

MINISTER FOR EDUCATION AND TRAINING AND MINISTER FOR ABORIGINAL AFFAIRS

OVERVIEW

<i>Agency</i>	<i>Budget 2002-03 \$m</i>	<i>Budget 2003-04 \$m</i>	<i>Variation %</i>
Department of Education and Training			
Total Expenses	7,616.9	8,159.3	7.1
Asset Acquisitions	417.0	440.1	5.5
Office of the Board of Studies			
Total Expenses	89.8	91.4	1.8
Asset Acquisitions	2.8	0.7	-75.0
Department of Aboriginal Affairs			
Total Expenses	40.9	42.1	2.9
Asset Acquisitions	1.1	...	-96.4
Total, Minister for Education and Training and Minister for Aboriginal Affairs			
Total Expenses	7,747.6	8,292.8	7.6
Asset Acquisitions	420.9	440.8	5.0

DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION AND TRAINING

The Department of Education and Training is responsible for the provision of high quality public school education and vocational education and training services through an extensive network of government schools, TAFE campuses and adult and community evening colleges. The Department also provides assistance to non-Government schools and funds specialist training, employment and youth programs.

The key priorities in education and training for 2003-04 will be to:

- ◆ ensure that all children get the best possible start in school through initiatives such as the reduction of class sizes, the building of new public pre-schools and comprehensive early literacy and numeracy initiatives;
- ◆ support the provision of high quality teaching across the State through significant enhancements to school-based professional development, specific initiatives to attract and retain teachers and through the development of professional teaching standards;

- ◆ enhance the place of schools as safe and productive learning environments, through more effective management of student behaviour and discipline and school security initiatives;
- ◆ further develop the information and communications technology infrastructure of schools and TAFE NSW campuses;
- ◆ target resources to students and communities experiencing disadvantage through funding specific programs. Major initiatives such as class size reductions will first be targeted to schools serving the most disadvantaged communities; and
- ◆ continue to improve the amenity of Government schools and TAFE campuses through new capital works and maintenance.

SCHOOL EDUCATION SERVICES

EXPENDITURE TRENDS AND RECENT DEVELOPMENTS

The Department has a legislative responsibility to provide education services to public school students of New South Wales. These encompass core, equity and strategic education services for both primary and secondary education. These services reflect general education provision, as well as services which address the range of identified equity groups.

Expenses on Government pre-school, primary and secondary education programs are estimated at \$6,033.2 million in 2003-04, an increase of \$447.4 million on the 2002-03 budget and an increase of \$1,272.6 million since the 1999-2000 budget.

The Non-Government School Assistance program provides financial support of \$585.5 million in 2003-04 to non-Government schools.

2002-03 Budget Enhancements

The Department's 2002-03 budget included additional funding of \$113 million for a range of Government initiatives, focussing on improving quality teaching and teacher supply, expanded information technology services in schools and TAFE campuses and additional resourcing to Government schools.

The programs implemented under these initiatives and achievements in 2002-03 include:

Quality Teaching and Teacher Supply

150 new teaching scholarships were offered in 2003, to attract students to train as teachers in technological and applied studies, mathematics, science and English.

18 teachers who commenced the full-time Secondary Mathematics Retraining Program, were appointed to schools in difficult to staff locations for the 2003 school year.

50 teacher mentors have been appointed in 2003 to schools with high proportions of newly appointed teachers.

The Interim Committee for a NSW Institute of Teachers has developed a draft framework of professional teaching standards, and draft processes for assessment, induction, and professional development. The Interim Committee is currently consulting on options for implementation with teachers and other stakeholders.

Priority Action Schools Program

This initiative which provides intensive support for specific schools has been implemented in 74 government primary, secondary and central schools. The program has resulted in improved student attendance, teacher morale, community-school interaction, enhanced focus on context based professional development, a renewed focus on aligning student welfare and curriculum planning and implementation and improved sharing and networking between schools.

School Global Funding

This initiative has resulted in increased global funding allocations to government schools, in socio-economically disadvantaged areas and remote locations. This additional funding has given these schools greater flexibility in meeting local service delivery requirements.

