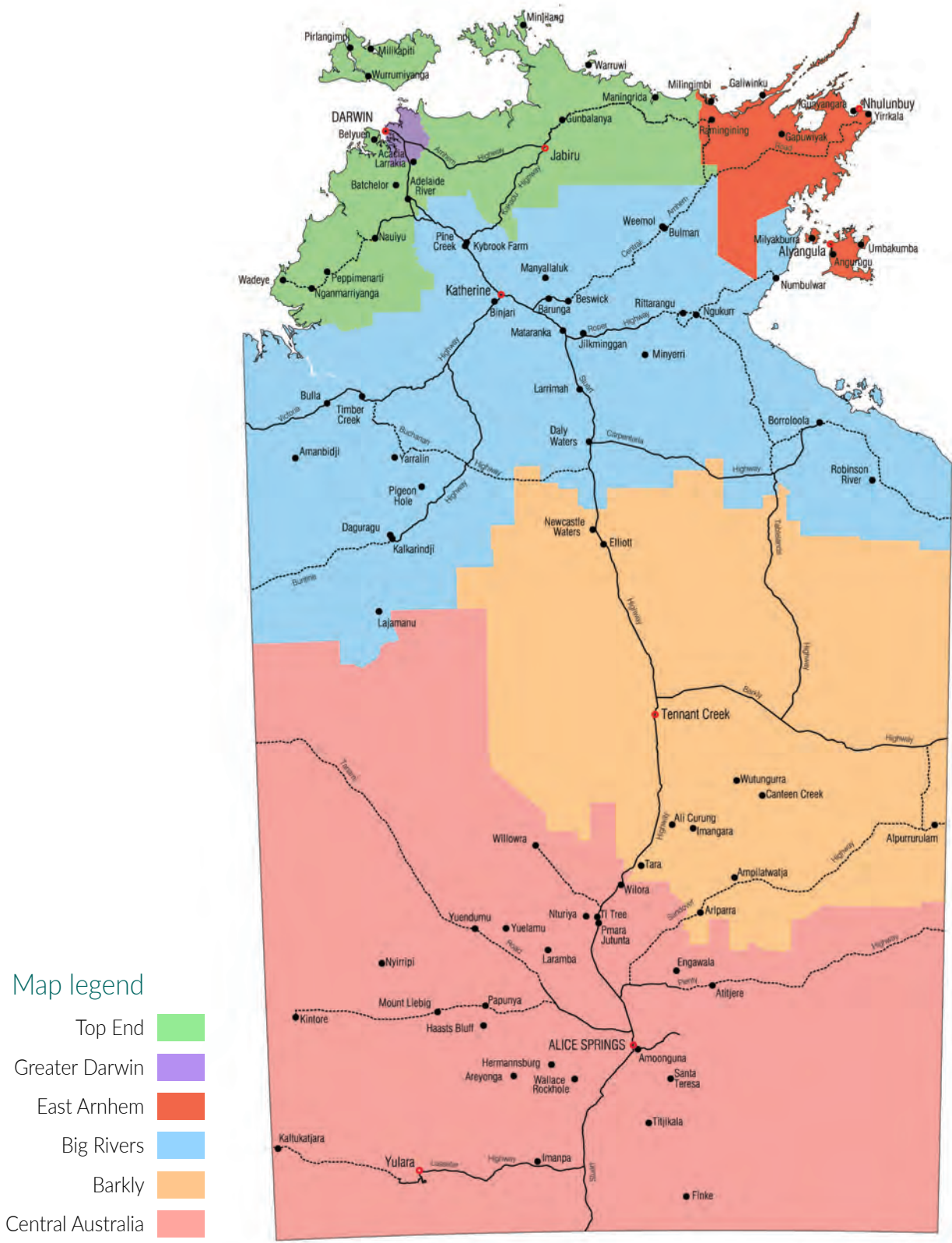
Environmental management

The 2024 Budget continues to invest in environmental protection and promote sustainable use of the Territory's natural assets, through:

- \$5.3 million over four years and \$1.5 million each year thereafter to enhance crocodile management and deploy new technologies to improve detection
- \$3.1 million to continue the Remote Power System Strategy program to support government's renewable energy target of 50% by 2030
- \$2 million for a regional monitoring program in the Beetaloo Sub-basin
- \$1 million for buffel and gamba grass management
- \$1 million to increase support for Bushfires NT
- \$1 million for green energy solutions and sustainability infrastructure at Territory Wildlife Park.

