

ATTORNEY GENERAL, MINISTER FOR THE ENVIRONMENT AND MINISTER FOR EMERGENCY SERVICES

OVERVIEW

<i>Agency</i>	<i>Budget 2000-01 \$m</i>	<i>Budget 2001-02 \$m</i>	<i>Variation %</i>
Attorney General's Department			
Total Expenses	488.2	518.7	6.3
Asset Acquisitions	31.4	24.4	- 22.3
Judicial Commission of New South Wales			
Total Expenses	3.2	3.3	0.7
Asset Acquisitions	0.1	0.3	200.0
Legal Aid Commission of New South Wales			
Total Expenses	99.8	115.2	15.5
Asset Acquisitions	2.6	0.5	- 81.0
Office of the Director of Public Prosecutions			
Total Expenses	61.2	62.4	2.0
Asset Acquisitions	6.7	5.5	- 17.9
Environment Protection Authority			
Total Expenses	147.3	175.6	19.2
Asset Acquisitions	5.7	5.9	3.5
Environmental Trust			
Total Expenses	32.8	29.4	- 10.2
Asset Acquisitions
National Parks and Wildlife Service			
Total Expenses	251.1	262.0	4.3
Asset Acquisitions	59.9	44.9	- 25.1
Royal Botanic Gardens and Domain Trust			
Total Expenses	30.5	27.6	- 9.6
Asset Acquisitions	3.7	4.1	10.9
Bicentennial Park Trust			
Total Expenses	5.0	5.7	14.6
Asset Acquisitions	4.6	2.0	- 57.0

<i>Agency</i>	<i>Budget 2000-01 \$m</i>	<i>Budget 2001-02 \$m</i>	<i>Variation %</i>
New South Wales Fire Brigades			
Total Expenses	308.9	327.3	6.0
Asset Acquisitions	38.8	38.9	...
Department of Rural Fire Service			
Total Expenses	92.6	116.8	26.1
Asset Acquisitions	3.2	1.2	- 62.5
State Emergency Service			
Total Expenses	23.4	23.7	1.1
Asset Acquisitions	2.8	3.4	20.5
Public Trust Office – Administration			
Total Expenses	26.3	28.9	9.9
Asset Acquisitions	5.3	5.7	7.4
Registry of Births, Deaths and Marriages			
Total Expenses	11.2	11.5	3.0
Asset Acquisitions	3.9	6.5	66.8
Stormwater Trust			
Total Expenses	16.8	29.4	75.0
Asset Acquisitions
Waste Planning and Management Fund			
Total Expenses	36.8	61.6	67.4
Asset Acquisitions
Total, Attorney General, Minister for the Environment and Minister for Emergency Services			
Total Expenses	1,635.1	1,799.1	10.0
Asset Acquisitions	168.7	143.3	- 15.1

ATTORNEY GENERAL'S DEPARTMENT

The role of the Attorney General's Department is to administer the legal system of New South Wales and develop and implement programs which promote a safe and harmonious society.

The Department provides the legal and administrative framework to facilitate the conduct of the Attorney General's role as the first Law Officer of the Crown, as well as providing support services to enable the fulfilment of the Attorney General's legislative and advisory responsibilities to Parliament and Cabinet.

EXPENDITURE TRENDS AND RECENT DEVELOPMENTS

Key initiatives and achievements in 2000-01 included:

- ◆ the successful continuation of the New South Wales Drug Court Trial reducing criminal activity of drug-dependent offenders by directing them into supervised drug treatment and away from the traditional criminal justice system. The trial has now been extended by a further year, with acceptances into the program being taken up to 30 June 2002;
- ◆ the ongoing management of the Safer Communities Development Program providing grants to Local Councils and non-Government organisations to undertake crime prevention activities;
- ◆ the continued implementation of the Strategic Framework for Court Services 2000 to 2004, which provides a broad strategic direction for New South Wales Court Services. The ongoing reform program includes:
 - implementation of electronic service delivery;
 - improving criminal procedures;
 - improving civil procedures; and
 - improving Court environments.
- ◆ provision of supporting legal services by the Crown Solicitor's Office to major Coronial Inquiries such as the Glenbrook Train Disaster and the Gretley Mine Disaster;
- ◆ funding of \$150,000 for projects designed to eradicate graffiti, dissuade youth from graffiti vandalism and trial new specialist cleaning equipment;
- ◆ continued implementation of the Disability Strategic Plan;
- ◆ funding of \$150,000 for the establishment of a pilot mandated *Domestic Violence Intervention Education Program* for perpetrators of domestic violence;
- ◆ implementation of model Key Performance Indicators with all courts reporting on a monthly basis and the progressive introduction of time standards and measures of backlogs and overloads;

- ◆ introduction of new Court technology, e-commerce and Internet services such as:
 - online fine and penalty payments (State Debt Recovery Office) and online purchase of birth certificates and registration of deaths by funeral directors;
 - teleconferencing for routine call-overs in the Land and Environment Court and in the Administrative Decisions Tribunal;
 - electronic document and case management system in the Compensation Court and Dust Diseases Tribunal;
 - enhancement of “CaseLaw NSW” enabling subscribers to receive judgments in electronic format via e-mail; and
 - significant progress in the Criminal Histories Project with 43 Local Courts in New South Wales now being equipped with technology to electronically transmit criminal histories.
- ◆ renovation and upgrading of facilities in a number of courthouses throughout New South Wales;
- ◆ the significant expansion of the State Debt Recovery Office’s fines management services to more effectively manage the large number of new matters received each year, and to progressively clear the large number of outstanding historical and accumulated matters;
- ◆ a state-wide public education campaign *Violence Against Women It’s Against All the Rules* developed by the New South Wales Council on Violence Against Women has been implemented by the Violence Against Women Specialist Unit and the network of Regional Violence Prevention Specialists; and
- ◆ significant improvement in the management of caseloads within various jurisdictions, especially within the District Court where substantial inroads into the backlog of pending criminal trials and improved disposal times for civil matters has been achieved.

STRATEGIC DIRECTIONS

The Department will continue to focus upon client service and performance improvements. The Department has developed Our Commitment to the Community, which was launched in April 2001. This document sets the Department's objectives as a diverse organisation and includes challenges such as excellent client service, good management and working well with others. These objectives will guide the Department's planning, service delivery, performance management and policy making in future.

Key priority areas for 2001-02 include:

- ◆ continued development and implementation of the Strategic Framework for Court Services to further enhance court services and facilities;
- ◆ continue the program to improve court security for all participants in the justice system in the face of increasing risk;
- ◆ implementation of the Department's Indigenous Justice Strategy focussed on indigenous contact with the Criminal Justice System;
- ◆ provide ongoing support to the various jurisdictions to further improve the management of caseloads to reduce backlogs and achieve service delivery standards;
- ◆ launch of a new document management system in the Land and Environment Court for electronic lodgement and secure access to documents;
- ◆ introduction of Electronic Court Transcript systems resulting in real time availability of transcripts; and
- ◆ evaluation of the Youth Drug Court program and MERIT (Magistrates Early Referral into Treatment) program to improve drug crime diversion options through appropriate policy legislation and alternative interventions into juvenile offending.

The Department will also continue to take lead responsibility for a wide range of key programs including those of a regulatory nature as well as improvements to the courts systems through projects such as the Courts Administration System.

2001-02 BUDGET

Total Expenses

In 2001-02, it is estimated that the total expenses of the Attorney General's Department will amount to \$518.7 million representing an increase of 6.3 percent over the budgeted expenditure levels of 2000-01.