Information Technology

The provision of enhanced bandwidth services has resulted in 1,677 sites receiving upgraded services. These upgrades have enabled faster Internet access speeds for students and teachers in the classroom.

E-learning accounts for students and teachers have been piloted in 7 schools and one TAFE college. The pilot is part of the user acceptance testing process, which will lead to the rollout of e-learning accounts throughout 2003.

The technical support for schools project involved an initial local area network assessment and improvement program, and the subsequent development of models for improved technical support. All schools have been assessed and improvements recommended. Of those schools requiring local area network improvement, 243 have been completed.

An enterprise portal (gateway) is being developed to provide users with a secure, single point of entry to access services in a controlled environment when using the Department's network. The Request for Quotation process has been completed and a vendor recommended.

Additional funding for software licences has resulted in a revised Microsoft enterprise agreement, which allows students and staff access to the full suite of Microsoft products, including educational products.

K-3 Class Size Pilot

Funding under this initiative has resulted in the appointment of an additional 65 teachers to 63 schools, to reduce the size of approximately 200 classes. For schools included in the pilot, class sizes have been reduced to a maximum of 20 students for Kindergarten, 22 for Year 1, 24 for Year 2 and 26 for Year 3.

Following the announcement of the Government's commitment to reduce all class sizes in Kindergarten to Year 2 by 2007, the design of the pilot is being revised. Information gathered from the pilot will be used to inform the broader class size reduction program.

STRATEGIC DIRECTIONS

The Department of Education and Training implements the strategic directions outlined in plans for NSW public schools, TAFE NSW, vocational education and training services, adult and community education and the Adult Migrant English Service. These plans reflect the NSW Government's commitment to public education and training.

The Department's 2003-04 budget allocates resources to new initiatives and existing services, to strengthen the provision of public education and to achieve the best outcomes for all students.

Class Size Reductions

The first three years of schooling are critical in laying the foundations for success at school.

The Government has made a key commitment to significant reduction in class sizes from Kindergarten to Year 2. The investment in class size reduction will include \$107 million for additional classrooms as well as \$222 million in funding for additional teachers over the next four years.

By 2007, class sizes will be reduced to a statewide average of 20 in Kindergarten, 22 in Year 1 and 24 in Year 2. Class size reductions will begin with schools serving the most disadvantaged communities.

Pre-schools

For many students, public pre-schools underpin a successful transition to school which in turn supports later learning.

The quality of early learning will be supported through the establishment of 21 new public pre-schools by 2005. This initiative will bring to 100, the total number of public pre-schools statewide.

Literacy and Numeracy

Over the next four years almost \$492 million will be allocated to the Department's Literacy and Numeracy Strategy.

Literacy and numeracy programs such as *Reading Recovery* and *Count Me in Too* will continue to provide essential support in the early years of schooling to ensure that all students have sufficient basic skills to underpin success in later years. Programs such as the online discussion of books through *Book Raps* will be expanded across the State through the availability of expanded network bandwidth.

New South Wales has Australia's most rigorous program of assessment which carefully monitors the progress of each student through each stage of schooling from the Basic Skills Test in Year 3 to the Higher School Certificate in Year 12. This program will be further enhanced through computer skills testing in Year 6.

The success of the Department's programs is evident in the State's strong performance in national and international assessments of literacy and numeracy standards.

Quality Teaching

A number of initiatives are focused on ensuring that NSW schools have the highest teaching standards in Australia. Over the next four years, \$139 million will be allocated specifically to initiatives which enhance the quality and availability of teaching.

A significant priority will be the development of professional teacher standards, including the establishment of a NSW Institute of Teachers.

There will also be a significant increase in resources provided for school-based professional development, which includes additional funding of \$39 million over the next four years.

Initiatives such as increased teaching scholarships to attract teachers to hard-to-staff schools, expanding teacher retention benefits and improving rental subsidies in isolated areas will ensure that all schools benefit from the availability of quality teaching.

Priority Schools Programs supporting disadvantaged communities

The Government is committed to providing the opportunity for all students to develop the knowledge, skills, understanding and values they need for a productive and rewarding life.