Regional overview

The following is an overview of key regional initiatives and programs in the 2024 Budget. It complements the extensive information contained in the other budget papers by presenting budget details of particular relevance to the communities in each of the Territory's six regions.



- Map legend**
- Top End ■
 - Greater Darwin ■
 - East Arnhem ■
 - Big Rivers ■
 - Barkly ■
 - Central Australia ■

Central Australia

Central Australia is the Territory's largest region, covering 42% of the total land area. The region is made up of small communities separated by long distances and is home to around 41,400 people, of whom about 43% are Aboriginal.

Alice Springs is the main centre in the region, with a population of around 29,200. About 34% of the region's population are aged 24 years or under and about 8% are aged 65 years or older.

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

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

Tourism

The Territory Government continues to invest in growing the tourism industry in Central Australia and generating more visitors for the region, including:

- \$5.6 million in continuing works for a new multi-day walking track at Watarrka National Park
- \$4.4 million for Tourism Central Australia Information Centre
- \$3.5 million for strategic planning and works at the National Road Heritage Hall of Fame
- \$2.7 million to enhance visitor experience at the Alice Springs Desert Park
- \$2.6 million to implement a visitor experience development plan at Alice Springs Telegraph Station
- \$2 million for water security planning and design at Tjoritja (West MacDonnell) National Park.

National Aboriginal Art Gallery

Aboriginal tourism plays a vital role across the region, enabled by authentic cultural experiences.

The National Aboriginal Art Gallery project in Mparntwe (Alice Springs) is an exciting and transformative endeavour to create a world-class destination celebrating the artistic traditions and cultural expressions of Australia's Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

The 2024 Budget includes \$54 million to continue progressing works on the National Aboriginal Art Gallery, with construction expected to begin in mid-2024 and be completed in 2027. An additional \$4 million over two years is also provided for operational and staffing support to deliver the project.

Roads and transport

The 2024 Budget includes \$189 million for new and continuing works on the Outback Way to upgrade various sections of the Plenty Highway and the Tjukurura Road.

Works are also continuing on Roads of Strategic Importance in the region, which will upgrade priority sections to improve connectivity, flood immunity, safety and access, as well as economic development for the region. This includes:

- \$80 million to upgrade and seal 150 kilometres of the Tanami Road
- \$10.8 million for upgrades to Schwartz Crescent and Stuart Highway intersection
- \$1 million for upgrades of Maryvale Road.

Alice Springs Hospital

The 2024 Budget continues to invest in health infrastructure across the Territory, including \$33.7 million for upgrades at the Alice Springs Hospital.

Investment includes \$26.9 million for the new ambulatory care centre, \$6.8 million to develop a hybrid operating theatre and stage 3 emergency electrical upgrades.

Land release

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

- \$26 million to support heavy industrial uses at the Brewer Estate
- \$7.5 million to support light industrial and commercial uses at the Alice Springs airport.

The 2024 Budget also includes \$38.4 million to progress headworks for stage 2 of the Kilgariff Estate, consisting of 88 residential lots (including social and affordable housing) and community sports facilities.

Improved corrections facilities

The 2024 Budget includes \$34 million for critical infrastructure upgrades at Alice Springs Correctional Centre to provide improved prison facilities. This is in addition to \$35.2 million provided through the 2023-24 Mid-Year Report to support an additional 50 custodial staff and 40 support staff, and increased rehabilitation programs and reintegration support.

A further \$4 million is also provided in 2024-25 to support a new alternative to custody facility in Central Australia. The facility will support up to 30 Aboriginal male domestic and family violence offenders, and is anticipated to be operational in 2025.

Alice Springs Youth Detention Centre

The \$32 million redevelopment of the Alice Springs Youth Detention Centre is nearing completion and will provide young people detained in Alice Springs with improved amenities, and greater rehabilitation and education opportunities.

