



State Budget 2005/06 Information Sheet

Essential Services: Energy, Water & Transport

WACOSS has advocated for the State Government to implement a whole of government approach to essential services that takes into account a range of social and environmental strategies.

WACOSS' Recommendation	Government's Pre-Election Commitment ¹	Budget Outcome
ENERGY There are no commitments in this budget that concern the delivery of energy services, aside from an investment in electricity infrastructure.		
Utility Advocacy Scheme With resources provided to enable the development of policy information and advice, education and support to relevant stakeholders, consumers and consumer representatives to provide meaningful participation in utilities market reform.	The Government has funded WACOSS to the amount of \$200 000 to establish a utility consumer's policy project.	\$599 Million to electricity but no specific detail about consumers and/or advocacy funding. No increase in electricity tariffs.
Utilities Assistance Scheme To provide one-off financial assistance to Concession Card Holders and low-income families with the cost of utility bills due to temporary financial crisis.	Assistance for low-income consumers to be considered as part of the review of State Government concessions. The Government has expanded the energy rebate to eligible pensioners in caravan parks and other lease for life arrangements such as retirement homes.	No specific allocation in the budget.
Community Service Obligations Undertake a review of Community Service Obligation (CSO) payments with a view to increasing the existing amount of funds available for CSO payments and making payments available to private enterprises providing essential services to the community.	The issues of Community Service Obligations will be considered as part of the review of State Government concessions.	No specific allocation in the budget.
Introduction of Retrofit Programs Undertake retrofitting programs for energy efficiency, targeted at low income and government housing.	Claimed to be supportive of the concept of retrofit programs and promised to commence discussion with community groups in regards to these programs in	No specific allocation in the budget.

¹ This is an abridged version of the Government's response to WACOSS' Pre-Budget Submission, for full details please refer to WACOSS' *The Social Issues Scorecard 2005*

	2005.	
Establish a Consumer Research and Advocacy Centre Provide resources for the establishment of a Consumer Research and Advocacy Centre, akin to that proposed by the Consumer Advisory Council.	The Council is currently consulting with stakeholders on this proposal.	No specific allocation in the budget.
WATER The increase in water fees remains below the inflation rate, as per the Government's commitment.		
Late Payment Fees for Water That late payment fees be waived for low income earners or remove high penalty interest on overdue accounts held by low-income earners.	This matter was to be examined in the development of the State Anti-Poverty Strategy.	\$715 Million for water infrastructure. A 2.2% increase in water tariffs, equivalent to approximately \$18.30 per year for WACOSS household model.
TRANSPORT Appropriate, accessible and affordable public transport is essential for many low income and disadvantaged individuals and families in Western Australia. WACOSS is disappointed that the increase in some concession fares contradicts the Government's commitment to freeze charges on concessions.		
Fully Accessible Buses Increase the number of fully accessible buses in the Transperth fleet.	No specific commitment for the budget.	No specific allocation in the budget.
Transport Concessions That State concessions for public transport be frozen at their current rate.	It has adhered to its pre-election commitment by freezing concession fares on Transperth services since July 2001.	Increase of 10c for all zones from 5 upwards, ie Kwinana South or Quinns Rock North. All normal fares from 2 zones upwards also increase by 10c.
CAT Buses Expand the operation of the free CAT buses by establishing routes in other main urban areas including Joondalup and Midland	There are at present no current proposals to operate CAT services in other areas. The Government is open to considering other partnership proposals.	No specific allocation in the budget.
Public Transport Services along growth corridors Direct resources to improve public transport services along growth corridors.	No specific commitment for the budget.	\$401 million to metrorail project (not a new commitment).