The Government has made a significant commitment to providing additional support for schools to overcome high levels of disadvantage within their communities, through a range of Priority Schools Funding Programs.

This includes funding of over \$16 million in targeted funding for the Priority Action Schools Program in 2002-03 and 2003-04.

Behaviour and Discipline

Over the next four years, \$56.4 million will be allocated to improving the range of placement and support options for disruptive students. This includes \$8 million new funding over four years for the establishment of 20 new suspension centres by 2007.

Eight new behaviour schools and seven new tutorial centres for secondary students will be established by 2007. This will bring the total number of behaviour schools to 35 and tutorial centres to 40.

Additional specialist teacher positions will be established to assist schools to manage difficult students.

School Security

The safety of staff, students and school property will be improved through the provision of security fencing to at least 200 schools over the next four years at a cost of approximately \$20 million. New and upgraded security alarms will continue to be provided to at-risk schools.

Technology

NSW schools lead Australia in their use of information and communications technology. The next four years will see recurrent funding of \$846.2 million for technology initiatives, which include:

- ◆ \$572.3 million for the continuing Computers in Schools program. This includes the provision of new computers, internet services and technology support in schools;
- ◆ \$172.3 million for the network bandwidth initiative. This initiative will progressively upgrade bandwidth in schools and TAFE NSW colleges, using available technology including government owned infrastructure and a range of telecommunication carriers;
- ◆ \$84.1 million for e-learning accounts for staff and students in schools and TAFE. This project will provide e-mail accounts to teachers and students, filtered access to the internet, discussion forums and web hosting facilities to all schools and colleges. Remote access will also be available from locations such as home or libraries; and
- ◆ \$17.6 million for Technology in Learning and Teacher Training. This program is continuing to provide teacher training in schools in the use of the latest computer technology.

Quality Learning Environments

A further \$119 million in capital funding will be provided over the next three years to support technology initiatives. The Government will continue its significant investment in the expansion and upgrading of school accommodation, through the four year \$1.2 billion Schools Improvement Package.

An amount of \$107 million will be provided over the next four years, including \$18.7 million in 2003-04, on the provision of accommodation at schools to allow for reduced class sizes.

The amenity of Government schools will continue to be improved through the replacement of demountable buildings with permanent classrooms. Work will continue on the air conditioning of both demountable and permanent buildings, with an allocation of over \$10 million in 2003-04.

2003-04 BUDGET

Total Expenses

Total expenses on school education services for 2003-04 are estimated at \$6,033.2 million. This represents an increase of \$447.4 million, or 8 percent on last year's budget.

Key initiatives include:

- ◆ recurrent and capital funding of \$329 million will be provided over the next four years, to progressively reduce class sizes in Government schools for students enrolled in Kindergarten to Year 2;
- ◆ increased funding of \$39 million over the next four years, for initiatives to increase the quality of teaching in Government schools, ensure an adequate supply of teachers in key learning areas and enhance teacher professional development;
- ◆ over \$492 million over four years for the further expansion of the State Literacy and Numeracy Plan with \$126 million to be spent in 2003-04;
- ◆ over \$846.2 million over four years for technology initiatives, including \$172.3 million for upgrading bandwidth in schools and TAFE NSW colleges. In addition, \$84.1 million will be provided for the provision of e-mail and a range of other e-services for students and teachers in Government schools and TAFE NSW. \$572.3 million will be provided for the continuing Computers in Schools program;
- ◆ \$280.4 million will be provided in 2003-04 for global allocations to Government schools. This funding includes over \$10 million per annum for the initiative introduced in 2002-03, to increase allocations to Government schools which have specific needs in meeting service delivery requirements at the local level;
- ◆ \$2.6 million will be provided in targeted funding to continue the class sizes pilot of 20 students, in designated schools, in Kindergarten to Year 3 to provide early identification of, and intensive support to young students, leading to improved educational outcomes;

- ◆ \$8.4 million will be provided in targeted funding in 2003-04, as part of the \$16.1 million over 2 years provided in 2002-03, to continue the pilot programs to provide intensive support to specifically targeted primary, high and central schools;
- ◆ \$56.4 million over the next four years to continue to provide a wider range of placement and support options for students with disruptive behaviour, including \$8 million for the establishment of 20 new suspension centres;
- ◆ \$22.1 million over four years will be provided to prepare young people for work through the development of individual school to work plans for all students in Years 9 to 12; and
- ◆ \$186 million will be spent in 2003-04 to maintain public schools. This includes a funding component of \$15.4 million in school global funds to support school maintenance.

