

# 2024-2025 State Budget Briefing

With special guests from the WA Department of Treasury



wa council of  
social service

# Agenda

- *Introduction & Acknowledgement of Country – Rachel Siewert*
- *Budget Overview - Michael Andrews & Lisa Bednarczyk*  
*Department of Treasury*
- *WACOSS Budget Analysis – Chris Twomey*
- *Gendered Budget Analysis – Emily Hull*
- *Q&A Panel*



# Western Australia State Budget 2024-25

9 MAY 2024



# The Budget Framing

## Highlights

The 2024-25 Budget delivers record cost of living relief for Western Australian families, continues to drive our State's strong economy, and invests in key services including housing and health.

Despite global volatility, WA's economy continues to fire on all cylinders:

- WA's domestic economy growing at **double the national rate**
- WA producing **almost half the nation's exports**
- Inflationary **pressures are easing** and **wages are rising**
- Record 1.6 million Western Australians now in work, with **more than 300,000 jobs** created since WA Labor came to office
- **Biggest ever increase in WA's population** of 94,000 people

# Five Key Pillars – *Premier Roger Cook*



- Cost of Living
- Housing
- Health
- Infrastructure
- Economic Growth

## 2024-25 Budget key figures:

- \$762 million **cost of living relief** for WA households and support for small businesses
- \$1.1 billion **housing package** focused on boosting supply
- \$3.2 billion investment in our **health system**
- \$1.3 billion for **education and training**
- \$1.8 billion **diversification and decarbonisation** package
- \$42.4 billion record **infrastructure** investment

# Supporting WA households

**\$762 million cost of living package delivering record support to Western Australian families**

- **\$400 electricity credit** for all WA households and small businesses
- **WA Student Assistance Payment** providing up to \$250 per child
- **Free public transport for school students** saving up to \$560 for a family with two kids
- \$65 million to extend **regional airfare caps**
- \$100 boost to the **Regional Pensioner Travel Card** to \$675 per year



**A family with two school-aged kids could receive:**

- \$400 Household Electricity Credit
- Two WA Student Assistance Payments totalling up to \$500
- Up to \$560 in savings through free student public transport

**Total assistance: \$1,460**

**And they'll benefit from:**

- Free flu immunisation
- Free public transport on Sundays

# Five Key Pillars – Premier Roger Cook



- Cost of Living ... *but for whom?* (~) target need
- Housing
- Health
- Infrastructure
- Economic Growth