Funding of \$1.0 million per annum has been provided to implement the Department's Indigenous Justice Strategy. Initiatives funded under the Strategy will improve outcomes for indigenous people who come into contact with the criminal justice system, as well as outcomes for indigenous people who are victims of crime.

The Police and Court Services Project (a project aimed at reducing the time spent by Police in courts) will be extended through the allocation of \$2.2 million. This will include a range of additional strategies designed to reduce the time spent in court by police officers, such as the appointment of Aboriginal Court Liaison Officers, scheduled hearings, e-mail links between court registries and police stations, and mediation support services.

An additional \$3 million has been provided to meet both current and increased workloads arising from increased policing activity and the progressive appointment of additional Police.

Funding of \$2.1 million has been provided for the establishment of a Revenue Division of the Administrative Decisions Tribunal. The Revenue Division has been given jurisdiction by legislative amendment to review certain decisions of the Chief Commissioner of Taxation of State Revenue as set out in the *Taxation Administration Act 1996*.

The Safer Communities Development Program will be continued with a further \$0.5 million allocation in 2001-02, for grants to Local Councils and non-Government organisations to undertake crime prevention activities.

Funding of \$150,000 is also provided in 2001-02 for the continuation of the pilot mandated *Domestic Violence Intervention Education Program* for perpetrators of domestic violence, which commenced in 2000-01. Attendance at the program is a condition of an apprehended violence order (AVO), ensuring that non-attendees are charged with a breach of an AVO.

A further increase in the number of Sheriff's officers in courts is planned for 2001-02 and will build on the successful implementation in 2000-01 of the Court Security program, which deployed 26 officers to the highest risk locations. The increased presence of Sheriff's officers is a key feature of the Government's strategic program to improve the safety of all participants in the justice system.

The ongoing work of the Justice Agency Data Exchange project will also further improve the quality and timeliness of information exchanged across the Justice sector, eliminate manual processes and increase user accessibility to data.

Asset Acquisitions

The Attorney General's Department's asset acquisition program provides for the construction of new courthouses, expansion/modification of existing courthouses, development of major computing facilities, and the purchase/replacement of plant and equipment. The funding for the 2001-02 program is \$24.4 million. The major new works are:

- ◆ commencement of construction of a new Metropolitan Children's Court at Parramatta. The new six-court facility will provide discrete care and criminal courts, with holding areas and other necessary facilities. The court will form part of a justice precinct being developed on the adjacent Parramatta Hospital site. The estimated total cost of the court is \$17.3 million (\$0.5 million in 2001-02); and
- ◆ commencement of construction of a new Children's Court in the Hunter District at Worimi. The court will provide for children's care and criminal matters and have two courtrooms and associated facilities for the delivery of the children's court services. The estimated total cost of the court is \$6.5 million (\$0.3 million in 2001-02).

Other major components of the 2001-02 program are:

- ◆ further refurbishment of the King Street courts complex to conserve and upgrade the site (\$2.7 million);
- ◆ backlog maintenance of court premises (\$6.7 million) including major structural repairs at North Sydney, Cooma, and conservation works at Darlinghurst, Central Local Court and 50 Phillip Street;
- ◆ extended application of security technologies to court houses (\$0.5 million);
- ◆ completion of a major extension of the Orange Court House (\$1.4 million); and

- ◆ minor works to improve court functionality, improve rental accommodation, and for the provision of office and recording equipment in support of operations.

Other major components of the 2001-02 program are:

- ◆ continued development of the Courts Administration System to improve registry operations and services offered to the community by courts (\$2.4 million);
- ◆ funding of \$1 million for a number of projects under the Justice Agencies Data Exchange Project. This is aimed at enabling the electronic transfer of data between the Attorney General's Department, the Police Service, the Department of Juvenile Justice and the Director of Public Prosecutions, thereby saving costs and increasing community safety; and
- ◆ continued enhancement of court transcription services to allow on-line delivery of electronic documents to judges and court registries (\$1.3 million).

JUDICIAL COMMISSION OF NEW SOUTH WALES

The Commission's major functions are: the organisation and supervision of a scheme for the continuing education and training of judicial officers; assisting the courts to achieve consistency in imposing sentences; and the examination of complaints against judicial officers.

EXPENDITURE TRENDS AND RECENT DEVELOPMENTS

In 1999-2000 judges and magistrates attended 1,350 days of education and demands for education programs have continued in 2000-01. This included 18 different programs, including three special seminars on important legal developments. In addition there were six pre-bench training sessions for newly appointed magistrates and 275 computer training sessions. Together with the Australian Institute of Judicial Administration, the Commission also conducted a weeklong National Judicial Orientation Program for newly appointed judges from across Australia.

The number of complaints received by the Commission in recent years has remained reasonably static. Significant improvements in the Commission's ability to complete its investigation of complaints have been achieved as a result of new procedures. This resulted in 43 percent of matters being finalised within two months of receipt and 89 percent of matters finalised within four months of receipt during 1999-2000.

STRATEGIC DIRECTIONS

The Commission will continue to focus on the provision of high quality and relevant programs to assist judicial officers undertake their professional responsibilities. The emphasis will be on the provision of timely and practical information whether through publications, conferences and seminars or the computerised Judicial Information Research System containing sentencing and other information.

In particular, the Commission will offer an extensive conference and seminar program for judicial officers in each court, ranging from induction courses for new appointees to specialist conferences on specific aspects of law, procedure, judicial skills and technique. The Commission will also continue its initiatives to ensure that New South Wales judicial officers are aware of social context issues involving children, women, sexual offences, domestic violence and ethnic minorities.

The seminars will be organised on a regular basis to keep judicial officers up to date with current developments and emerging trends. Seminar topics will include areas identified as needing review or rapid and major changes in the law. There will also be an Annual Conference for each court and inter-curial seminars on topics of interest to all courts.

2001-02 BUDGET

Total Expenses

Total expenses of the Commission are projected to be approximately \$3.3 million in 2001-02.

An additional amount of \$100,000 per annum has been provided to update and maintain the Criminal Trial Courts Bench Book used by judges of the Supreme and District Courts, when directing juries on the law.

Asset Acquisitions

The Commission has been provided with \$190,000 in 2001-02 for the further development of the Judicial Information Research System. Funding of \$50,000 has also been provided for the replacement of the Commission's PABX telephone system.

An amount of \$49,000 has also been provided to meet the Commission's on-going plant and equipment needs.

LEGAL AID COMMISSION OF NEW SOUTH WALES

The Legal Aid Commission provides legal assistance in matters arising under New South Wales and Commonwealth law. The Commission promotes access to justice for disadvantaged people by providing legal information, advice, alternative dispute resolution and representation.

EXPENDITURE TRENDS AND RECENT DEVELOPMENTS

The primary sources of funds for the Legal Aid Commission are the State Government and the Public Purposes Fund. The Commission also operates under an agency agreement with the Commonwealth Government to provide legal assistance in matters arising under Commonwealth law in line with the priorities and guidelines set by the Commonwealth. A new four-year agreement with the Commonwealth, which commenced on 1 July 2000, provides a significant increase in funding compared to the previous agreement. This will allow the Commission to provide enhanced family law services.

The Commission will also implement the requirements of the *Children and Young Persons (Care and Protection) Act 1998* during 2001-02 utilising funding provided by the State Government.