Asset Acquisitions

Schools

The capital allocation for school education provides for the construction of new and replacement schools, construction of additional facilities at existing schools and the upgrading of buildings to modern standards. The cost of sites for new schools, furniture and equipment and major information and communications technology projects are also funded under this program.

Capital funding of \$333 million has been allocated for the construction and enhancement of school facilities. The allocation is part of a four year \$1.2 billion Schools Improvement package, which will not only provide for a significant upgrade of school accommodation, but will also provide for a major thrust in the expansion of internet services for staff and students.

This year's program will provide for:

- ◆ the commencement of 27 new building projects including funds for continued upgrade of facilities at Callaghan College and Tuggerah Lakes College and the provision of secondary facilities at Jindabyne;
- ◆ work to commence on the second stages of new or redeveloped schools at Banora Point, Berala, Blakehurst and Harbord;

- ◆ commencement of a \$107 million program over four years for the provision of accommodation at schools to meet the Government's commitment to lower class sizes. \$18.7 million will be spent on this initiative in 2003-04; and
- ◆ pre-school accommodation at a number of existing schools at a cost of \$7.9 million in 2003-04.

Work will continue on over 70 projects commenced in previous years, including new or replacement schools at Bogangar, St George (Rockdale), Jerrabomberra and Banora Point as well as staged works at Auburn West, Blue Haven, Denistone East, James Ruse (Carlingford), Lightning Ridge, Mullumbimby and Westfields (Fairfield West). Work will also continue on the redevelopment of the Northern Beaches Secondary College, Brisbane Waters College, Tuggerah Lakes College and Callaghan College.

Sixteen of the 70 continuing projects are being undertaken as part of the Revitalisation of Inner Sydney Schools program. These include the redevelopment of facilities for Alexandria Park Community School, Cleveland Street Intensive English High School, Rose Bay Secondary College, and the Sydney Secondary College campuses at Balmain, Blackwattle Bay and Leichhardt. \$45 million will be spent on this program in 2003-04.

Work will continue on the \$96 million project to increase the capacity of the communications network to support online learning and teaching programs in schools and TAFE colleges. The Government's aim is to provide internet services and products to all staff and students, including email accounts. The project to standardise and link all education and training websites through a single point of entry will continue and be completed at a total cost of \$4 million. Students, teachers and staff will have customised profiles to access appropriate e-services and communicate with business and the community. Other information technology related projects costing \$47 million over three years will be commenced.

In addition \$1 million has been provided for the commencement of the upgrading of the National Art School at East Sydney at an estimated total cost of more than \$8 million.

\$34 million has also been provided to fund six new primary schools, two new secondary schools and a new specific purpose school constructed under a separate funding arrangement with the private sector.

The primary schools will be constructed at Horsley, Kellyville, Mungerie Park, Shell Cove, Stanhope Gardens and Wongarah. The secondary schools will be constructed at Glenwood and Horningsea Park and the special needs school will be constructed at Kellyville.

TAFE AND RELATED SERVICES

EXPENDITURE TRENDS AND RECENT DEVELOPMENTS

TAFE NSW is the largest supplier of workforce training in Australia at a time of significant technological change in business, industry and government enterprises. TAFE NSW has an on-going commitment to ensure that programs and services are responsive to industry and community needs. TAFE NSW is also committed to improving access to education and training through the provision of more flexible delivery options, including workplace learning and online learning.

TAFE NSW is facing increasing demand for its programs and services. The changing skill requirements resulting from the need for NSW businesses to be competitive in the global economy and emerging skill needs of industries such as biotechnology are increasing the demands on TAFE NSW to provide relevant programs to support these developments.