The 22-bed centre is a first of its kind in Australia, with high-tech security systems designed to keep young people, staff and the community safe. Final fitout of the detention centre commenced in February 2024 and the facility is anticipated to be fully operational by June 2024.

Residential youth justice facility

The 2024 Budget invests \$5.5 million to establish a new residential youth justice facility in Alice Springs.

The live-in facility will be able to accommodate up to eight youth and ensure court sentences and orders are enforced, while also providing training and education services to help young people get their lives back on track and into the workforce.

The 2024 Budget also includes \$10.1 million over two years to operate the facility including a youth justice camp program, with education and training provided through an Aboriginal community-controlled organisation service provider.

Major works overview

	Capital works
	\$000
Transport	281 306
Recreation, culture and religion	70 465
Housing and community amenities	52 728
Public order and safety	40 039
Health	33 705
Economic affairs	30 850
Environmental protection	10 000
Education	5 440
Total Central Australia	524 534



Barkly

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

The Barkly region is made up of small communities separated by long distances and is home to around 6,000 people, of whom around 69% are Aboriginal. Tennant Creek is the main centre with a population of around 3,500 people. A high proportion of people living in the region are young, with around 39% aged 24 years and under, and about 7% aged 65 or older.

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

Alekarenge School

The 2024 Budget includes \$8.7 million for new infrastructure at Alekarenge School for early years, including preschool and a Families as First Teachers space, and a new administration building.

The improved physical learning environments and educational facilities will ensure ease of access to support the delivery of quality education facilities and services in remote areas. The co-location of Families as First Teachers and preschool will also provide a seamless transition and more opportunity to engage families and identify children needing additional support, with the aim of giving children the best possible start to their education.

Major works overview

	Capital works
	\$000
Transport	87 909
Housing and community amenities	15 023
Public order and safety	11 498
Economic affairs	10 114
Education	9 360
Recreation, culture and religion	8 883
Health	1 275
Social protection	582
Total Barkly	144 644

Roads of strategic importance

The 2024 Budget includes \$85.5 million to upgrade the Tennant Creek to Townsville road corridor, including sealing, strengthening, widening and road safety improvements.

The Tennant Creek to Townsville corridor is a key economic freight route that supports major industries including mining, agriculture and tourism. The upgrades are expected to be completed by 2026 and are aimed at:

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



Tourism

The 2024 Budget is investing \$8.9 million in tourism opportunities in Barkly to generate jobs and economic opportunities, including:

- \$7 million for the Tennant Creek Nyinkka Nyunyu Art and Culture Centre extension to provide a new artist studio, upgraded gallery, performance and storage spaces and immersive audio visual displays and experiences that share history, stories, arts and culture
- \$1.9 million for the creation of a new visitor experience in Tennant Creek, which will include gold rush and ore mining interpretive displays.

Residential youth justice facility

The 2024 Budget provides additional funding of \$1.5 million for work on the Tennant Creek youth justice facility. This will accommodate up to eight young people and ensure court sentences and orders are enforced, while also providing training and education services to help young people get their lives back on track and into the workforce.

The 2024 Budget also includes \$5.7 million over two years to operate the youth justice program, and provide education and training through an Aboriginal community-controlled organisation service provider.

While construction of the Tennant Creek youth justice accommodation facility is being finalised, a further \$1.7 million is provided for security and safety upgrades at the Juno Campus, which will operate as an interim facility for the cohort of young people who may be sentenced or bailed to the Tennant Creek youth justice program.

Land release

The 2024 Budget invests \$9.8 million in the Parnttali Road industrial subdivision to continue subdivision works and support the release of new industrial land in Tennant Creek.

The 2024 Budget also includes \$5 million for headworks infrastructure to support the release of 80 lots at Chittock Crescent, providing new residential land for subdivision to support residential housing growth in Tennant Creek.

Tennant Creek watch house

The 2024 Budget includes \$11.5 million for the Tennant Creek watch house, including suitable amenities for families and legal staff to visit prisoners, and enhance staff and prisoner safety while providing a safe environment for children. Construction is anticipated to commence in 2024-25.