STRATEGIC DIRECTIONS

In 2001-02 service delivery will be improved and costs reduced through the following initiatives:

- ◆ achieving greater efficiencies in the processing of applications for grants of legal aid by introducing measures such as the electronic lodgement of applications and implementing a range of new systems;
- ◆ increasing front-end services with lower unit costs such as mediation, improved advice and information services, and increased levels of community legal education;
- ◆ reducing corporate service and administrative support;
- ◆ contributing to greater efficiency in the wider justice system through strategies including court delay reduction in country areas and law reform issues; and

- ◆ providing enhanced legal representation to eligible young people and parents/carers under the *Children and Young Persons (Care and Protection) Act 1998* in both alternative dispute resolution and court processes.

2001-02 BUDGET

Total Expenses

Total expenses of the Commission are projected to be \$115.2 million in 2001-02 which represents an increase of 15.5 percent on 2000-01.

The Government has provided an additional \$2.2 million for the implementation of the *Children and Young Persons (Care and Protection) Act 1998*. The funding will enable the Commission to provide high quality legal representation in both court processes and alternative dispute resolution for children and young people who are at risk. These services will be provided by a combination of in-house and assigned solicitors.

The Criminal Law Program has been allocated an additional \$4.7 million to compensate for the withdrawal of Commonwealth funds under the four year agreement with the Commonwealth signed in July 2000. Under the previous agreement with the Commonwealth, the Commission was permitted to utilise part of the Commonwealth allocation for State criminal law matters. The new agreement has withdrawn this provision.

Asset Acquisitions

In 2001-02, the Commission will introduce electronic lodgement and processing of applications for legal aid from the private profession and a practice management system for the efficient management of matters within the inhouse practice. To facilitate this, a computer desktop replacement program will be implemented using leased equipment as opposed to the outright purchase policy that has been the practice in the past. The Commission will also continue to improve accommodation at its regional offices.

OFFICE OF THE DIRECTOR OF PUBLIC PROSECUTIONS

The Office of the Director of Public Prosecutions is responsible for the prosecution of all indictable and certain summary offences against New South Wales laws and the conduct of appeals in the Local, District, Supreme and High Courts.

EXPENDITURE TRENDS AND RECENT DEVELOPMENTS

The Office received additional recurrent funding of \$4.3 million in 1999-2000 and \$5.5 million in 2000-01 to meet the increase in the Office's workloads as identified by the Council on the Cost of Government in 1998.

The centralised committal project commenced in Sydney in 1998 and was extended to Sydney West in February 1999, Lismore in October 1999, Wollongong in November 1999, and Newcastle in January 2000. This project has led to a major reduction in the criminal trial caseload before the District Court.

The Drug Court pilot commenced in 1999 at Parramatta. The Office will continue its commitment to the pilot during 2001-02.

STRATEGIC DIRECTIONS

The Office will continue its commitment to improving the criminal justice system and to providing the people of New South Wales with an independent, fair and just prosecution service.

The Office and the New South Wales Police Service have successfully implemented a system for the electronic interchange of information relating to indictable charges. The electronic transfer of information between the Police Service and the Office is being further developed. The two agencies are working closely to develop a system for the electronic transfer of briefs of evidence.

The Reporting Services Branch of the Attorney General's Department and the Office have agreed to pilot the electronic provision of District and Supreme Court transcripts. The potential for electronic transfer of information between the Court of Criminal Appeal and the Office is being explored.

Upgrading of the Office's information technology structure will continue in 2001-02. This will provide an integrated document management system and improve the Office's capacity to report on performance. This upgrading will significantly improve the Office's efficiency and enable more effective communication with other criminal justice agencies.

2001-02 BUDGET

Total Expenses

In 2001-02 total expenses will amount to \$62.4 million, which is an increase of 2.0 percent on 2000-01. This includes \$2.9 million for cost reimbursements to witnesses and \$2.1 million for flow on costs arising from the appointment of additional police officers.

The Office will pursue its objective of providing the people of New South Wales with an independent, fair and just prosecution service.

In 2001-02 the Office will continue to give high priority to increased co-operation with other criminal justice agencies to improve the performance of the criminal justice system. Additionally, emphasis will continue to be placed on the provision of services to victims and witnesses.

Asset Acquisitions

The Office's asset acquisition program will total \$5.5 million in 2001-02.

The refurbishment of head office will cost \$4.2 million in 2001-02 with the Consolidated Fund contributing \$2.2 million. The balance of \$2 million will be provided by the lessor. This project is planned for completion in 2001-02 and will greatly improve the functionality and overall efficiency of the Office's operations. Victims and witnesses of crime will have access to much needed facilities. This will allow the Office to make much more efficient use of its office space.

The Office commenced migration of its core computer application, the Criminal Advocacy Support and Enquiry System in 2000-01. Funding of \$0.2 million will be allocated towards this project, to be completed in early 2001-02. This will permit easier use, better access to information and full utilisation of the Office's investment in upgraded technology.

Funding totalling \$0.4 million will be used for ongoing plant and equipment replacement, furniture and fittings.

ENVIRONMENT PROTECTION AUTHORITY

The Environment Protection Authority's (EPA) objectives are to protect, maintain and restore the quality of the environment, having regard to the need to maintain ecologically sustainable development. It also seeks to reduce environmental risks to human health and to prevent degradation of the environment.

The EPA's *1998 to 2003 Corporate Plan* sets its mission as that of "guiding the community to achieve and maintain a healthy environment in a productive New South Wales".

EXPENDITURE TRENDS AND RECENT DEVELOPMENTS

Since the EPA commenced operations in March 1992, there has been a steady increase in budget support reflecting the Government's commitment to the environment as well as increased awareness by the community of environmental issues and the EPA's responsibilities.

In 2000-01, the EPA will contribute 55 percent of waste levy revenue to the Waste Planning and Management Fund commenced as part of the Government's overall waste reduction program. The projected contribution to the Fund for 2001-02 is \$47.4 million. This payment will bring total contributions to the Fund to \$153.8 million since its inception in 1995-96.

The EPA appropriation also includes a contribution of \$20 million to the Stormwater Trust as part of the Government's commitment to improved urban stormwater management and \$22.1 million to be paid to the Zoological Parks Board as part of the Government's support for that body.

STRATEGIC DIRECTIONS

The Environment Protection Authority has developed strategies involving innovative and targeted monitoring, regulation and enforcement as well as the use of economic mechanisms, education and the planning process.

Of particular importance have been recent legislative changes to the overall regulatory regime for environmental control in New South Wales. This has included the introduction of a system of "load based" licensing as a means of focusing on the total load of pollutants discharged into the environment rather than the concentration of pollutants in discharges. The new system directly links the level of licence fee to the total load.

These strategies will assist the EPA in addressing:

- ◆ issues of waste generation, transport, disposal and management;
- ◆ increased pressures on the environment as a result of increased urban population and development;

- ◆ problems of maintaining and improving the health and sustainability of marine and freshwater environments; and
- ◆ the adverse impacts on the environment and public health of chemicals, hazardous substances and other contaminants.

The most important of these legislative changes came into effect on 1 July 1999. These changes posed significant implementation challenges for the EPA, some of which will continue in 2001-02. During the transition period the EPA has needed to run a dual system of licences and approvals. Significant new responsibilities have also been acquired in environmental education, pesticides management and waste management.