TAFE NSW has a particular responsibility to assist with the economic development of regional communities. The development of an appropriately skilled workforce in regional areas is essential if those areas are to attract and retain industry.

TAFE NSW has a strong commitment to quality. By mid 2001, all TAFE institutes were externally validated as Quality Endorsed Training Organisations (QETO) by the NSW Vocational Education and Training Accreditation Board. In 2001, the TAFE Board and management decided that all TAFE Institutes would achieve International Standards Organisations (ISO) certification against the new quality management standard ISO 9001:2000. To date, 10 TAFE NSW Institutes and Open Training Education Network have been certified under the new ISO standard.

The State Government has successfully negotiated the 2001-2003 Australian National Training Agreement with the Commonwealth Government. This Agreement provides for the provision of growth funds of \$150.9 million over the life of the Agreement for vocational education and training in New South Wales. These funds are to be met equally by the State and Commonwealth governments.

Total expenses in 2003-04 on TAFE NSW and related services are estimated at \$1,540.6 million, an increase of \$52.4 million or 3.5 percent on the 2002-03 budget.

STRATEGIC DIRECTIONS

The TAFE NSW strategic directions for 2002–2004 are to:

- ◆ grow the business of TAFE NSW for our customers;
- ◆ drive the integration of skill formation in social and economic development;
- ◆ empower TAFE students and teachers to excel;
- ◆ innovate to improve TAFE products and services; and
- ◆ be acclaimed for quality.

Total Expenses

Major initiatives to be undertaken during 2003-04 include:

\$19.5 million over four years to support TAFE scholarships and students at risk programs with some \$4.9 million being allocated this year. This includes:

- ◆ \$1.9 million in 2003-04, for a joint TAFE and schools initiative through TAFE NSW outreach and school substitute care, to target youth and expand their access to vocational education and training. TAFE NSW will provide 100 places for students in juvenile centres;
- ◆ \$3 million in 2003-04, to assist students from rural and low socio-economic areas who have successfully completed vocational education training courses as part of the Higher School Certificate to continue full-time study at TAFE NSW;
- ◆ the ongoing development of partnerships between TAFE and industry to deliver flexible training programs specific to client needs and at times and locations suitable to the client; and
- ◆ continuing the Government initiative to provide opportunities for city and country government school students in years 9, 10 and 11 to undertake learning activities, with a career path focus during the Christmas vacation period in TAFE NSW summer schools.

Asset Acquisitions

The TAFE NSW asset acquisition program for 2003-04 is \$72 million. This program provides for the commencement of 14 new major projects in 2003-04, including facilities at Belmont, Blue Mountains, Chullora, Grafton, Granville, Meadowbank, Mount Druitt, Mudgee, Northern Beaches, Orange, Ultimo, Wagga Wagga and Wollongong.

Construction will continue on 23 major projects commenced in previous years at an estimated total cost of more than \$86 million. These projects include the construction of a multi-storey building at the Ultimo campus of TAFE NSW Sydney Institute at an estimated total cost of more than \$28 million. Other major works continuing in 2003-04 include projects at Albury, Cootamundra, Dubbo, Crafton, Lightning Ridge, Liverpool, Shellharbour, Wollongbar and Wyong.

OFFICE OF THE BOARD OF STUDIES

The Office of the Board of Studies provides professional and administrative support to the Minister for Education and Training and the Board of Studies for their respective functions under the *Education Act 1990*. This includes the development of syllabuses and curriculum support materials for all schools from Kindergarten to Year 12, registration and accreditation of non-government schools, the administration of the home schooling program and the development and conduct of the School Certificate (SC), Higher School Certificate (HSC) examinations and Computing Skills Assessment for Year 10 students. The Office of the Board of Studies also encompasses the Australian Music Examinations Board (NSW) and the Aboriginal Education Consultative Group.

