

MINISTER FOR FAIR TRADING, MINISTER FOR YOUTH, AND MINISTER FOR VOLUNTEERING

OVERVIEW

<i>Agency</i>	<i>2007-08 Budget \$m</i>	<i>2008-09 Budget \$m</i>	<i>Variation %</i>
Office for Children			
Total Expenses	12.3	12.4	0.9
Capital Expenditure	0.1	0.1	...
Rental Bond Board			
Total Expenses	39.4	40.7	3.3
Capital Expenditure
Total, Minister for Fair Trading, Minister for Youth, and Minister for Volunteering			
Total Expenses	51.7	53.1	2.7
Capital Expenditure	0.1	0.1	...

In addition to the agencies listed above, the Minister is also supported by the Department of Commerce (Section 20) for the Fair Trading portfolio area, and the Department of Premier and Cabinet (Section 2) for the Volunteering portfolio area.

OFFICE FOR CHILDREN

The Office for Children provides administrative and financial support to the Commission for Children and Young People and the Children's Guardian. The governing legislation is the *Commission for Children and Young People Act 1998* and the *Children and Young People (Care and Protection) Act 1998*.

RESULTS AND SERVICES

The Office for Children is improving the wellbeing of children by working towards the following results:

- ◆ Children flourish in child-related workplaces and in stable out-of-home care environments that are child-safe and child-friendly.
- ◆ Child deaths are prevented.
- ◆ Children benefit from improved legislation, policies, practices and services.

Key services provided by the Office for Children to contribute to these results include:

- ◆ undertaking background checks and prohibited employment reviews to create child-safe and child-friendly organisations as part of the Working with Children program
- ◆ undertaking research including the review of child deaths, the provision of policy advice and promoting children's issues
- ◆ promoting participation programs for children and young people
- ◆ accrediting and monitoring of out-of-home care and adoption service providers against approved standards and
- ◆ authorising of prescribed employers of children and monitoring of compliance with conditions of their authorities and the mandatory Code of Practice.

The key services provided by the Commission and the way in which they are expected to contribute to results are set out in the following table:

Service Groups	2008-09 Budget Expenses \$m	Results	
		Helping children flourish	Child deaths are prevented
Commission for Children and Young People	8.8	✓	✓
Children's Guardian	3.6	✓	
Total Expenses Excluding Losses	12.4		

RECENT ACHIEVEMENTS

During 2007-08 the Commission for Children and Young People:

- ◆ released the *Trends in the fatal assault of children in NSW: 1996-2005* Report
- ◆ finalised the research for *Trends into Child Deaths in NSW from 1996-2005* Report
- ◆ released the *Babysitting Guides* for parents and young people and
- ◆ developed e-Check to deliver Working With Children background checks online. Online checking will provide a faster and easier service to employers.

During 2007-08 the Children's Guardian:

- ◆ promoted the safety and wellbeing of children in care by accrediting more agencies and by providing a program of assistance to agencies attempting to accelerate their progress towards accreditation
- ◆ improved the performance of the regulation of children's employment
- ◆ improved coordination with the Department of Community Services and the NSW Ombudsman to minimise overlaps in agency reporting requirements and monitoring arrangements and
- ◆ commenced implementing legislative and administrative reforms arising from the review of the Accreditation and Quality Improvement Program to improve efficiency and reduce regulatory burden.

STRATEGIC DIRECTIONS

In 2008-09, the Commission for Children and Young People will extend its service delivery and policy advice through:

- ◆ helping child-related employers reduce opportunities for harm to children
- ◆ conducting research to inform policy on children's wellbeing and
- ◆ supporting local councils in building child friendly communities.

In 2008-09, the Children's Guardian will improve its service delivery through:

- ◆ implementing the administrative reforms arising from the 2007-08 Review of the Accreditation and Quality Improvement Program
- ◆ revising the NSW Out-of-Home Care Standards to focus on outcomes and promoting compliance with standards and codes of practice and
- ◆ auditing case files to determine compliance with standards for promoting the health of children and young people in care.

2008-09 BUDGET INITIATIVES

Total Expenses

The estimated total expenditure of the Office for Children in 2008-09 is \$12.4 million.

Capital Expenditure

The Office for Children's capital program of \$99,000 in 2008-09 is for the purchase and replacement of minor plant and equipment.

AGENCY RESULT INDICATORS

Helping children flourish

Result Indicator	Units	2005-06 Actual	2006-07 Actual	2007-08 Budget	2008-09 Forecast
i) Children and young people in out-of-home care with a current case plan	%	83	71	75	75
ii) Designated agencies that have achieved accreditation	%	29	51	61	70

Notes:

- i) This indicator shows how effective the Children's Guardian is in promoting safety and stability for children in out-of-home care.
- ii) This indicator shows how well agencies that provide out-of-home care are meeting standards for safety and stability for the children in their care.

Child deaths are prevented

Result Indicator	Units	2005-06 Actual	2006-07 Actual	2007-08 Budget	2008-09 Forecast
i) Agencies agree to recommendations within 2 years	%	85	100	90	90
ii) Agencies implement agreed recommendations within 4 years	%	80	73	80	80
Notes:					
i) This indicator shows the effectiveness of the Commission's work to engage agencies that may be able to prevent child deaths through changing policy or practice.					
ii) This indicator shows the effectiveness of the Commission's work to generate policy or practice change that could prevent child deaths.					

RENTAL BOND BOARD

The Rental Bond Board is a statutory corporation, established under the *Landlord and Tenant (Rental Bonds) Act 1977*, and is the custodian of rental bonds taken on private residential tenancies in New South Wales. It comprises five members, one of whom is the Commissioner for Fair Trading.

RECENT ACHIEVEMENTS

The Board is a self-funding body, and derives its income mainly from net earnings on rental bond deposits.

The Board estimates that it will administer \$740 million in rental bond deposits on behalf of landlords in 2008-09. These administered funds do not form part of the assets reported within the balance sheet of the Board.

The Office of Fair Trading, part of the Department of Commerce, undertakes the administrative functions of the Board on a user pays basis.

2008-09 BUDGET INITIATIVES

Total expenses are estimated at \$40.7 million in 2008-09. The Board estimates that it will earn \$43 million in revenue to support its activities. The Board's expenses include provision for:

- ◆ \$15.1 million to administer the rental bond scheme

- ◆ \$9.1 million in grants supporting 50 per cent of the costs of the residential tenancy functions of the Consumer, Trader and Tenancy Tribunal. The Tribunal has power to determine matters relating to the termination of tenancy agreements, payment of rental bonds on termination of tenancies, breaches of tenancy agreements and payment of compensation
- ◆ \$4.9 million in grants including support of 50 per cent of the costs of the Tenancy Advice and Advocacy Program. This program provides advice, information and advocacy services to public and private tenants and, where appropriate, people seeking to become tenants. These services are provided in accordance with the *Landlord and Tenant (Rental Bonds) Act 1977*
- ◆ \$1.1 million to fund the Credit Counselling Grants Program
- ◆ \$7.1 million to meet the operating costs of providing information, education and mediation services within the framework of the *Retirement Villages Act 1989* to tenants, village residents, landlords, their agents and village managements
- ◆ \$2.5 million towards the funding for the upgrade of the Rental Bond System and
- ◆ \$250,000 to fund the upgrade of the Tenants Union of New South Wales information technology system.