2001-02 BUDGET

Total Expenses

The EPA's expenses have increased from \$147.3 million to \$175.6 million. This is due to the increased grant contributions of \$10.8 million to the Waste Planning and Management Fund, to reflect increased receipts from the s88 Waste Levy, and increased grants of \$14.7 million to the Zoological Parks Board for the redevelopment of both of the State's zoos. Major expenditures include:

- ◆ \$56.7 million on waste minimisation and management initiatives, including \$47.4 million to support the Waste Planning and Management Fund;
- ◆ \$37.5 million on improving the health and sustainability of New South Wales waterways, including a contribution to the Stormwater Trust of \$20 million to fund programs to plan for and control stormwater discharges and reduce the impact from sewerage systems;
- ◆ \$27.7 million on environmental compliance, including the one-off transitional costs associated with implementing the new *Protection of the Environment (Operations) Act 2000* and other new legislation;
- ◆ \$8.8 million on minimising the adverse impact of chemicals and other hazardous substances on the environment and public health;
- ◆ \$13.6 million to reduce air and noise emissions and to minimise their impact on the community;
- ◆ \$9.1 million to enable the wider community to help protect the environment through the provision of access to key environmental information; and

- ◆ a contribution of \$22.1 million to the Zoological Parks Board for various purposes, including a comprehensive program of rebuilding and modernisation of facilities, research and public education.

Asset Acquisitions

Asset acquisitions in 2001-02 total \$5.9 million.

An amount of \$3.0 million (plus \$4.2 million in 2002-03) will be spent building a purpose built accommodation for laboratories at Lidcombe.

Expenditure of \$0.3 million will be incurred for the continuing upgrade of the air-quality monitoring network.

ENVIRONMENTAL TRUST

The objectives of the Environmental Trust are:

- ◆ to promote environmental education, to encourage the development of education programs and to increase the awareness of environmental issues;
- ◆ to promote research into environmental problems;
- ◆ to encourage and support restoration and rehabilitation projects that are likely to reduce pollution, the waste stream or environmental degradation within New South Wales; and
- ◆ to fund the acquisition of land for national parks.

In addition, the *Forestry Restructuring and Nature Conservation Act 1995* provides access to the Trust's funds to meet various costs. This Act requires the Environmental Trust to reimburse the Consolidated Fund for authorised expenditure originally made from the Consolidated Fund associated with the following objectives:

- ◆ restructuring the timber industry for the purpose of conserving New South Wales forests;
- ◆ reserving and conserving new national parks; and
- ◆ implementing a range of high priority environment projects.

EXPENDITURE TRENDS AND RECENT DEVELOPMENTS

Expenditure from the Trust and its predecessor bodies has risen steadily from 1995-96 reflecting refunds to the Consolidated Fund for initiatives under the *Forestry Restructuring and Nature Conservation Act 1995*.

Amendments to this Act in 1999 increased the total amount of forest industry restructuring payments from \$60 million to \$80 million, and extended the scheme by a further five years to June 2006. As at February 2001, a total of \$31.7 million has been reimbursed from the Trust for forestry purposes.

In recent years, the Environmental Trust's grants under its Act were limited to \$1.1 million per annum, with the bulk of the Trust's funds going towards expenditure incurred under the *Forestry Restructuring and Nature Conservation Act 1995*. From July 2000, the *Environmental Trust Act 1998* empowers the Trust to undertake a larger annual grants program within its objectives.

STRATEGIC DIRECTIONS

In 2001-02, the Trust has up to \$17.4 million approved for expenditure on its own programs. The Trust receives a standing appropriation from the Consolidated Fund (\$13.5 million in 1998-99 dollars indexed to the CPI) to support these grants.

The *Environmental Trust Act 1998* states that a minimum \$2 million per annum will be allocated to community groups for environmental education, restoration and research projects.

2001-02 BUDGET

Total Expenses

Total expenses in 2001-0 are projected to be \$29.4 million and include the following projects:

- ◆ forest industry restructuring expenditure incurred under section 4(1)(a) of the *Forestry Restructuring and Nature Conservation Act 1995* (\$12 million); and
- ◆ grants to Government agencies, community groups and conservation organisations (\$16.7 million).

NATIONAL PARKS AND WILDLIFE SERVICE

The objectives of the National Parks and Wildlife Service (NPWS) are to conserve, protect and manage the State's natural and cultural heritage and to provide opportunities for members of the public to enjoy, appreciate and support national parks, regional parks and the conservation of the State's heritage.

EXPENDITURE TRENDS AND RECENT DEVELOPMENTS

Expenditure since 1995-96 has increased from \$147.3 million to projected expenditure in 2000-01 of \$252.7 million (excluding seasonal firefighting costs recoverable from the Treasury Managed Fund). This significant increase reflects the Government's continuing commitment to the environment and the increased responsibilities of the NPWS in conservation management, protecting threatened species, promoting biodiversity and managing the expanding areas of reserves and regional parks.

Since 1995-96, the Government has declared over 250 new national parks and reserves, including additions to existing reserves. As at 30 June 2000, more than 700,000 hectares of State forest in the north east and south east of New South Wales had been transferred to the NPWS as a result of the Government's forestry reform process. During 2000-01, the NPWS assumed control of an additional 325,000 hectares of land as part of the Southern Comprehensive Regional Assessment, resulting in the declaration of a further 89 new national parks and 18 additions to existing parks.

In continuing the Government's commitment to the environment, \$17 million (\$10 million in recurrent funding and \$7 million in capital funding) will have been spent in 2000-01 on establishing and managing new national parks in the upper and lower north east regions of the State. In addition, funding of \$1.5 million was provided to meet the ongoing costs of management of park additions acquired during 1999-2000.

Other commitments in recent years include implementing strategies for recovery and threat abatement of threatened species, developing and implementing a State Biodiversity Strategy and establishing and maintaining new and existing regional parks in western Sydney.

STRATEGIC DIRECTIONS

In meeting its objectives of conserving, protecting and managing the State's natural and cultural heritage, the Service has adopted three key conservation themes that reflect a shift in focus towards greater community involvement:

- ◆ facilitating conservation outside of the formal reserve system;
- ◆ managing the reserve system within a regional landscape context; and
- ◆ introducing agreed conservation criteria to target further improvement to the reserve system.

Within this framework, specific initiatives focus on strategic additions to the reserve system in under-represented bioregions, especially in western New South Wales. These include providing improved protection of biodiversity and cultural heritage, working with aboriginal communities in joint management arrangements for culturally significant lands, and working with the general community to promote conservation efforts on privately-owned lands.

2001-02 BUDGET

Total Expenses

Total expenses in 2001-02 are estimated at \$262 million. Major expenditure areas include fire management, pest species management and the maintenance of essential infrastructure to facilitate management, access and enjoyment of the reserve system by the community. Continued emphasis will be placed on community education and consultation programs consistent with the agency's strategy to engage its stakeholders in the delivery of its core programs.

Major new areas of expenditure include:

- ◆ \$1.7 million for maintaining roads and bridges in Kosciuszko National Park (\$3.1 million per annum from 2002-03);
- ◆ \$1.1 million for developing a new Kosciuszko Plan of Management & Regional Environmental Plan (\$1 million in 2002-03);
- ◆ \$0.93 million for establishing and managing the proposed Stockton Bight National Park (rising to \$0.96 million per annum from 2004-05 for park management);
- ◆ \$5.4 million (\$4.7 million per annum from 2002-03) for managing newly established parks following the Southern Comprehensive Regional Assessment;
- ◆ \$0.9 million (rising to \$2.9 million per annum from 2004-05) to enhance the electronic communications capability of the agency and for the leasing of IT equipment;

- ◆ \$1.8 million for a further stage of the State Biodiversity Strategy (with a further \$1 million in 2002-03);
- ◆ \$0.8 million to undertake water reform projects required under the *Water Management Act 2000*; and
- ◆ \$0.9 million provided as a capital grant to the Jenolan Caves Reserve Trust for remediation works, including the upgrade of sewerage systems at Wombeyan Caves and Jenolan Caves and flood mitigation at Abercrombie Caves.

