

State Budget 2007/08 Information Sheet

Financial Wellbeing

WACOSS' Recommendation	Budget Outcome	Comments
<p>As recommended in the State Taxation Review, undertake a comprehensive review of State concessions to examine the accessibility, equity and adequacy of state concessions. In addition, the review should examine 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.</p>	<p>No specific budget allocation.</p> <p>In the budget text however, under the <i>Major Initiatives For 2007/08</i> (Department of Premier and Cabinet) it states that in collaboration with the Department of Treasury and Finance, the Department will undertake a project to improve the management and policy framework for State Government concessions</p>	<p>WACOSS will monitor the progress of this undertaking to help ensure that it indeed takes place and that the project reviews the equity and adequacy of state concessions.</p>
<p>Establish a Cost of Living Index that takes into consideration, factors beyond just those which determine the Consumer Price Index (CPI), and ensure that all future taxes and charges be kept at or below the Cost of Living Index.</p>	<p>No specific budget allocation.</p> <p>The State Government continues to rely on the previous year's CPI figures to calculate rises in household fees and charges over the forthcoming budget year.</p> <p>While most charges were not increased in this year's budget, there were increases in water prices and most Transperth fares, which according to the WACOSS household model assessment, push the total impact of fees and charges above the CPI for many families.</p>	<p>Research has shown that falls in the price of luxury items (such as white goods and electronic equipment) have caused a fall in the CPI, giving a false sense of the true cost of living for low income earners.</p> <p>The State Government needs to develop a more comprehensive Cost of Living Index that takes into account the true cost of necessities to people living on a low income.</p>
<p>Subject all State Revenue Proposals to a Social Impact Assessment to ensure that they do not unfairly impact on low-income families and individuals.</p>	<p>No specific budget allocation.</p>	
<p>Extend the range of concessions currently granted to Seniors to the approximately 18,400 family carers under the age of 60 who are in receipt of carer allowance and the 115,800 people who are severely or profoundly disabled.</p>	<p>No specific budget allocation.</p>	<p>The variations between the concessions available to holders of different concession cards in Western Australia remain unacceptable.</p>