The facility will be built on vacant land within the same lot as the existing police station and watch house, and funding includes demolition of the current watch house once construction is complete.

Tennant Creek visitor park

The 2024 Budget includes \$10 million to continue works at the Tennant Creek Visitor Park. The visitor park will respond to the need for more short-term, affordable accommodation for people travelling to Tennant Creek for cultural, health or social reasons.

Located on the corner of Leichhardt Street and Udall Road, the visitor park will comprise different types of accommodation including grassed camping areas with large, covered shelters for swags, as well as cabins.

Remediation works on the community-selected site have been completed, with subdivision works expected to commence in 2024. The facility is anticipated to be operational in mid-2025.

Castile Resources' Rover 1 project

Castile Resources' Rover 1 Project, which is expected to generate a capital expenditure of nearly \$280 million, has been awarded major project status by the Territory Government.

The Rover 1 project is an underground mine 80 kilometres southwest of Tennant Creek that will directly target gold, cobalt, copper and magnetite. Major project status is a formal acknowledgement of the project's significance through its contribution to the region's economy and employment.

During construction, up to 160 Territorians are expected to be employed on the project. In addition, 120 positions will be required during operation. A plant and processing facility will also provide additional long-term employment throughout the Barkly region.

Big Rivers

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

The Big Rivers region is made up of small communities separated by long distances and is home to around 21,400 people, of whom around 57% are Aboriginal. The town of Katherine is the region's main centre with a population of around 10,800 people. About 39% of the region's population is aged 24 years and under, while around 7% is aged 65 years and over.

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



Borroloola Health Centre

The 2024 Budget includes \$20 million for construction of a new health centre in Borroloola to support delivery of health services from the existing health centre.

The new health centre will enhance delivery of healthcare to the community and assist in attracting and retaining clinical staff. It will include clinical and pharmacy spaces, emergency resuscitation equipment, consulting spaces, morgue facilities and a separate patient and visitor entrance from staff. The 2024 Budget also provides \$500,000 for new medical equipment at the facility.

Improving access across the region

The 2024 Budget continues to enhance accessibility across the Big Rivers region to improve freight efficiency, connectivity, road safety and economic productivity by investing \$212 million, including:

- \$169.8 million for major road upgrades, including:
 - \$112.4 million for new and continuing works under the Buntine Highway upgrade program to improve access for remote communities and support economic growth
 - \$37.4 million for continuing works to upgrade the Carpentaria Highway, a key route for supplies and transport for Glencore's McArthur River Mine, major access road to the Beetaloo Sub-basin and Borroloola, and an important service route for the Borroloola community and pastoral, tourism, agricultural and mining sectors
 - \$20 million for Phelp River crossing works on Numbulwar Road, including construction of concrete floodways, culverts and bridges
- \$41.9 million for Roads of Strategic Importance, comprising:
 - \$41.6 million for new and continuing works to upgrade the Newman to Katherine road corridor, including sealing, strengthening and widening, and road safety improvements
 - \$330,000 for continuing works to seal between the Roper and Wilton River bridges.

Major works overview

	Capital works \$000
Transport	212 742
Economic affairs	34 111
Health	20 000
Housing and community amenities	18 064
Education	14 774
Environmental protection	9 400
Recreation, culture and religion	2 592
Total Big Rivers	311 684

Katherine Logistics and Agribusiness Hub

The Territory Government is committed to developing Katherine’s regional horticultural and agricultural potential, as well as a logistics hub to strengthen the town’s role as a transport junction for Queensland and Western Australia commodities.

The 2024 Budget includes \$30 million for continuing headworks and subdivision works to develop the Katherine Logistics and Agribusiness Hub. The hub will be a multi-discipline logistics and agribusiness hub to meet the current and future growth needs of Katherine, the Top End region and northern Australia.

STEAM centre

Work has commenced to construct the \$16.7 million Katherine High School science, technology, engineering, arts and mathematics (STEAM) centre.

Territory contractor, M+J Builders, have commenced constructing the facility, which includes purpose-built classrooms, art and music studios and a tiered performance space. The project will also see a mix of upgrades to existing facilities and the development of new learning areas.