Asset Acquisitions

Total asset acquisitions in 2001-02 are estimated at \$44.9 million, which is a decrease of \$15 million from the 2000-01 budgeted capital program, due mainly to remediation work on the Alpine Way nearing completion and the establishment of national parks under regional forest agreements also nearing completion.

A major component of the NPWS capital program is directed towards enhancing the community's appreciation of the environmental significance of areas through the provision of visitor facilities. The program encompasses acquiring land and constructing or upgrading of facilities and minor works.

In 2001-02, major new works totalling \$10 million include:

- ◆ \$2.5 million (total cost of \$10 million) for Stage 2 of the Sewerage Upgrade Program to address health and public safety risk issues in parks, and to generally improve amenities;
- ◆ \$2.4 million (total cost of \$6.4 million) to provide recreational facilities at the Lower Prospect Canal site and to complete landscaping works;
- ◆ \$1.2 million for the relocation of a wader bird habitat on Kooragang Island in Newcastle;
- ◆ \$1.3 million (total cost of \$5 million) to upgrade roads and bridges in Kosciuszko National Park;
- ◆ \$1 million to purchase Crown Lease Lands following the Upper and Lower North East Forests Agreement;
- ◆ \$0.6 million (total cost of \$1.1 million) to upgrade and expand the computer network to improve communication across the widely dispersed facilities of the NPWS; and

- ◆ \$0.5 million (total cost of \$4 million) to revitalise metropolitan icon parks.

The program also provides \$11.6 million for minor works and \$23.2 million for major works-in-progress including:

- ◆ a further \$4 million for development works in former State forests in the Upper and Lower North East Forests;
- ◆ a further \$4 million for Stage 1 of the Sewerage Upgrade Program;
- ◆ \$4.3 million to finalise the reconstruction and stabilisation of the Alpine Way road above Thredbo Village;
- ◆ \$1.6 million for further initiatives in fire management and pest species management;
- ◆ \$2.6 million to establish and improve works in regional parks; and
- ◆ \$6.3 million for land acquisitions: \$4.1 million for purchases under specific Government programs and \$2.2 million to meet the costs associated with ongoing general acquisitions of land with high conservation values for addition to the reserve system.

ROYAL BOTANIC GARDENS AND DOMAIN TRUST

The Royal Botanic Gardens and Domain Trust maintains the Sydney Gardens and Government House Grounds, the National Herbarium of New South Wales, the Domain and the Mount Tomah and Mount Annan Botanic Gardens. It also provides research, advice, education and extension services in botanical and horticultural areas.

EXPENDITURE TRENDS AND RECENT DEVELOPMENTS

The Capital Program for 2000-01 included:

- ◆ completion of the Middle Gardens Shop;
- ◆ upgrade of the Domain Horticultural Depot;
- ◆ restoration of the Tropical Centre;
- ◆ construction of a kiosk at Mount Tomah;

- ◆ completion of an environmentally friendly effluent system at Mount Tomah; and
- ◆ enhancements to irrigation and visitor services at Mount Annan.

STRATEGIC DIRECTIONS

The major priorities to be addressed by the Trust during the coming year include:

- ◆ a continued focus on the development of opportunities to increase and diversify the Trust's revenue base; and
- ◆ application of total asset management plans at all sites following the piloting and successful implementation at Mount Annan.

2001-02 BUDGET

Total Expenses

Budgeted expenses of the Trust total \$27.6 million.

The decrease in expenditure between 2000-01 and 2001-02 is due to the end of the provision for settlement of claims arising from litigation over the amount payable by South Sydney Council for the rental of the Domain Car Park.

Asset Acquisitions

Budgeted asset acquisitions total \$4.1 million and include the following major works projects:

- ◆ \$1 million for the continuation of the Sydney Gardens and Domain irrigation systems;
- ◆ restoration of the Macquarie Culvert;
- ◆ \$580,000 for the renovation of the Sydney Tropical Centre;
- ◆ installation of a footbridge crossing the Bells Line of Road at Mount Tomah;
- ◆ \$102,000 for the completion of the alternative irrigation and water supply system at Mount Annan; and
- ◆ \$445,000 for the Visitor Services Agencies IT Infrastructure.

BICENTENNIAL PARK TRUST

The Bicentennial Park Trust is responsible for the maintenance and management of Bicentennial Park, a highly used area of parklands in western Sydney. Bicentennial Park forms a gateway to Sydney Olympic Park and part of the emerging Millennium Parklands.

EXPENDITURE TRENDS AND RECENT DEVELOPMENTS

Over the last three years, the Trust's total expenditure has increased significantly from \$4.4 million in 1999-2000 to an estimated \$5.6 million in 2000-01. This reflects the Government's commitment to improving the maintenance of parklands, enhancing the protection strategies for the wetlands and improving customer service standards.

A major upgrade of the Park's internal road and the provision of additional car parking facilities have been undertaken during 2000-01 under the Park's capital program.

It is proposed that all Government owned lands within the Homebush Bay precinct will be vested in Sydney Olympic Park Authority, including those of Bicentennial Park.

STRATEGIC DIRECTIONS

The Trust's strategic plan focuses on achieving the following outcomes in four key result areas:

- ◆ financial effectiveness;
- ◆ customer service;
- ◆ process excellence; and
- ◆ innovation and learning.

Growth in tourism, specialised event and conferencing support services, innovative business partnerships combined with growth in current recreation and education markets will enable the Trust to increase revenue as infrastructure is developed in the Park. The Park will continue to diversify its revenue base, improving its quality of services, assets, business development and a higher level of cost recovery.

2001-02 BUDGET

Total Expenses

Total expenses of the Trust in 2001-02, estimated at \$5.7 million, will provide for the maintenance of educational, recreational and cultural services and facilities located in the Parklands. This includes the Field Studies Centre, Visitor and Environment Centre, recreation and tourism management services, horticultural and wetlands management programs and marketing and business development programs.

Asset Acquisitions

Total asset acquisitions in 2001-02 are estimated at \$2 million and will be used in the continuing development of Bicentennial Park assets consistent with the objectives of the Bicentennial Park Futures Strategic Masterplan.

NEW SOUTH WALES FIRE BRIGADES

The New South Wales Fire Brigades serves and works with the community to prevent fire and to respond to fires, hazardous material incidents and rescue operations in order to protect and preserve life, property and the environment. The Brigades is responsible for providing fire protection to developed centres throughout the State. In times of emergency, such as a bush fire crisis, it also supports the New South Wales Rural Fire Service in non-urban areas.

EXPENDITURE TRENDS AND RECENT DEVELOPMENTS

The New South Wales Fire Brigades is funded 73.7 percent by the insurance industry and 12.3 percent by Local Government with a net cost to the State of 14 percent.

Between 1993-94 and 1999-2000 there was a 51.8 percent growth in incidents attended by the Brigades. In 1999-2000 the Brigades responded to 119,532 primary incidents, an increase of 6 percent on 1998-99.

The Brigades has received significant funding increases over the past seven financial years. In 1994-95, the amount provided was \$241.5 million. In comparison, the total amount to be provided in 2001-02 will be \$366.2 million, an increase of 51.6 percent over this period.