# Wages vs Prices

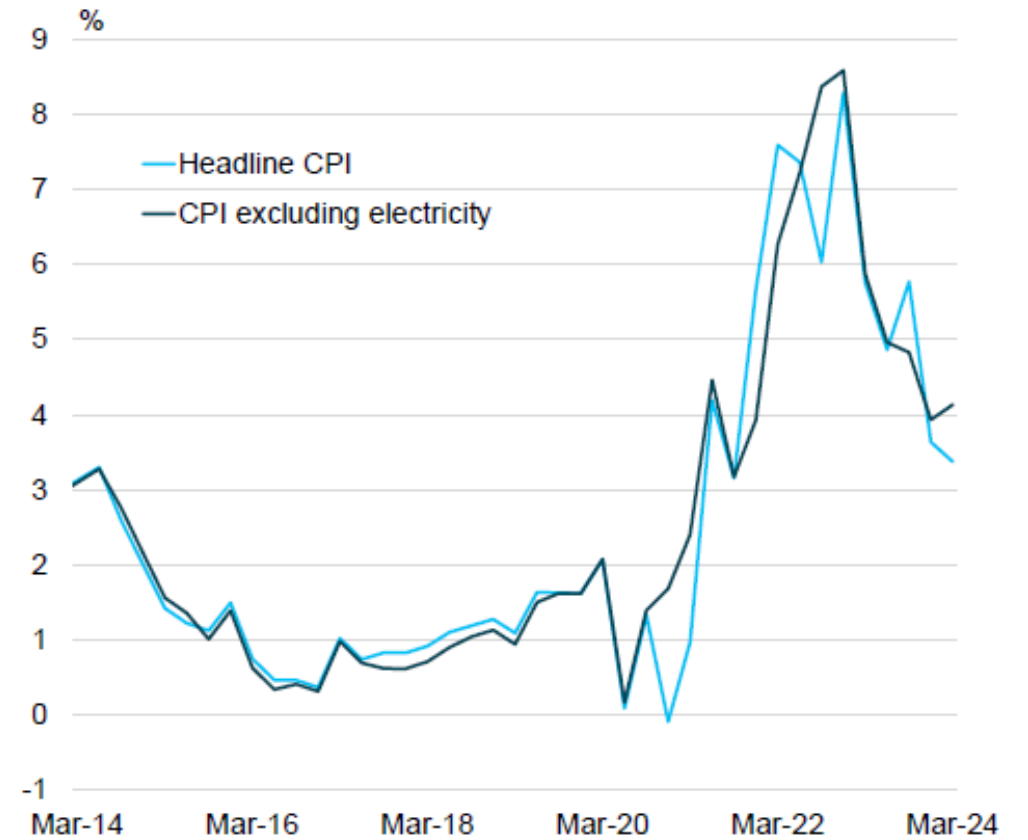
## REAL WAGES

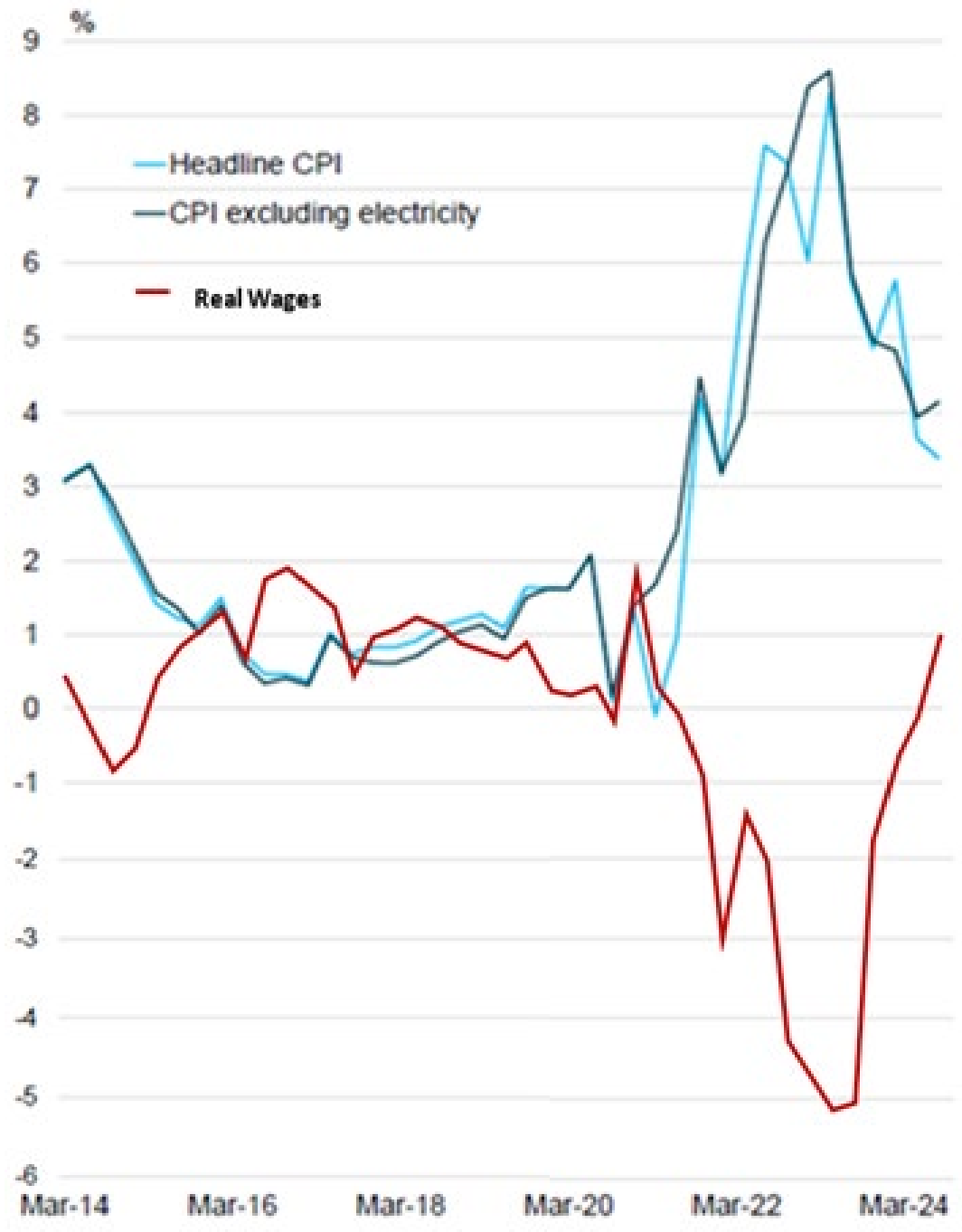
Western Australia, Year-ended Growth



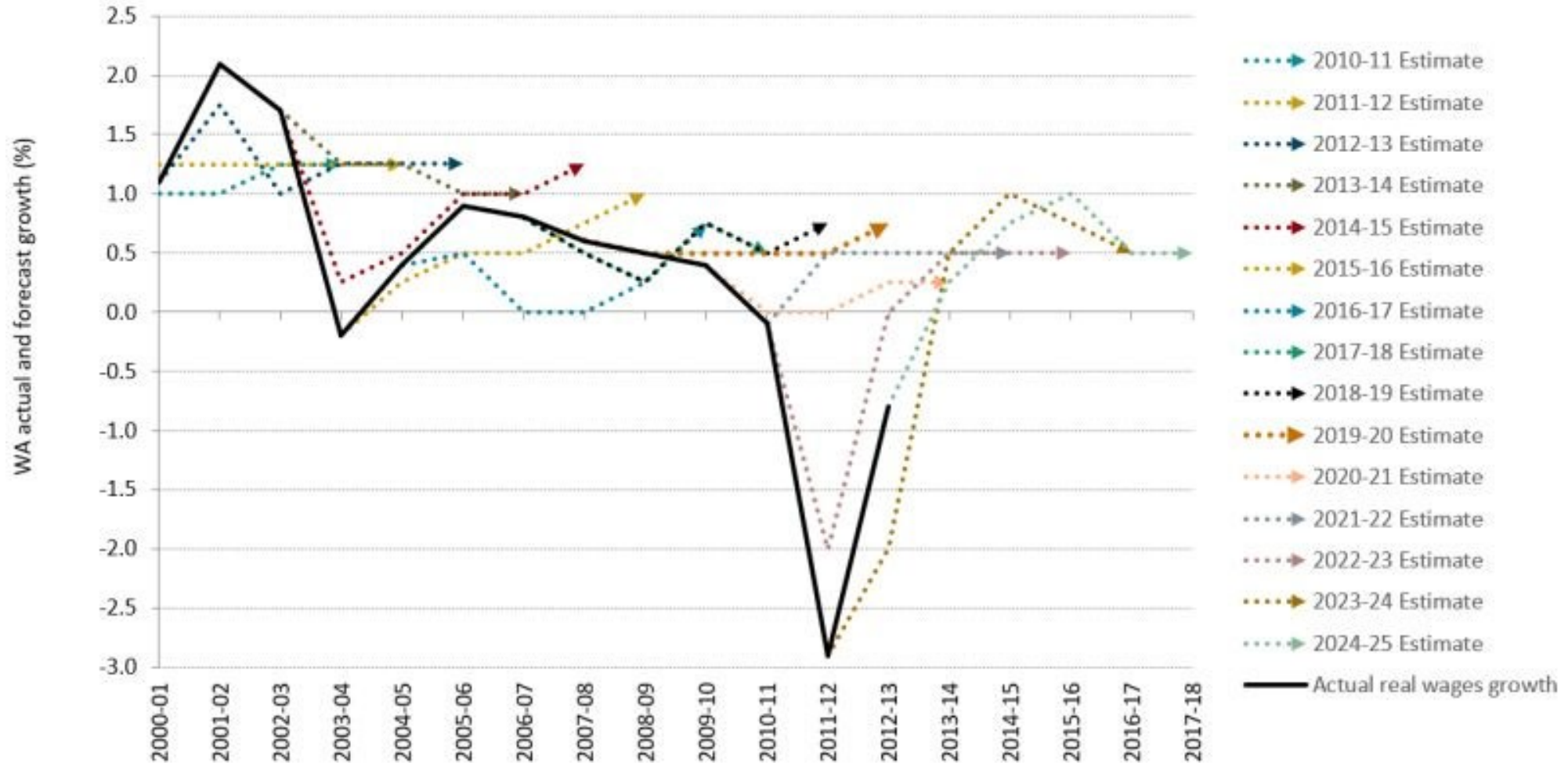
## CONSUMER PRICE INDEX

Year-ended Growth





### WA actual and forecast real wage growth 2010-11 to 2024-25 budgets (%)



# Housing and homelessness

Massive \$1.1 billion additional investment to boost housing supply and affordability, and support homelessness services

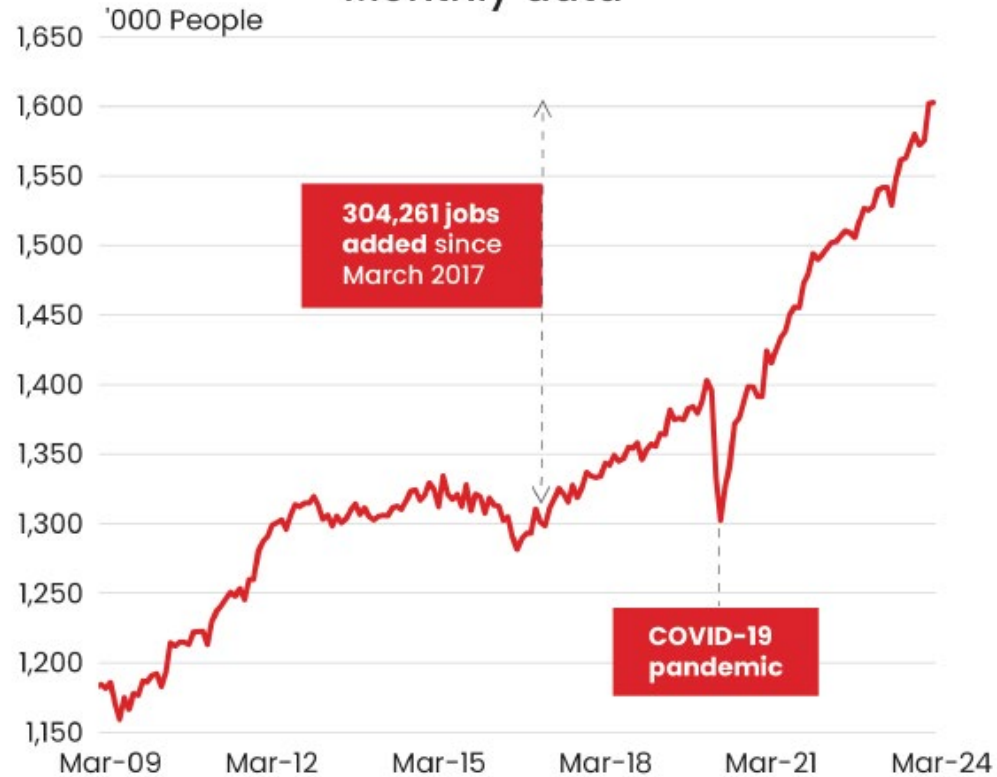
- \$400 million investment in the **Social and Affordable Housing Investment Fund** increasing total investment to \$1.6 billion
  - Almost 5,000 social houses committed in this term with more than 2,100 already delivered
- \$179 million uplift to maintain the State's 45,000 social, remote and government worker houses
- \$144 million in Housing Diversity Pipeline projects
- \$92 million for homelessness to support more than 120 service providers