Residential youth justice facility

The 2024 Budget commits \$5.5 million to establish a new residential youth justice facility in Katherine, which will be gifted to the Jawoyn Association once completed.

The live-in facility will ensure court sentences and orders are enforced, while also providing training and education services to help young people get their lives back on track and into the workforce.

The 2024 Budget also includes \$7.7 million over two years to operate the facility, including providing youth justice camp programs, education and training, which will be provided through an Aboriginal community controlled organisation service provider.

New therapy dog for Katherine Hospital

Katherine Hospital has welcomed Daisee the therapy dog, who will bring cheer, reduce anxiety and assist patients in their recovery. In a Territory first, the two-year-old non-allergenic poodle will be the first support and wellness dog to live and work permanently at a Territory hospital.



East Arnhem

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

The region is home to around 14,700 people, of whom around 70% are Aboriginal, with major population centres in Nhulunbuy and Alyangula, and several other large communities. The population in East Arnhem is relatively young and dispersed, with around 41% aged 24 years and under and only around 4% aged 65 years and over.

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

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



Groote Archipelago Regional Council

The Territory Government is committed to returning local decision making (LDM) to Aboriginal communities by empowering Aboriginal people to determine service delivery models that work best for their community and region.

The 2024 Budget supports the delivery of the landmark nine-year Groote Archipelago LDM agreement, including establishment of the Groote Archipelago Regional Council. Establishing the new regional council represents a return to local community control of local government services for Anindilyakwa and other community residents in the Groote Archipelago.

The 2024 Budget provides \$3 million per annum to support the financial viability of the newly established Groote Archipelago Regional Council and assist other regional and shire councils across the Territory. The funding will strengthen the financial and operational capability and capacity of the Groote Archipelago Regional Council, enabling the council to be community-focused, well governed and sustainable.

Central Arnhem Road upgrades

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

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

The 2024 Budget commits \$209 million for new and continuing works along the corridor. Upgrading and sealing Central Arnhem Road will unlock further economic potential in the region and open a range of new long-term economic and social opportunities, with new works anticipated to commence in 2024-25.



Arts trail

The 2024 Budget includes \$4 million to commence upgrades and expand the world-renowned Buku-Larrnggay Mulka Centre at Yirrkala and a new building for Gapuwiyak Culture and Arts, through a partnership with the Commonwealth.

The investment is part of the Territory Government’s \$30 million Arts Trail Gallery Extension Program.

Yirrkala School upgrades

The 2024 Budget invests \$1.5 million for upgrades to secondary school facilities at Yirrkala School to support improved physical learning environments and educational facilities, and delivery of quality middle and secondary education facilities and services in remote areas.

Upgrades include refurbishment of classrooms, outdoor learning areas and the administration block to support delivery of senior secondary school and specialist education facilities such as home economics.

An updated masterplan for future investment at Yirrkala School will also be developed, incorporating this project and other investments in the school’s infrastructure since the original masterplan was developed in 2010.

Gunyangara Tourism Precinct

The government is continuing to support economic growth in East Arnhem, with the final construction tender to upgrade marine and landside facilities at Gunyangara (Gove Port) Tourism Precinct now released.

The new marine facilities will enable ongoing local marine maintenance jobs in Nhulunbuy and provide better facilities for recreational users, charter vessels, small cruise ship operators and other marine operators.

This final package of works for the \$9 million Gunyangara Tourism Precinct project will enable more visitors to explore the region’s natural beauty and rich cultural history. The works include a detachable floating pontoon to enable removal and safe storage in preparation for a cyclone.

Major works overview

	Capital works
	\$000
Transport	217 458
Health	19 985
Recreation, culture and religion	4 000
Housing and community amenities	3 070
Education	2 804
Total East Arnhem	247 316

Top End

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

Around 18,300 people live in the Top End region with major population centres in Wadeye and Jabiru. The region’s population is relatively young, with around 38% aged 24 years and under, and only about 8% aged 65 years or older.

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

Maningrida cyclone shelter

Regional communities located along the Territory coastline are vulnerable to tropical cyclones, with many lacking the capacity to safely shelter the local community’s population.