EXPENDITURE TRENDS AND RECENT DEVELOPMENTS

In 2002-03 the Office's key activities involved:

- ◆ developing revised Years 7-10 syllabuses;
- ◆ developing and trialling Computing Skills Assessment for Year 10 students;
- ◆ implementing the recommendations of the 2002 Masters Review of the New HSC examinations in 2001, including the provision of additional support materials to assist teachers and students;
- ◆ statewide testing as part of the standards referenced School Certificate;
- ◆ releasing new K-6 Mathematics, Years 7-10 English and Years 7-10 Mathematics syllabuses;

- ◆ continuing the HSC Advice Line; and
- ◆ enhancing the range of online information services available for schools, teachers, students and parents.

Revised Years 7 to 10 Syllabuses

The Government has allocated over \$27 million to the Office of the Board of Studies and the Department of Education and Training over the 2001-02 to 2004-05 period for the evaluation and re-development of Years 7-10 syllabuses within a standards framework. This revamp will complete the establishment of a standards based continuum of learning for students from Kindergarten through to Year 12 and closely follows the implementation of the New 'standards based' Higher School Certificate. The development of revised Years 7-10 English and Mathematics syllabuses released in 2002 was accompanied by an evaluation of the remaining Years 7-10 syllabuses and the distribution of revised syllabuses to schools during 2003.

Computing Skills Assessment for Year 10 Students

A total of \$3.9 million in recurrent and capital funds over the 2001-02 to 2004-05 period (\$1.1 million in 2002-03) was allocated for the introduction of statewide external Computing Skills Assessment for all Year 10 students. This will determine their level of computing competency as an addition to the statewide 'standards based' testing already established in 1998 for the new School Certificate.

The Computing Skills Assessment for Year 10 students was trialled by 1,500 students across 20 government and non-government schools in 2001. The trial was extended to over 7,500 students in 160 schools during 2002 so that all schools can participate in 2003.

Vocational Education and Training

The Office of the Board of Studies has been allocated \$1.1 million over the 2002-03 to 2005-06 period to support the maintenance and revision of existing Vocational Education and Training frameworks and the development of new frameworks. During 2002-03, new frameworks in Hospitality and Tourism were developed and revisions to the Information Technology and Retail frameworks were finalised.

STRATEGIC DIRECTIONS

Syllabus Development and Support

In 2002, the Office finalised the development of a Kindergarten to Year 10 curriculum framework. The framework takes into account current and emerging issues for the delivery of curriculum within schools, particularly the use of information and communications technology in the classroom and its impact on learning and assessment. The framework has supported the revision of Years 7 to 10 syllabuses.

In 2003, the Office will have completed the development of new up to date, standards based syllabuses for the K-6, 7-10 and 11-12 stages of schooling. The Office has begun the process of post implementation evaluation of the Years 11-12 syllabuses which were released in 1999. The Office is currently working with teachers and school systems to develop strategies and materials to support the implementation of the full set of K-12 syllabuses now completed.

Registration and Accreditation

The Office of the Board of Studies is the regulator of non-government schools in New South Wales. In October 2000, the Government commissioned an independent Review of non-Government Schools in New South Wales conducted by Mr Warren Grimshaw, AM. The first report of the Grimshaw Review was released in April 2002 and addressed the issues of school registration, accreditation, administrative structures, school reporting and the planning of new schools. In December 2002, the Government announced that key recommendations of the Grimshaw Review would be implemented including those that address strengthened registration criteria and detailed school annual reporting requirements. The 2003-04 Budget provides funding to the Office to support the implementation process.

Information and Communications Technology

The 2002-03 Budget included \$4.2 million to fund the introduction of new information and communications technology to assist the development of new syllabuses and support materials, online services and support for schools, a trial of computing skills assessments and further development in the broader use of computers in examinations. The Office of the Board of Studies was allocated \$0.7 million over 2 years (\$0.2 million in 2002-03 and \$0.5 million in 2003-04) to support the review, development and small scale trial of online testing for appropriate HSC and School Certificate courses.