## Regional housing

- \$50 million for essential Government worker housing
- \$35 million boost for regional land supply
- \$22 million to support rough sleepers in transitioning to permanent housing, including in the regions

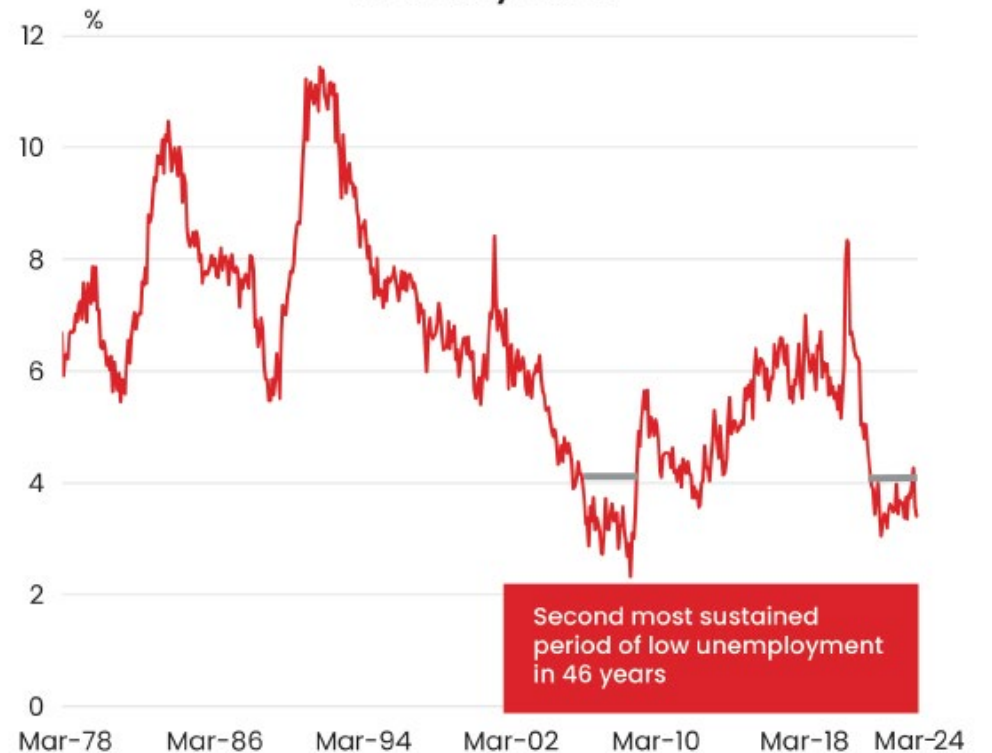
# Population and Workforce

## WA Employment Monthly data

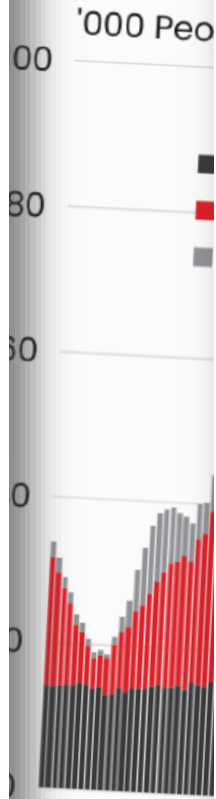


Strong employment growth continues with more than 1.6 million Western Australians now employed, over 300,000 jobs added since 2017

## WA Unemployment Rate Monthly data



Unemployment rate the lowest of the States and at historically low levels



## Housing & Homelessness

Housing is the single largest living cost for Western Australians. In the current cost of living crisis, the investment committed to housing and homelessness in this Budget is to be commended. Social and affordable housing, both supply and condition, has been at crisis point for some time, as have homelessness services. We expect the investments made in this Budget will boost supply, improve living standards for social housing and support Western Australians who are doing it tough.

<b>Initiative</b>	<a href="#">Uplift to Homelessness Services</a> (BP2, V2, P504)
<b>Investment</b>	\$70.2 million over four years
<b>Description</b>	There will be an increase in baseline funding for more than 120 homelessness services.
<b>Implications</b>	This represents a significant increase to baseline funding for homelessness services in WA, which we know is much needed as these services have been at breaking point for many years. The uplift to funding in homelessness services is welcome. The average uplift to services will be 26%. After years of underfunding this money will enable those critical and lifesaving services to keep the doors open.


<b>Initiative</b>	<a href="#">Housing First Support Services (HFSS)</a> (BP2, V2, P504)
<b>Investment</b>	\$15.7 million over four years.
<b>Description</b>	Expansion of the Housing First Support Services, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>\$6.7 million to support expansion in the Metro area</li> <li>\$9 million to support expansion in the regions including Geraldton, Albany and Kalgoorlie</li> </ul>
<b>Implications</b>	Housing is a basic human right. Homelessness is a barrier to accessing necessary support services. Housing First recognises that people need somewhere safe to live, as well as supports to maintain that housing. This funding announcement is warmly welcomed.

<b>Initiative</b>	Social and Affordable Housing Investment Fund (BP2, V2, P505)
<b>Investment</b>	\$400 million
<b>Description</b>	Expand the Social and Affordable Housing Investment Fund (SAHIF) to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>support the delivery and refurbishment of social housing stock, and</li> <li>support a pipeline of affordable multi-residential housing across priority sites, including METRONET precincts, by partnering with the Commonwealth through Housing Australia and the community housing sector</li> </ul> A media release with further detail can be found <a href="#">here</a> .
<b>Implications</b>	Increasing availability of social and affordable housing is critical to support Western Australians who need it most. The bulk of the funding will go to Community Housing Providers across the State. Despite land being 'unlocked' to develop across regional areas, it still requires investment from developers to build properties which if there is no incentive to do so, may slow the development of new housing stock

<b>Initiative</b>	Vacant Property Rental Incentive Scheme (BP3, P112)
<b>Investment</b>	\$5.3 million over two years
<b>Description</b>	Under this scheme, the Government will offer \$5,000 incentives to owners of up to 1,000 vacant properties to bring them onto the long-term rental market (offering minimum 12-month lease). A media release with further detail can be found <a href="#">here</a> .
<b>Implications</b>	This scheme is likely to boost rental housing supply, which is critically important to ensure Western Australians have access to affordable housing. It is modelled on the successful Short-Term Rental Accommodation Incentive Scheme.