The 2024 Budget includes \$24 million to design and construct a multipurpose community cyclone shelter at Maningrida as part of the first stage of the 10-year rolling program to improve cyclone shelter capacity in remote communities across the Territory.

Providing adequate cyclone shelter capacity in local communities allows residents to shelter close to home, reducing the need to relocate people to emergency facilities in Darwin or other major centres, and creates greater community resilience.

The Maningrida cyclone shelter will be designed as a multipurpose facility to maximise use and benefit to the local community, with potential for use by community organisations for various activities and programs.

Road upgrades

The 2024 Budget continues to enhance accessibility across the Top End to improve freight efficiency, connectivity, road safety and economic productivity by investing \$120 million in roads, including:

- \$60 million for selected upgrades on Port Keats Road between Wadeye and Palumpa
- \$52 million to upgrade roads on the Tiwi Islands
- \$6.2 million to upgrade and seal Marindja Road
- \$1.9 million for upgrades to the Arnhem Highway and Marrakai Road intersection.



Major works overview

	Capital works
	\$000
Transport	272 481
Public order and safety	55 388
Economic affairs	50 378
Housing and community amenities	24 000
Health	21 257
General public services	1 000
Education	706
Recreation, culture and religion	319
Total Top End	425 529

Community safety

The Territory Government continues its commitment to safer communities, including investment of \$36 million to commence construction of a multipurpose police complex in Maningrida, which will include residential housing and visiting officer quarters, multifunction room/court house, associated boat and storage sheds, and a communications tower.

The 2024 Budget also includes \$19 million to commence construction of a new multipurpose police complex in Peppimenarti, including government employee housing, multifunction room/court house, detention facilities and other supporting site infrastructure.



Mandorah marine facilities

The Territory Government is delivering new marine facilities to improve and maintain public transport services for residents of, and visitors to, Mandorah, Wagait Beach and Belyuen.

The 2024 Budget includes \$78 million for continuing works to construct a new marine facility at Mandorah. The new facility will be safer for ferry users and provide easier access for people with disabilities to board and alight from the ferry.

The new facility will be delivered in stages and include a more weather resistant dual berthing facility that can safely accommodate the ferry operating between Darwin and Mandorah, as well as future expansion.

A stronger future for Jabiru and Kakadu

The Commonwealth and Territory governments have committed \$411.5 million to deliver a strong and sustainable future for Jabiru and Kakadu, including supporting transition of Jabiru from a mining town to a sustainable tourism hub and service centre for Kakadu National Park and the West Arnhem region.

The 2024 Budget includes \$117.2 million in continuing works for infrastructure to reposition Jabiru post-mining as a tourism and regional services hub, including \$67 million for road upgrades in Kakadu National Park to support tourism growth.

The new \$20 million Jabiru Health Centre is underway, with construction 75% complete. The new facility, co-located adjacent to the proposed Bininj Resource Centre and lakeside precincts, will greatly improve access to medical services in the region, as well as expand the provision of local renal dialysis services for patients in the West Arnhem region.

The health centre will include eight consulting suites with dedicated male, female and paediatric rooms, four multipurpose allied health examination rooms, a four-chair renal room and a dental surgery (including sterilisation and work rooms).

The health centre will also include specialised facilities such as an audiology consulting room with a hearing booth, x-ray room, medication store and private pharmacy, four-berth morgue with a viewing area and an external, culturally appropriate ceremony area adjacent to the morgue.

Greater Darwin

The Greater Darwin region includes the cities of Darwin and Palmerston, the Litchfield Shire, East Arm and Robertson Barracks. The region is home to around 150,700 people, representing about 60% of the Territory's population. Greater Darwin has the lowest proportion of young people among the regions, with around 32% aged 24 years and under, and the highest proportion of population aged 65 years and over, at around 10%.

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

Major industries in Palmerston and the Litchfield Shire include construction, aquaculture, horticulture, cattle and crocodile farming, defence, and LNG production. The Robertson Barracks army base, located near Palmerston, hosts the ongoing rotations of United States marines in the Territory.