In 1997, the Government embarked on the first major fire station building program in 75 years. A \$25 million greater Sydney area Strategic Program will see new fire stations built in Western Sydney to provide improved and equitable urban fire protection. Nine of these stations are already operational (St. Andrews, Blacktown, Kellyville, Rosemeadow, Narellan, Huntingwood, Horningsea Park, Regentville and Bonnyrigg Heights). Other stations will become operational at Schofields, Cranebrook and Horsley Park during 2001-02 and 2002-03.

Funding has now been provided to complete the next stage of this program (relocation of Castle Hill, Northmead and Rockdale fire stations) during 2001-02 and 2002-03, subject to acquisition of suitable sites.

More than 100 additional firefighters in Western Sydney and 78 in country areas have been recruited as a result of the fire station building program.

Since 1995, the Government has injected more than \$1.8 billion into the Brigades including more than \$60 million for state-of-the-art fire engines.

Funds to the extent of \$14 million are being allocated to recruit an additional 120 permanent and 60 retained firefighters over the four year period which commenced in 1999-2000.

The Brigades' other initiatives include successful smoke alarm campaigns in partnership with the Department of Housing, Rural Fire Service, local Area Health Services, local government and the insurance industry. As a result of this, the number of homes fitted with smoke alarms has increased from 20 percent in 1995 to more than 60 percent at present.

STRATEGIC DIRECTIONS

The New South Wales Fire Brigades aims to minimise the impact of emergency incidents on the community. The Brigades has taken a number of strategic initiatives to improve decision-making required for better planning, evaluation and operational service delivery throughout the organisation. Many of these involve improved consultation with local government. Improved decision-making capability will maximise the effectiveness and efficiency of the Brigades' core business: fire prevention, fire suppression, management of hazardous material incidents, provision of rescue services and response to natural hazards.

Building Program

An amount of \$33.3 million is being allocated over the period 1999-2000 to 2002-03 to build 25 new or upgraded fire stations and training facilities in Sydney, the Illawarra, the Central Coast, the Hunter region and country areas and to undertake major refurbishment of a further seven stations.

Under the greater Sydney area program, establishing or relocating fire stations at Glenhaven, Baulkham Hills, Yennora and Arncliffe will be completed during this period. Stage one of the Central Coast program will see new fire stations built at Warnervale, Umina (completed in March 2001), Doyalson and Kincumber subject to consultations with local groups. New stations at Kariong, Berkeley Vale and Bateau Bay were completed in 1999-00 as part of this program.

In the Illawarra, a new fire station will be built at Shellharbour. Stage one of a program to build or upgrade stations in the Hunter Valley will continue. Under this program fire stations to be built during the period 1999-2000 to 2002-03 will be at Toronto, Wangi Wangi, Tingira Heights, Kotara, Wallsend, West Wallsend, Stockton and East Maitland, subject to consultations with local groups. A new fire station has been completed at Dubbo and the new station at Kelso was opened in 1999-2000.

Additionally, training facilities will be provided in Penrith, Newcastle and Lismore during the period 2001-02 to 2002-03. Refurbishment of the fire stations at a number of country locations will also be carried out.

Equipment

The fire appliance program will continue with the allocation of \$36 million for new firefighting appliances over the next two years. This continues the \$72 million program commenced in 1999-2000. This program includes the purchase of 168 new and upgraded fire engines for country New South Wales as part of the Brigades' forward program as well as continuing the replacement of heavy duty fire engines for use in the urban areas of Sydney, Newcastle and Wollongong.

2001-02 BUDGET

Total Expenses

Total expenses in 2001-02 are estimated at \$327.3 million.

The Brigades will continue its repair and maintenance programs for the firefighting fleet and fire stations. The continuance of the greater Sydney area strategic plan and opening a number of other new fire stations will involve the allocation of \$8.5 million for staffing of these new stations. This will meet the expanding demands of growth areas and community needs.

Some of the key issues that will be addressed are:

- ◆ providing enhanced protective clothing for firefighters to improve firefighter safety;
- ◆ continuing the reform process with an increased focus on prevention and community risk management;
- ◆ provide an extra nine permanent positions to enable 24 hour staffing at Dubbo Fire Station; and
- ◆ establishment of an additional 60 Community Fire Units over the period 2000-01 to 2002-03.

Asset Acquisitions

The New South Wales Fire Brigades' 2001-02 asset acquisition program of \$38.9 million includes provision for the following projects:

- ◆ communications project including the continued developments associated with Government Radio Network (\$4.0 million);
- ◆ continuation of the new fire station program in the greater Sydney area (\$1.8 million) as well as the continuation of new fire station programs on the Central Coast (\$1.1 million) and in the Hunter (\$3.5 million);
- ◆ continuation of the Illawarra station program (\$1.4 million);
- ◆ the construction of a purpose-built fire station at No. 1 Fire Station, Sydney (estimated total cost of \$13.2 million and \$2.9 million provided in 2001-02);
- ◆ commencement of training facilities at Penrith, Lismore and Newcastle (\$1.1 million);
- ◆ continuation of a program to acquire and replace firefighting appliances and pumpers (\$13 million);

- ◆ continuation of a program to replace special appliances such as breathing apparatus, Hazmat (Hazardous Material responses) and salvage vehicles (\$2 million);
- ◆ purchase of specialised aerial firefighting appliances (\$3 million);
- ◆ information systems (\$2 million); and
- ◆ various other minor works (\$3 million).

These asset acquisitions will be of particular benefit to both city and rural areas of New South Wales and will continue to address the needs for additional facilities required in growth areas.

DEPARTMENT OF RURAL FIRE SERVICE

The Department of Rural Fire Service is responsible for the promotion of effective rural fire fighting services within the State, including the co-ordination of bush fire fighting and bushfire prevention activities. The Office for Emergency Services is included under the Service's administration and is responsible for policy advice to the Minister and executive and administrative support to the State Emergency Management Committee and the State Rescue Board.

The prevention and containment of bush fires would not be possible without the unpaid work of some 70,000 volunteers, who operate through 2,400 community based bush fire brigades attached to 142 local councils.

EXPENDITURE TRENDS AND RECENT DEVELOPMENTS

The State's contribution towards fire fighting services is paid into the Rural Fire Fighting Fund (RFFF), along with the fire levies from insurance companies and councils. These funds are then dispersed in accordance with the advice of the Rural Fire Service Advisory Committee.

The funding formula for the RFFF has altered slightly under amendments to the *Rural Fires Act 1997*, to apply from 1 July 2001. The contributions of the State and Local Government are now set at 13 percent and 13.3 percent respectively. The proportion contributed by the insurance industry, 73.7 percent, remains unchanged.

The RFFF has received significant funding increases over the past seven financial years. In 1994-95 the total amount provided to the RFFF was \$50.7 million. In comparison, the total amount to be provided in 2001-02 will be \$114.9 million, an increase of 126.6 percent over this period.

STRATEGIC DIRECTIONS

The Department of Rural Fire Service is an integral part of a complex bush fire management infrastructure comprising volunteer bush fire brigades, local government councils, land management agencies and other fire authorities.

Since the January 1994 bushfires, the agency has focussed on improving radio communication, replacing aged tankers and developing an appropriate management structure to minimise fire hazard and improve response to fire emergencies.

The new administrative arrangements to be introduced from 1 July 2001 will transfer fire control staff, currently employed by local government, to the direct employment of the Service. These new arrangements will ensure the provision of a cohesive emergency service, and address concerns expressed by the Coroner in relation to the previous dual accountability of fire control staff to both the State and Local Government. It represents a logical extension of the significant reforms that the Government began in 1996.