<b>Initiative</b>	Tenancy Reforms (BP3, P112)
<b>Investment</b>	\$8.9 million over four years
<b>Description</b>	This funding will support the Consumer Protection Commissioner to perform their increased role in dispute resolution processes, including for disputes over bond payments, tenant applications to keep pets and minor modifications. A media release with further detail can be found <a href="#">here</a> .
<b>Implications</b>	Currently, all tenancy matters are handled by the Residential Tenancy Authority.

# Five Key Pillars – Premier Roger Cook

- Cost of Living ... *but for whom?* (~) target need
  - Housing ... & *homeless services* (
- 

# Investing in our health system

Record \$3.2 billion investment in health and mental health system

Since 2017, we have added:

- 4,400 nurses (FTE)
- 1,800 doctors (FTE)
- 45% increase in annual spending on health services since 2017


Since 2021, we have added **709 new beds**

## The 2024-25 Budget includes:

- \$1.2 billion for **public hospital services**
- \$405 million for **regional health services**
- \$260 million on **mental health and alcohol and other drug initiatives**
- \$155 million for initiatives to **improve emergency access and reduce ambulance ramping**, bringing total investment to \$827 million in last three years
- \$39 million for **Child Development Services**
- \$839 million in health infrastructure investment, including next stage of roll out of the **Electronic Medical Record Program**



# Five Key Pillars – Premier Roger Cook

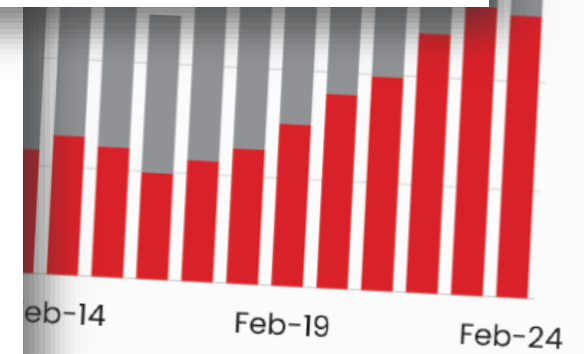
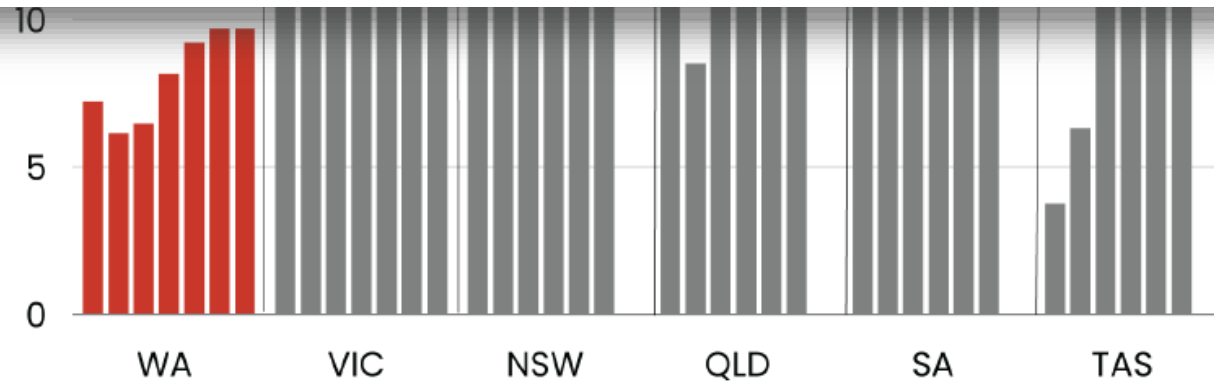
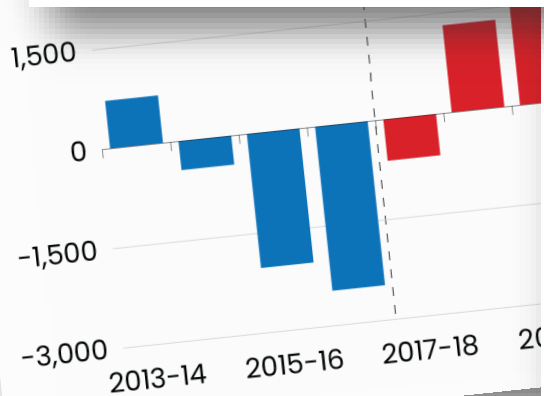
- Cost of Living ... *but for whom?* (~) target need
  - Housing ... & *homeless services* (
- 

# The Economy

## Total Public Sector Net Debt as a share of GSP

## Commodity Exports

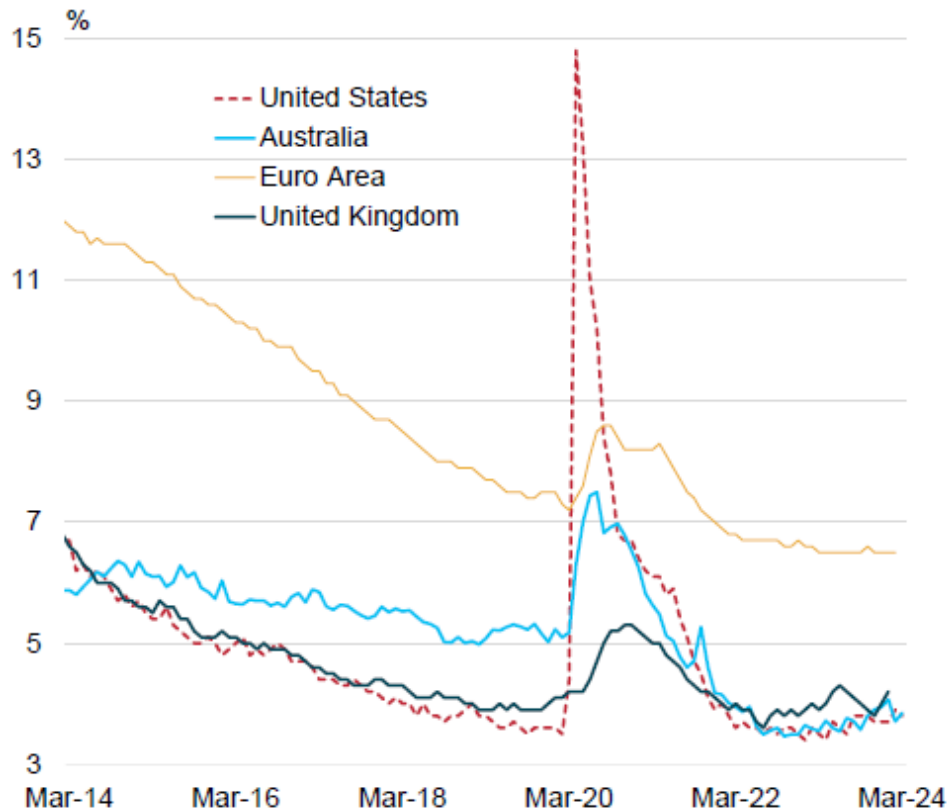
	2022-23 Actual	2023-24 Estimated Actual	2024-25	2025-26	2026-27	2027-28
State Final Demand (SFD)	3.9	5.25	3.25	3.0	3.0	2.75
Gross State Product (GSP)	3.5	1.75	2.0	2.0	2.25	2.25
Unemployment rate	3.6	3.75	4.0	4.25	4.5	4.75
Perth CPI	5.0	4.0	3.0	2.5	2.5	2.5