2003-04 BUDGET

Total Expenses

Total expenses for 2003-04 are estimated at \$91.4 million, an increase of \$1.6 million on 2002-03. Key expenditure initiatives in 2003-04 include:

- ◆ continuing revision of Years 7-10 syllabuses: \$2 million will be provided to complete the review and revision of Years 7 to 10 syllabuses for distribution to schools during 2003;
- ◆ Computing Skills Assessment for Year 10 students and online testing: \$1.1 million will be allocated to further develop and trial the assessment of the computing skills of Year 10 students and further development and small scale trailing of online testing;
- ◆ Vocational Education and Training: \$0.3 million has been provided to develop a new framework for Primary Industries for release in 2003 and to support new framework development and revisions to the Construction, Information Technology, Metal and Engineering, and Entertainment frameworks for release in 2004; and
- ◆ enhanced registration requirements for non-government schools: \$0.5 million has been allocated to the Office in 2003-04 to fund the establishment costs of the implementation of the Grimshaw Review.

Asset Acquisitions

An amount of \$0.7 million will be provided to further develop computer systems to support the Computing Skills Assessment test for Year 10 students and for the Years 7 - 10 syllabus redevelopment project.

DEPARTMENT OF ABORIGINAL AFFAIRS

The Department, through the partnership between the Government and the Aboriginal people of New South Wales, is the leading agency for positive change and achievements in Aboriginal affairs and for facilitating co-ordination of Aboriginal programs.

EXPENDITURE TRENDS AND RECENT DEVELOPMENTS

The Aboriginal Communities Development Program (ACDP) will raise the health and living standards of 22 selected priority Aboriginal communities that have major environmental health needs. The ACDP began in 1998-99 with a budget of \$200 million over seven years. The Department works closely with the Aboriginal Housing Office in determining the housing strategy within this program. The program is now expected to be completed in 2007-08.

During 2002-03, expenditure on the ACDP was revised from \$33.8 million to \$29.2 million. Critical non-housing expenditure has been brought forward into 2002-03 to maintain momentum in the program due to delays in establishing accredited Aboriginal housing providers.

In 2002-03, the Department received additional funding of \$1 million per annum for four years for the Aboriginal Community Partnerships project. The project aims to give Aboriginal communities greater control over the planning, design and delivery of Government services. While the project is still in its infancy, significant work has gone into preparing the local communities and forming the stakeholder linkages necessary to ensure the project's success.

An additional \$0.3 million was allocated in 2002-03 to establish and operate an Aboriginal Languages Resource and Research Centre. The purpose of the Centre is to assist Aboriginal communities to revive and permanently preserve some of the 70 Indigenous languages once spoken across New South Wales. In April 2003 the Centre was opened at Tranby College, Glebe.

In 2002-03, the Department received an additional \$0.1 million to index the records of the Aboriginal Welfare Board. The objective of the indexing project is to assist Aboriginal people with researching family history when trying to reconnect with kin. Indexing began in January 2003 with approximately 15,000 records to date entered onto the database from the files held at State Records.

In 2002-03, the Department received \$1.65 million in relocation and fitout costs for new premises. New accommodation was required due to overcrowding in the existing location. The Department moved to its new location in April 2003.

STRATEGIC DIRECTIONS

The Department has ongoing commitments to key initiatives that extend into the 2003-04 year and beyond. These include the development of the new policy for Aboriginal Affairs in New South Wales, *Two Ways Together, Partnerships: A New Way of Doing Business with Aboriginal People*. The Department continues to work closely with the New South Wales Aboriginal Land Council (NSWALC), to monitor and advise on the administration of Aboriginal Land Councils.

2003-04 BUDGET

Total Expenses

Estimated total expenses for 2003-04 are \$42.1 million. The major expense is \$33.5 million for the Aboriginal Communities Development Program of which \$19 million will be channelled through the Aboriginal Housing Office to procure housing in accord with the *Aboriginal Housing Act 1998*.

In 2003-04, additional funds of \$0.1 million will be provided to the New South Wales Reconciliation Council. The Council is the peak body for reconciliation in the State and will use the funds to:

- ◆ deliver information technology training to Local Reconciliation Groups;
- ◆ run a small grants program which will provide seed funding to local reconciliation projects;
- ◆ operate a local history project in one community in New South Wales; and
- ◆ employ a field officer to provide support to local reconciliation groups.

Asset Acquisitions

Capital expenditure is budgeted at \$39,000 for 2003-04 for the upgrading of computer software and office equipment.