Economic infrastructure

The 2024 Budget invests in infrastructure to support the growth of the region, including:

- \$448 million in new and continuing works for the common user ship lift facility at East Arm, including ship lift, wet berths and additional hard stand area for ship repair and maintenance works
- \$71.6 million for continuing works on the Tiger Brennan Drive overpass
- \$43 million for Holtze and Kowandi headworks to support additional land supply
- \$17 million to provide a connection from Coolalinga North to the Palmerston sewerage network
- \$11 million to support development of renewable energy hubs in Weddell
- \$11 million to support the development of Farrar West/Milulula to design and deliver enabling infrastructure that will support residential land development by Larrakia Development Corporation

- \$9.1 million for detailed design, strategic environmental assessment, business case development and preliminary works for the Middle Arm Sustainable Development Precinct
- \$8.8 million to replace the ageing Berrimah agricultural laboratory building with new laboratory facilities and modern infrastructure at Berrimah farm
- \$5.9 million for Gunn Point Agribusiness Precinct.

Darwin Convention Centre upgrades

The Darwin Convention Centre is the largest event and conference facility in the Territory with a maximum seated capacity of 1,200.

The 2024 Budget includes \$19.2 million to expand the capacity of the Darwin Convention Centre by 4,350 seats, to a total of 5,550 seats, and deliver upgrades, including change rooms, public amenities, and audio and visual equipment to increase event offerings. The upgrades will enable increased tourism offerings, particularly during non-peak tourism periods.

In addition, construction of the adjacent Darwin Convention Centre hotel will provide upscale accommodation options and support increased visitor numbers to the Darwin Waterfront.

Royal Darwin Hospital

The 2024 Budget includes \$107 million in continuing works for infrastructure upgrades at the Royal Darwin Hospital, including:

- \$25 million to expand the mental health inpatient unit
- \$24.8 million for additional clinical spaces
- \$22.9 million for a modular multipurpose facility
- \$22.6 million to upgrade the forensic mortuary, pathology and bereavement facility
- \$6.6 million to establish the mental health stabilisation assessment and referral area unit
- \$2.3 million for remedial repairs to concrete spalling
- \$1.4 million to install a new laundry rail hoist.

State Square and Civic Park

The Civic and State Square revitalisation project aims to create a vibrant and liveable city centre that will attract new residents, students and businesses to Darwin, and encourage them to put down roots and stay for the long term.

The revitalised Civic and State Square precinct will include sheltered pedestrian walkways connecting the precinct and surrounding areas within the city with promenades and walkways, Aboriginal artwork to celebrate the city's rich cultural history,

and shading, landscaping and water features. The precinct will also include spaces for events, festivals, gatherings and displays, and highlight the important links to the harbour and foreshore.

The 2024 Budget provides \$104 million for new and continuing works at the precinct, which include construction of the Northern Territory Art Gallery, and completion of a detailed master plan and design for the remainder of the precinct. It is anticipated to be completed late 2027.

Upgrades to schools

The 2024 Budget includes \$17.2 million for new and continuing works to upgrade school infrastructure and facilities in Greater Darwin, including:

- \$9.2 million for new preschool facilities at Parap Primary School
- \$3.2 million to redevelop Richardson Park as a community recreation facility and provide access to Ludmilla Primary School
- \$2 million to plan for enrolment growth in secondary and special education in Palmerston
- \$1.6 million for upgrades to the administration block at Leanyer Primary School
- \$1.2 million for the roof replacement at Wulagi Primary School.



Hidden Valley Motor Sports complex

The 2024 Budget includes \$4.7 million for upgrades to the Hidden Valley Motor Sports complex including improved accessibility, and track and service works to support the FIM Motocross World Championships.

Residential aged care

The 2024 Budget includes \$12 million for land servicing, development and design of a new 120-bed residential aged care facility in the Palmerston Regional Health Precinct.

The site is in close proximity to Palmerston Regional Hospital and the land servicing works will support the residential aged care facility as well as the broader development of the Holtze area.

Major works overview

	Capital works
	\$000
Transport	571 835
Housing and community amenities	142 498
Health	109 345
Recreation, culture and religion	96 037
Economic affairs	38 930
Environmental protection	19 410
Education	14 648
Social protection	11 951
Public order and safety	9 610
General public services	3 363
Total Greater Darwin	1 017 627

Acknowledgements

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