# Global Comparisons ...

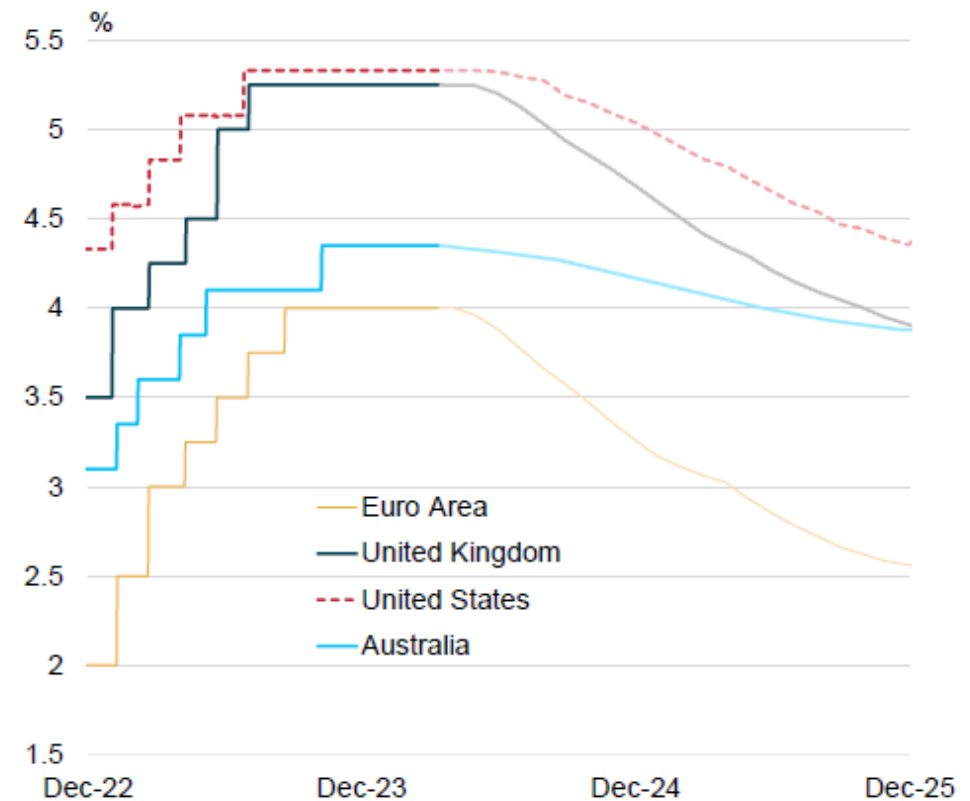
## UNEMPLOYMENT RATES

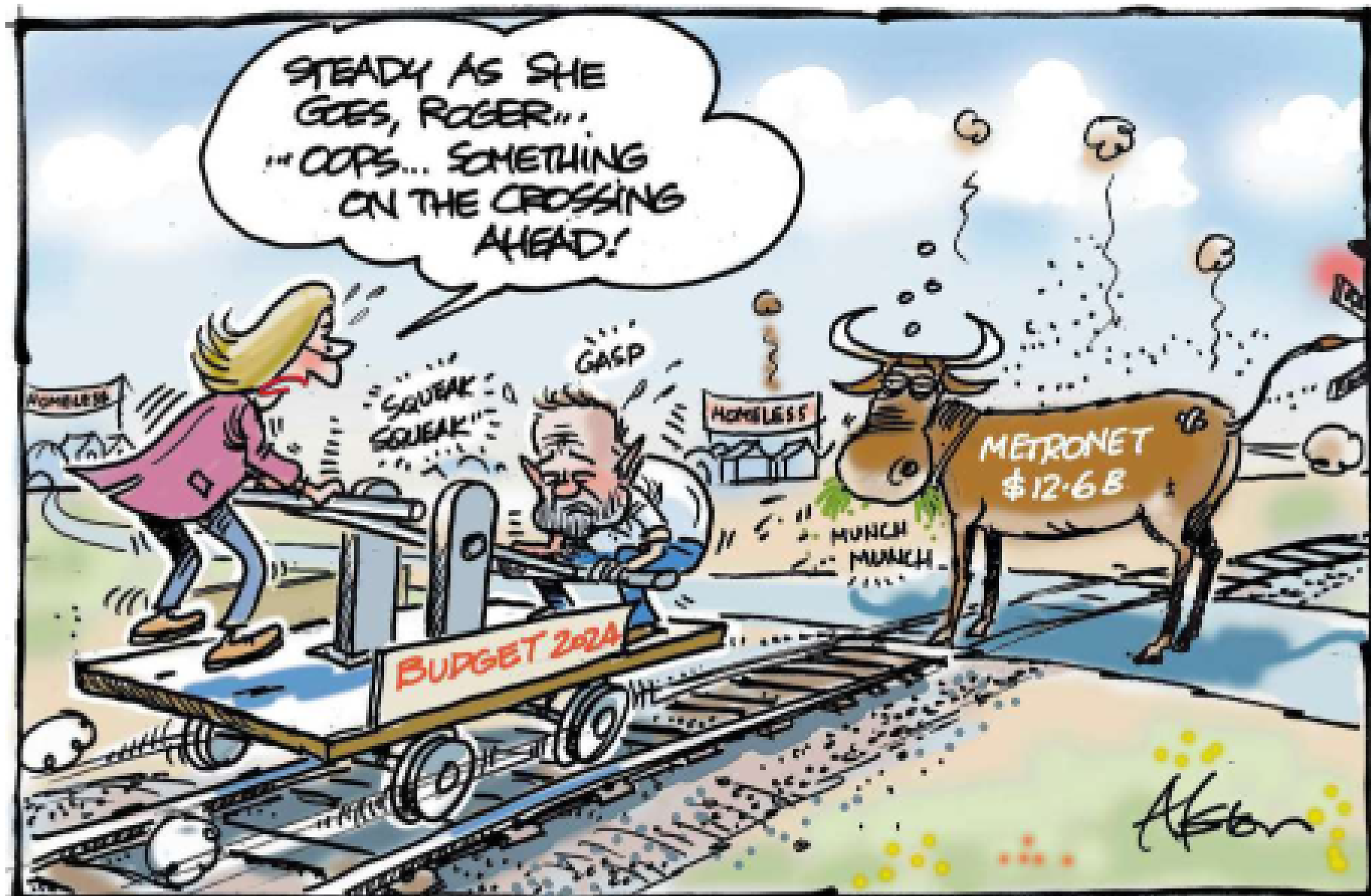
Monthly



## GLOBAL RATE EXPECTATIONS

As at 11 April 2024

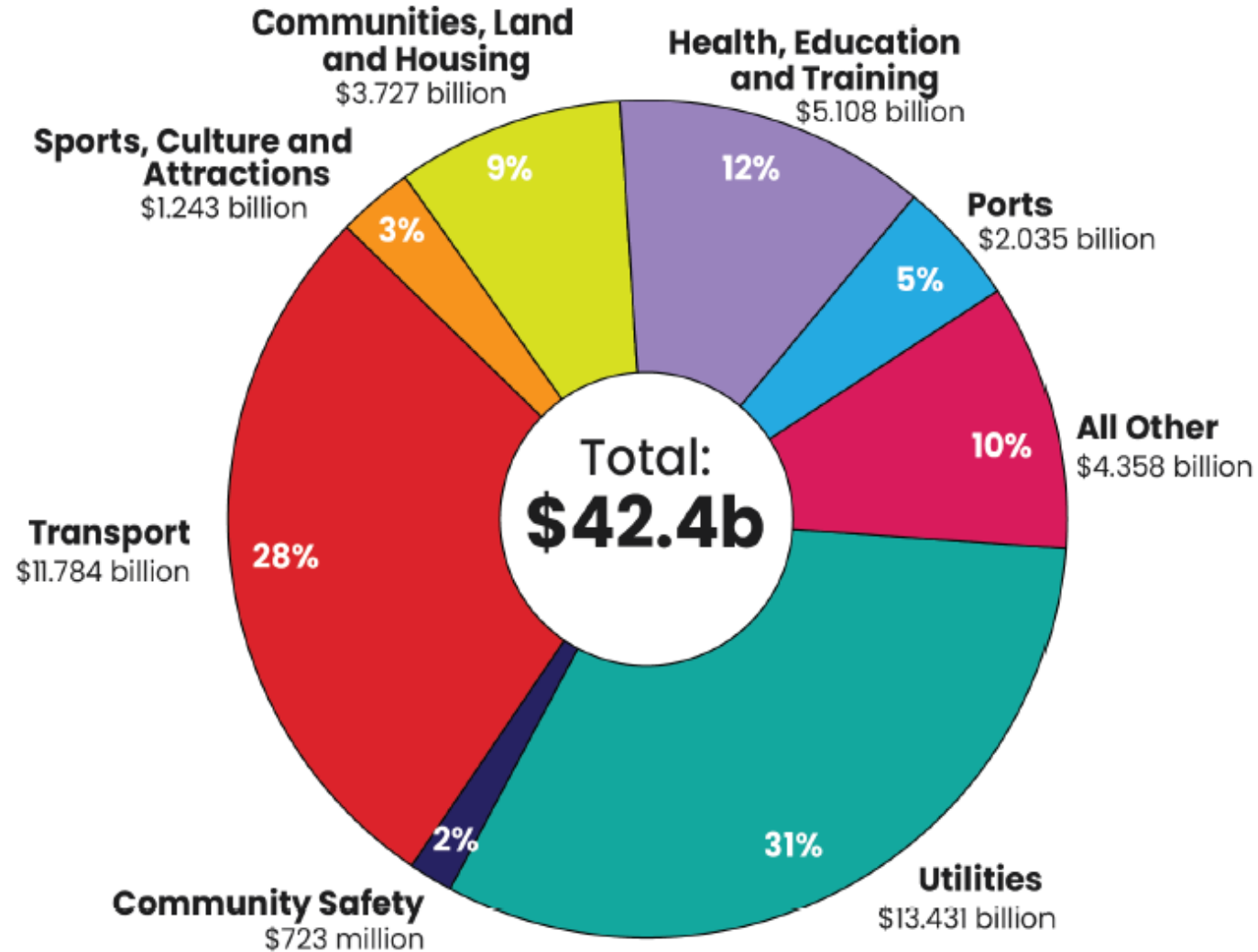
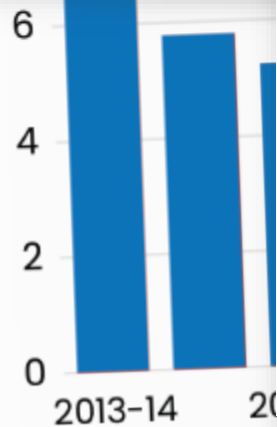




# Infrastructure

Record \$10.6 billion in 2023-24,  
increasing to \$12.1 billion in 2024-25  
\$42.4 billion to be invested over the  
next four years

\$ Billion  
14



## Investing in regional WA

\$4 billion investment in Royalties for Regions

A record \$12.8 billion of regional infrastructure pipeline of works over the next four years

Delivering what matters for regional WA:

- \$65 million to extend the **Regional Airfare Zone Cap Scheme**
- \$100 increase to the **Regional Pensioner Travel Card**
- \$405 million on regional health services, including a boost to **Patient Assisted Travel Scheme (PAT)**