The Rural Fire Service is continuing a service-wide upgrade of safety features on tankers, and also replacing protective clothing and equipment for fire fighters with superior products made available through improved technology.

2001-02 BUDGET

The higher level of funding provided in 2001-02 allows for the transfer of the administration of district fire control staff to the Service from 1 July 2001. As a result of these new arrangements employee-related expenditure will increase from \$10.2 million in 2000-01 to \$29.5 million in 2001-02. The increase includes a one-off payment of \$10 million to compensate local councils for wages paid to fire control staff in 2000-01.

The Service will continue its tanker replacement program, with an estimated 180 new tankers to be provided during the year. A total amount of \$27 million has been provided for the purchase of new and used tankers during 2001-02.

An amount of \$5 million has been provided for the continuing fit-out of existing tankers with vehicle protection systems and the provision of fire blankets.

Allocations to local government will allow the roll-out of a dedicated communications platform linking all Rural Fire Service sites. This platform will enhance management, planning and communication capacity at corporate, regional and district levels.

The equipment replacement program will also continue at the accelerated level initiated by the Government to ensure that firefighters have access to the latest technology.

Funding for the Office of Emergency Services has been provided at a level commensurate with that of the previous financial year.

STATE EMERGENCY SERVICE

The State Emergency Service (SES) is a volunteer based organisation dedicated to providing timely assistance in times of natural or man made incidents or emergencies. While its main responsibilities reflect its role as the combat agency for floods and storms, the SES is also the major provider of land and inland water search and rescue throughout the State. Additionally, the SES provides significant support to the Police Service and other emergency services in a wide range of emergency situations. Currently there are around 9,000 SES volunteers contributing 440,000 hours per year to operations and training.

EXPENDITURE TRENDS AND RECENT DEVELOPMENTS

The State Emergency Service has received substantial increases in funding since 1998-99, which have enabled it to address major priorities in the areas of protective clothing, safety equipment, competency based training, maintenance of communications equipment and the commencement of employment of Permanent Division Controllers.

The SES has received significant funding increases over the past seven financial years. In 1994-95, the amount provided was \$14.4 million. In comparison, the total amount to be provided in 2001-02 will be \$27.1 million, an increase of 88 percent over this period.

Additional funding in 2000-01 included:

- ◆ \$1 million per annum for the provision of protective clothing and safety equipment for volunteers;

- ◆ \$1.4 million per annum to fund both the employment of six additional trainers located in the field and the delivery of a competency based training package to all volunteers based on world best practice;
- ◆ \$191,000 per annum for the employment of two additional flood planning staff; and
- ◆ \$217,000 per annum up to and including 2002-03 for the recurrent needs of computerisation of State Emergency Service volunteer units.

The 2000-01 financial year saw the continued funding of the Hawkesbury/Nepean Flood Management Project to improve public education, upgrade flood warning systems and enhance SES flood response capability.

Throughout the year the volunteer members of the SES attended numerous floods including those in the North West and Namoi regions in November 2000 and the Mid and Far North Coast in February/March 2001. Volunteers also provided assistance during major storms at Dubbo, Casino and in the Sydney Metropolitan area.

Volunteers also carried out road rescues, search and rescue and provided valuable assistance to the community during floods and storms.

STRATEGIC DIRECTIONS

The State Emergency Service will continue to improve its capability to deal with floods, storms, tempests and other incidents and emergencies.

This will be achieved through:

- ◆ developing public communication;
- ◆ flood planning programs to ensure that communities at risk are aware of the nature of the risks and how to protect themselves and their property; and
- ◆ by continuing to improve its response capabilities.

2001-02 BUDGET

Total Expenses

The State Emergency Service's total expenses are projected to be \$23.7 million in 2001-02.

Additional funding of \$200,000 in 2001-02 has been provided to enable the SES to upgrade radio profiles.

An amount of \$156,000 in 2001-02 and \$121,000 per annum thereafter has been provided to employ two permanent part time Division Controllers for rural and regional New South Wales.

Further, an amount of \$166,000 per annum has been provided from 2003-04 onwards to continue funding of two full time Divisional Controllers in the Sydney metropolitan area currently funded from the Hawkesbury Nepean project.

Asset Acquisitions

In 2001-02, asset acquisitions will total approximately \$3.4 million.

As part of the asset acquisition program approximately \$1.2 million has been provided for rescue equipment. The funding will ensure road rescue equipment, flood rescue boats, emergency lighting and vertical rescue equipment are available to provide continued professional emergency support to the community.

Funding of approximately \$1.8 million has been provided for the purchase of model 3 analogue radios for North West, Clarence/Nambucca and Illawarra/South Coast Divisions as well as replacing HF-SSB radios. Included in this amount is \$200,000 for the conversion of radio communications equipment for the Far West Division as part of the Government's election commitments.

Other allocations include:

- ◆ \$250,000 for the supply and installation of computers to SES volunteer units. This is the second year of funding of a three year program to implement a Government election commitment;
- ◆ \$100,000 for the purchase of five sand-bagging machines that will be deployed to flood affected regions of the State; and
- ◆ \$50,000 for annual provisions.

PUBLIC TRUST OFFICE - ADMINISTRATION

The Public Trust Office offers:

- ◆ life planning services including will making;

- ◆ estate, trust and asset management;
- ◆ document safe custody;
- ◆ funeral bonds; and
- ◆ private client services.

The Public Trust Office is financially independent of the Consolidated Fund. Total expenses and asset acquisitions are funded through revenue generated from clients and other corporate income. The Public Trustee is obliged to accept all estates regardless of their value.

EXPENDITURE TRENDS AND RECENT DEVELOPMENTS

The Public Trust Office restructured in 1998 to focus on business development and marketing to customers, particularly the growing seniors market. To improve customer service, the consolidation and development of core business and technical support systems has been a focus of expenditure over the last three to four years. This has included expenditure of \$5.3 million over three years on the development of the Trust Estate Asset Management System, which will be completed during 2001.

STRATEGIC DIRECTIONS

The Public Trust Office will continue to improve services to customers and has commenced a Service Delivery Review to assess an optimum business model for the statewide Branch network. This will be in conjunction with improvements in workflow management and the expansion of on-line services during 2001.

The Public Trustee's Regulation came up for review in September 1999 under the *Subordinate Legislation Act 1989*. A Regulatory Impact Statement (RIS) completed in 2000 is currently being considered by the Government.

In keeping with the changes to the *Trustee Act 1925* in March 1998, requiring trustees to manage client portfolios under prudent person principles, the Public Trustee's investment powers have been broadened to include equities. The Public Trustee will be providing suitable investment vehicles for client funds at risk levels acceptable to the Public Trustee and its client base.

2001-02 BUDGET

Total Expenses

The 2001-02 Budget provides for total expenses of \$28.9 million. Salary and related items account for approximately 66 percent of total expenses, while working expenses (34 percent) are used to maintain agency structures and state-wide Branch networks, as well as plant and equipment items.

Asset Acquisitions

An asset acquisition program of approximately \$5.7 million is planned for 2001-02.

Expenditure is planned on upgrades/replacement to the computer infrastructure which includes NT and Novell Servers, Office/Windows 2000, personal computers, notebooks, printers, routers and switches.

Other significant areas of expenditure include refurbishment of the 19 O'Connell Street office, the Wills production system and the records management system. The development of the Trust Estate Asset Management System (TEAMS) will be completed with enhanced functionality to be added.