- \$23 million to extend **Operation Regional Shield**

## Economic diversification and decarbonisation

\$1.8 billion investment to diversify and decarbonise our economy

- \$500 million to establish a Strategic Industries Fund
- \$200 million Critical Minerals Advanced Processing Facility
- \$36 million for regulatory reform and red tape reduction

### Investments in enabling economic infrastructure:

- \$472 million invested in electricity networks to enable industry growth and decarbonisation
- \$373 million investment in ports
- \$116 million for Westport, including early works
- \$15 million for Goldfields water supply business case

# Western Australia's rising emissions are cancelling out efforts to reduce emissions by other states

Change in emissions from 2005 to 2021

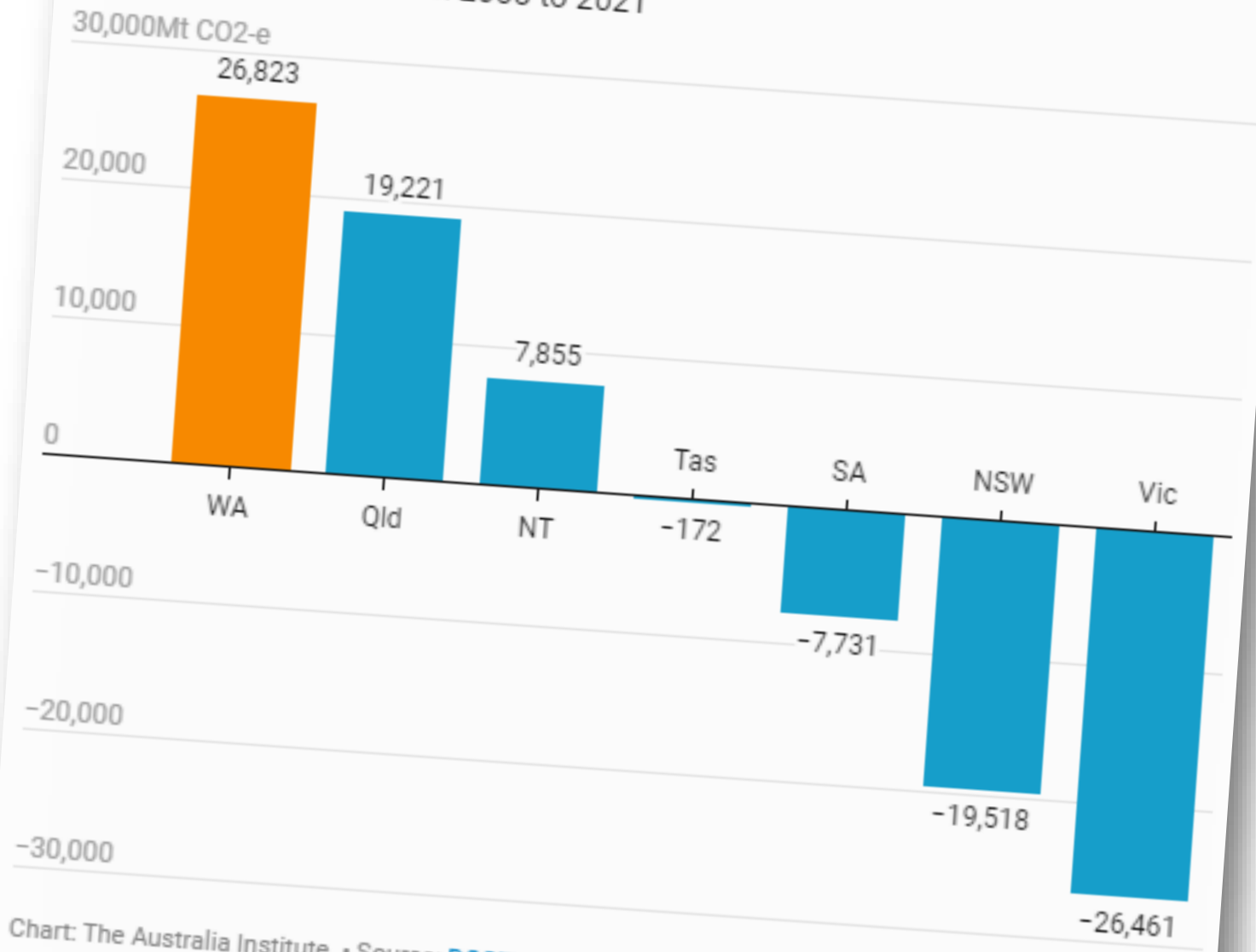


Chart: The Australia Institute • Source: [DCCEEW](#) • [Get the data](#) • Created with [Datawrapper](#)

# Five Key Pillars – Premier Roger Cook

- Cost of Living ... *but for whom?* (≈) target need
- Housing ... & *homeless services* (



# Stronger communities

- \$96 million for **family and domestic violence initiatives and reform**, bringing total new investment to \$422 million since 2021
- \$88 million for **child protection initiatives**
- \$70 million to implement reforms to improve fairness, advocacy and services for **persons with mental impairment in the justice system**
- \$17 million to support **historic overhaul of firearms laws**
- \$16 million for **youth justice programs** for Aboriginal and at-risk young people



## 2024 - 2025 Budget

### Women

*This budget does not demonstrate significant commitment to women in WA, or building an environment in which they can thrive. While the budget funded a range of initiatives, when looked at holistically funding for women appears to be caught in a dance of one step forward and one step back.*

*The 2024-2025 Budget demonstrated the desire to increase WA's capacity and capability to address the State's family and domestic violence crisis through considerable investment in a range of initiatives. Sadly, the budget did not provide much needed funding to critical refuge and safe house services or the implementation of the Aboriginal Family Safety Strategy. As one woman dies every four days in Australia sustained investment is urgent and vital.*

*Funding to support women's economic independence was limited to small grants, upgrades to locker rooms, and programs that benefit public sector employees. This budget saw minimal investment in ensuring women have the tools to navigate work - including affordable childcare - to enter historical male dominated sectors or be adequately remunerated for their work in feminised industries.*

*We continue to call for the WA Government to adopt a gender response budgeting approach that analyses, and transparently reports on, the gendered impacts of public spending.*

*This budget was ultimately a missed opportunity to fund a gender responsive budgeting unit within WA Treasury and truly consider how our social systems, structures, and spending contributes to gender inequity in WA.*

### Family and Domestic Violence

<b>Initiative</b>	FDV Taskforce – Strengthen Responses (BP2, V2, P503-504)
<b>Investment</b>	\$60.5 million over 4 years
<b>Description</b>	Package includes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>\$6 million over 2 years for Aboriginal Family Safety Grants</li> <li>\$600,000 over 2 years to boost Access to Domestic Violence Counselling</li> <li>\$2 million over 3 years for Coercive Control Education and First Responder Training</li> </ul>



<b>Initiative</b>	FDV Taskforce – System Reform Plan (BP2, V2, P504)
<b>Investment</b>	\$53.8 million over 4 years
<b>Description</b>	Including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>\$405,000 over 2 years for a Central Information Point</li> <li>\$25.6 million over 4 years to expand the FDV Response Teams</li> <li>\$1.9 million over 4 years for a Lived Experience Advisory Group</li> <li>\$4 million over 4 years for new Crisis Beds</li> <li>\$6.2 million over 4 years for the development of a Workforce Entity</li> <li>\$2.06 million over 3 years for administration</li> </ul>
<b>Implications</b>	We are pleased to see funding commitments aligned with the System Reform Plan, created by the FDV Taskforce. Collaborative multi-agency approaches result in better experiences and outcomes for victim-survivors. The expansion of the FDV Response Teams is welcomed. We look forward to the inclusion of Community Corrections Officers in the Response Teams to bring focus to accountability and intervention for people who use violence. A Lived Experience Advisory Group will enable people with lived experience of FDV to contribute their expertise in a formalised process to inform policy and system development and improvement.

<b>Initiative</b>	Family and Domestic Violence Disclosure Scheme (BP2, V2, P421)
<b>Investment</b>	\$396,000 over 1 year
<b>Description</b>	The Department of Justice to undertake consultation on a new family and domestic violence disclosure scheme for victim-survivors.
<b>Implications</b>	This funding will go towards consultation on a disclosure scheme. If further investment is made, victim-survivors will be empowered with the knowledge of whether a person has a documented history of domestic violence.

<b>Initiative</b>	Breathing Space Services in Calista and Maylands (BP2, V2, P504)
<b>Investment</b>	\$4.5 million over 1 years
<b>Description</b>	Additional funding for men's behaviour change programs

## Aboriginal Wellbeing

Spending for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities is spread across most budget priorities and portfolios. There are sizeable investments in upgrading and increasing regional and remote housing stock for Aboriginal communities. Funding for the Early Years Partnership – while not Aboriginal-specific – is pivotal for Aboriginal children aged 0-4 in Derby and Bidjadalaga, will be significant.

This budget also includes a significant focus on infrastructure projects and the benefits they provide to economic development of Aboriginal communities such as in the Plan Our Parks initiative. While positive, some of these investments are government obligations (such as the Fitzroy River Bridge Repairs) and should be considered in context of wider investment directly into wellbeing and economic self-determination initiatives.

However, it is disappointing to see a lack of investment in long-term initiatives to empower communities to develop and lead their own place-based services and programs to deliver improved outcomes for their people. This is a missed opportunity to get behind programs such as Justice Reinvestment (see Justice fact sheet). The lack of investment to transform youth detention is also disappointing, with Aboriginal young people vastly over-incarcerated and therefore disproportionately impacted by the ongoing crisis inside youth detention.

<b>Initiative</b>	Social Housing Energy Performance Upgrade Initiative Co-Investment (BP2, V2, P504)
<b>Investment</b>	\$25 million over four years.
<b>Description</b>	To match Commonwealth funding, the WA Government has allocated \$25 million to improve energy performance for housing in Aboriginal Communities in the Kimberley and regional towns. To be managed by the Department of Communities. Only \$334,000 is being committed for 2024-25.
<b>Implications</b>	Improvements to regional social housing are critical, with many households reliant on ageing and inefficient infrastructure. The ongoing impacts of climate change mean many houses may be facing higher indoor temperatures alongside higher household bills.

<b>Initiative</b>	Health and Mental Health (1. BP2, V1, P332, 2. Aboriginal Wellbeing Budget Snapshot)
<b>Investment</b>	1. \$12 million over two years for the Aboriginal Social and Emotional

## Justice

Funding for justice initiatives in this budget have been mixed; characterised by a lack of big picture thinking and little to address the urgent crisis in youth detention. Investment in diversion services such as the In-Roads Therapeutic Program at the WA Children's Court are welcome and are an opportunity to provide intensive support and interventions to change circumstances and behaviour long-term. Unfortunately, continued investment in additional policing has not been matched by programs to address community contexts. This was a missed opportunity for the WA Government to get behind initiatives such as co-investment in the Federal Justice Reinvestment Grants Program, which aims to create generational change.