REGISTRY OF BIRTHS, DEATHS AND MARRIAGES

The New South Wales Registry of Births, Deaths and Marriages records in perpetuity, all births, deaths and marriages occurring in New South Wales and, provides documentation on these events to individuals to help establish a range of legal entitlements. The Registry also collects statistical data for Government and other organisations, performs civil marriages and undertakes searches of the records.

The Registry performs both regulatory and commercial activities, with sufficient revenue being generated from its commercial activities to offset the cost of the registration function and pay a dividend to the Government.

EXPENDITURE TRENDS AND RECENT DEVELOPMENTS

The Registry of Births, Deaths and Marriages has been operating commercially since 1992. The dividend for 2000-01 is anticipated to be approximately \$2 million.

The Registry has focused on expanding and improving its services and products to clients throughout New South Wales over the past five years. The Registry has developed a product range that includes genealogical indexes, commemorative birth, death and marriage certificates, an on-line certificate validation service and a Wills Register. Further initiatives are being undertaken to develop new business products and services.

STRATEGIC DIRECTIONS

The Registry's strategic priorities are to ensure its commercial viability and overall performance. These include the development of information technology systems to improve client service and to support management and staff; and human resources strategies to enhance staff skills, productivity and flexibility. The Registry's operational software is being upgraded and processes are being re-engineered in order to achieve quality-driven systemic efficiencies.

2001-02 BUDGET

Total Expenses

Total expenses are estimated at \$11.5 million. This represents an increase of 3 percent above the 2000-01 Budget.

Asset Acquisitions

The Registry's asset acquisition program in 2001-02 will be \$6.5 million. In December 2000 the Registry purchased business premises and will spend \$2.6 million on an upgrade to public access and office fit-out. The Registry will move into the new premises in November 2001.

The Registry is completing the second phase of a major project to convert its older paper records (up to and including 1951) to a digitised format. The third phase consisting of deaths and marriages for the period of 1952 to 1994 will commence in early 2002. This project will reduce production costs, improve service delivery to the Registry's clients and ensure the preservation of the Registry's data. Total projected expenditure on these projects in 2001-02 is approximately \$2.4 million and both these phases will be completed by the end of the 2002-03 financial year.

The Registry will also spend \$465,000 on the Asset Based Enhancement Project which involves the development of further on-line services and approximately \$1 million on computer upgrades and system development. The latter includes:

- ◆ \$250,000 on the development of the new plastic birth card service;
- ◆ \$229,000 on the replacement of computers;
- ◆ \$150,000 on the development of a Management Information System; and
- ◆ \$413,000 on technological upgrades and systems development that includes the new Call Centre and business continuity.

All capital expenditure in 2001-02 will be internally funded from the Registry's retained earnings.

STORMWATER TRUST

In May 1997, the New South Wales Government released the Waterways Package which contained a range of initiatives to improve the quality of the State's waterways. A key initiative of the package is improved management of urban stormwater. This is to be achieved by requiring councils to prepare Stormwater Management Plans, trialing innovative stormwater treatment measures and implementing remedial works linked to these plans. Educating the community about essential changes in behaviour is another critical component of the package.

STRATEGIC DIRECTIONS

The Government has committed up to \$80 million over the years 1997-98 to 2001-02 for the Stormwater Trust Fund. The Fund is intended to assist with the implementation of stormwater commitments in the Waterways Package. Establishing the Fund was also a response to the recommendations of the report prepared by the Waterways Advisory Panel on Sydney Water's proposal for sewage overflow abatement in Sydney Harbour.

This funding has been allocated to:

- ◆ assist councils, and certain state government agencies either individually or in groups, to pilot innovation in stormwater management or to undertake remedial activities;
- ◆ provide assistance to councils for the preparation of Stormwater Management Plans; and
- ◆ a statewide education program coordinated by the Environment Protection Authority.

2001-02 BUDGET

Total Expenses

Funding of \$20 million has been provided in 2001-02 for Stage 2 of the grants program and for a stormwater education campaign.

An evaluation of the results of the grants program and the management plans has found that the Trust's program has been successful in reducing waterway pollution and increasing the ability of local councils to manage urban stormwater. The evaluation also found that further efforts should be made to increase the capacity of councils to manage urban stormwater in a more sustainable way.

The program expenditure will focus on providing grants for cost-effective projects tackling significant stormwater issues across the state. Significant expenditure will also be allocated to projects designed to increase the stormwater management abilities of councils.

WASTE PLANNING AND MANAGEMENT FUND

The Waste Planning and Management Fund was established in 1995-96 with an initial allocation of \$60 million. In 1998, additional funds were allocated specifically to fund a range of initiatives to support kerbside recycling across New South Wales, taking the total allocation to \$106.3 million for the six years to 2000-01.

The majority of this funding has been provided for the establishment, operations and waste reductions programs of Regional Waste Boards, a community grants program, state-wide waste and litter education initiatives, a series of rural pilot schemes to reduce waste, and a range of programs to support kerbside recycling.

Beginning in 2000-01 and for subsequent years, 55 percent of receipts of the levy imposed under Section 88 of the *Environment Operations Act 1997* for the disposal of waste to landfill will be allocated to the Fund.

EXPENDITURE TRENDS AND RECENT DEVELOPMENTS

In 2000-01, the Environment Protection Authority's (EPA) contribution of 55 percent of the s88 waste levy was estimated to provide \$36.6 million to the Waste Planning and Management Fund.

Major expenditures include:

- ◆ \$65 million to support Regional Waste Boards. This includes establishment, recurrent and program funding as well as allocations to each Board to develop its regional waste plan;
- ◆ \$11.7 million to provide support for kerbside recycling, including emergency support and structural improvement programs;
- ◆ \$6.5 million for the "Waste Challenge" and litter community awareness and education campaigns;
- ◆ \$7 million over five years for the annual Community Waste Reduction Grants program;
- ◆ \$1.7 million to support two important programs to tackle the problem of unwanted hazardous substances - Chemcollect (farm chemical) and OPAL / RUM (unwanted pharmaceuticals); and
- ◆ \$1.5 million to support regional waste arrangements in rural New South Wales, including \$1 million for the South-East Waste Board pilot.

STRATEGIC DIRECTIONS

Two major initiatives will determine the future strategic direction for waste minimisation and management in New South Wales. The major driver will be the Government's review of the *Waste Minimisation and Management Act 1995* currently under way. This review, which commenced in September 2000 with the calling of public submissions, will be completed shortly and reported in Parliament by the Minister for the Environment.

Future initiatives will also be framed around the recommendations arising out of the Independent Inquiry into Alternative Waste Technologies and Practices, which reported its findings last year. These initiatives will be integrated into the Report to Parliament on the Act.

Together these two initiatives will provide the framework for:

- ◆ increasing the focus on waste avoidance;
- ◆ massively improving materials recovery and disposal diversion in the commercial and industrial waste streams; and
- ◆ a greater focus on extended producer responsibility.

2001-02 BUDGET

Total Expenses

The Waste Planning and Management Fund will increase its expenses from \$36.8 million to \$61.6 million in order to utilise the additional contributions from the EPA.

Major expenditure from the Fund will be directed towards the initiatives that arise out of the current review of the *Waste Minimisation and Management Act 1995*.

These will include spending on:

- ◆ regional waste reduction and management initiatives, building upon achievements of the past six years;
- ◆ support for cleaner production initiatives for industry;
- ◆ integration of, and improvement to, waste and resource recovery processes, systems, services and infrastructure;
- ◆ a new round of community waste reduction grants; and
- ◆ research and development.