A high-security detention facility to replace Unit 18 (inside maximum-security adult prison) was announced in 2023, but exists only as a business case in development. The ongoing Coronial Inquiry into the death of a teenager inside Unit 18 has begun highlighting major issues in the management of youth detention and identifying areas in need of immediate investment – particularly in workforce transformation and mental health.

A joined-up approach to justice is needed to end cycles of crime and improve outcomes in the community before crime occurs. It is important to note that no additional funding has been provided for community-based legal assistance services. This is a sector experiencing high demand, and there is great need particularly in regional areas of WA.

<b>Initiative</b>	Reforms to Mental Impairment in the Justice System (BP3, P96, P130)
<b>Investment</b>	\$69.9 million over four years
<b>Description</b>	Funding for additional demand and an uplift in services resulting from the <i>Criminal Law (Mental Impairment) Act 2023</i> which comes into effect on 1 September 2024. Key reforms include limiting terms for supervised persons who are currently on indefinite custody orders and enhanced statutory advocacy.
	Investment includes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>\$26.1 million for mental health support services</li> <li>\$20 million to</li> </ul>

### Children and Families

There were comparatively few major announcements in the children and family service area, outside of the cost of living measures for families and school students (see Cost of Living fact sheet), some new or extended initiatives in child protection (listed below) and major additional funding for Child Development Services (see Health fact sheet, also listed below).

Additional funding for Home Stretch WA converts the existing pilot into an ongoing program and extends it to include eight Aboriginal Community Controlled Organisations as well as three mainstream services, extending its regional coverage.

<b>Initiative</b>	Extending Home Stretch WA funding for young people leaving out-of-home care (BP2, V2, P504)
<b>Investment</b>	\$46.3 million in total (\$11.7 million/year ongoing)
<b>Description</b>	Additional funding builds on the \$32.7 million invested in 2019 in the Home Stretch pilot, making the program permanent. It supports young people from 18 to 21 as they leave care.
<b>Implications</b>	Now a total of 9 ACCO services and 3 mainstream services will deliver the program across the state – adding in the Goldfields-Esperance and Wheatbelt regions. (Anglicare and Yorganup played a critical role developing the service model) (see <a href="#">media release</a> ).

<b>Initiative</b>	Continuing and expanding foster care supports. (BP2, V2, P504)
<b>Investment</b>	\$17 million in total (\$4 million/year rising to \$4.4 million by 2027-28)
<b>Description</b>	Supporting the continuation and expansion of foster care supports across the state.
<b>Implications</b>	Average cost \$216/day per child for 4,314 foster care arrangements (see <a href="#">media release</a> ).

<b>Initiative</b>	Upgrade to residential care homes for children in out-of-home care
<b>Investment</b>	\$13.7 million in total
<b>Description</b>	One-off funding allocated for upgrade works to care homes

### Disaster Risk Reduction and Resilience & Emergency Management

WACOSS welcomes investment into the Fitzroy Crossing recovery efforts and strengthening bushfire mitigation and prevention. However, given the likelihood of increased disasters, it is concerning that there is not additional funding towards disaster mitigation across hazards and building community resilience to disasters.

<b>Initiative</b>	Brooking Channel Bridge Replacement (BP3, P193)
<b>Investment</b>	\$107 million over 2024-25
<b>Description</b>	Funding will be delivered in the next year to replace the Brooking Channel Bridge in the Kimberley. This funding includes unspent funds from the Fitzroy River Bridge replacement and will provide dual-lane crossing.
<b>Implications</b>	This bridge will help improve the resilience of the region through better road safety and supply chain improvement.

<b>Initiative</b>	Enhanced Capacity for Firefighting (BP2, V2, P450)
<b>Investment</b>	\$23 million over four years
<b>Description</b>	There will be \$23 million invested into 60 career fire and rescue service firefighters over the next four years. There will be an additional \$2.6 million toward corporate service supporting building firefighting capacity. This will also support planning towards a new WA Emergency Management Training Centre.
<b>Implications</b>	This supports improved resilience for communities with high bushfire risk, while contributing towards strengthening the firefighting workforce.

<b>Initiative</b>	Bushfire Mitigation (BP3, P147)
<b>Investment</b>	\$30 million over four years
<b>Description</b>	

## Mental Health

For many Western Australians experiencing mental ill health, factors including stigma, cultural barriers and a lack of easy and timely access stop them from seeking the support they need to stay or become well. When people finally seek support, services are often inaccessible due to significant gap fees or limited capacity for new admissions or referrals.

This budget works to support those in WA experiencing a mental health crisis through increased investment in the public mental health system, particularly for crisis response and acute mental health services. While this funding is very welcome, this budget does not commit to supporting community based mental health supports or addressing the underlying causes of mental ill health through increasing focus on prevention and early intervention.

<b>Initiative</b>	WA Virtual Emergency Department and Ambulance Co-Response Model (BP2, V1, P331)
<b>Investment</b>	\$7.9 million over two years.
<b>Description</b>	Part of the broader WAVED program funding (\$47 million package).  Investment to support Stage 1 of the Mental Health Co-Response Ambulance Pilot. This program aims to provide a coordinated mental health crisis response pilot that prevents avoidable ED attendances and admissions by providing clinically appropriate alternative models of care.
<b>Implications</b>	Expansion of this model into mental health co-response is based on successful trails in the eastern states and, when implemented, will provide support to a person in crisis in their home. This has been shown to increase patient safety and improve outcomes.  Whilst this initiative will alleviate pressure experienced by Emergency Departments, focus should remain on preventing acute mental health crises.

<b>+</b>	<b>Initiative</b>	Infants, Children and Adolescents (ICA) Taskforce (BP2 V1, P331 – 333)
	<b>Investment</b>	\$46,600,000 over four years, including:

## Alcohol & Other Drugs

The sector has been calling for flexible services that support people with intersecting needs and are designed in partnership with service users to support practical approaches to self-determination. It is hoped that the recently announced new Office of Alcohol and Other Drugs will lead a strategic response towards Alcohol and other Drug commissioning, planning and policy and more urgently needed investment.

<b>Initiative</b>	Broome Sobering Up Centre (BP2, V1, P340) (BP2, V1, P333) (BP3, P218)
<b>Investment</b>	\$10.7 million over three years.
<b>Description</b>	Towards the establishment of a new 26-bed Sobering Up Centre within the Broome town centre. The service will be easily accessible for individuals needing a safe environment to sober up.
<b>Implications</b>	We welcome this investment. The community has been calling on the Government to fund a sobering-up service in Broome town since it was closed in 2021 and relocated with reduced capacity. Whilst this is a welcome investment, further support is needed to reduce problematic alcohol use and prevent harmful behaviour.

<b>Initiative</b>	Alcohol Interlock Scheme Treatment Services – ongoing initiative (BP2, V2, P406)
<b>Investment</b>	\$163,000 in 2024-25.
<b>Description</b>	The WA Alcohol Interlock Scheme aims to reduce the road safety risk posed by drink drivers by introducing a mandatory, user pays, performance-based scheme in which alcohol interlock devices provide separation of drinking and driving behaviour.  From the Road Trauma Trust Account. The Road Trauma Trust Account includes a total \$403 million investment. (BP2, V2, P406)
<b>Implications</b>	Funding towards an ongoing initiative.

<b>+</b>	<b>Initiative</b>	Demit Points Processing – ongoing initiative (BP2, V2, P406)
	<b>Investment</b>	\$1.69 million over four years.

# **2024-2025 State Budget Briefing**

## **Q & A Panel**