

State Budget 2010–11

Agency Budget Highlights

Justice and Attorney-General

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### Justice and Attorney-General



#### Message from the Minister

**The 2010-11 State Budget provides \$1.046 billion for the Department of Justice and Attorney-General to deliver a broad range of justice services. This will ensure the department can continue to build on the many achievements of recent years and help make Queensland a stronger, safer and fairer state, as outlined in *Toward Q2: Tomorrow's Queensland*.**

Some \$290 million has been allocated in 2010-11 for the \$600 million Supreme and District Courts project, which exemplifies the government's Toward Q2 commitment to strengthen the state by delivering infrastructure that anticipates growth. This project will create nearly 5,000 jobs during construction and sets a new benchmark in courthouse design, with a strong focus on the needs of vulnerable witnesses, victims of crime, citizens performing a jury service and other court users.

A further \$20.3 million over four years will fund an additional 41 guardians and frontline staff within the Office of the Adult Guardian to support the growing number of adult Queenslanders who require substitute decision-making because of serious accidents, dementia and mental illness.

Legal Aid Queensland will receive an allocation of \$61 million over four years to provide a more secure funding source for its vital services and reduce its reliance on funding from the Legal Practitioner Interest on Trust Accounts Fund.

Extra funding has been provided for the Crime and Misconduct Commission to target the proceeds of crime, computer fraud and misconduct complaints (\$1 million a year), the Office of the Director of Public Prosecutions to employ an extra crown prosecutor and legal officers (\$460,000 a year), Victim Assist Queensland to support non-government services to victims (\$1.6 million a year) and the Queensland Civil and Administrative Tribunal to help resolve minor civil disputes and guardianship matters (\$1.5 million a year).

This year's funding will also support the further development of intervention and diversionary strategies that deal with the causes of crime, including drugs and alcohol, such as the Special Circumstances Court (\$1.26 million), Murri Courts (\$1.2 million) and Queensland Indigenous Alcohol Diversion Program (\$800,000). These and other initiatives – such as the Queensland Magistrates' Early Referral into Treatment (QMERIT) program, the Illicit Drug Court Diversion program and Healthy Lifestyle Program for the Queensland Public Service – support the Toward Q2 ambitions of making Queensland a safer and fairer place to live.

The department's commitment to a fair, safe and just community is further demonstrated in the funding allocation of \$111.9 million to the Office of Fair and Safe Work Queensland for workplace health and safety, electrical safety and industrial relations. This includes \$2 million a year for four years to fund a new program aimed at reducing the incidence of work-related fatalities, injuries and disease in high-risk businesses.

The department will support up to 2,700 volunteer Justices of the Peace as part of its JPs in the Community program at 152 signing sites, contributing to the government's Toward Q2 volunteer target.

The State Budget 2010-11 for the justice portfolio provides the means to implement the government's reform agenda and to continue delivering on the government's blueprint for a better Queensland.



Cameron Dick MP  
Attorney-General and  
Minister for Industrial Relations

**The Department of Justice and Attorney-General is committed to making our justice system more open and accessible and our workplaces fairer and safer. The 2010–11 State Budget provides the funding to continue delivering modern courthouses, enhanced services and targeted programs to help those most in need and at greatest risk.**

## **Protecting vulnerable people**

### **Securing legal aid**

\$61 million has been provided over four years to secure ongoing funding for Legal Aid Queensland to help financially disadvantaged Queenslanders who need advice and assistance with legal matters. It will also be used to upgrade legal aid offices in Brisbane, Caboolture, Mackay and Rockhampton.

### **More adult guardians**

The Office of the Adult Guardian will receive an extra \$20.3 million over four years to help the growing number of Queenslanders who are unable to make their own decisions because of accidents, dementia, mental health and other disabilities. The new funding will be used to employ an additional 41 guardians and frontline staff, establish a regional office in Ipswich, upgrade the regional office in Townsville and deliver a statewide advisory service to assist privately appointed guardians.

### **Helping victims of crime**

Victim Assist Queensland (VAQ) will extend its operations to administer \$1.6 million in grants for non-government organisations delivering services to victims of crime. VAQ is a one-stop shop for victims of crime seeking financial assistance and coordinated support services. It will receive \$29.4 million in 2010–11 and \$30.5 million in 2011–12, up from \$25.3 million in 2009–10.

## **More modern courthouses**

Capital funding of \$330 million in 2010–11 will ensure the portfolio can continue its program of modernising Queensland's justice infrastructure. This program has already delivered new courthouses at Sandgate, Pine Rivers, Mareeba and Ipswich in recent years, as well as major upgrades at regional centres.

### **Southport Courthouse**

The refurbishment of the Southport Courthouse includes the expansion of the main arrest court on the ground floor, construction of three new courtrooms and magistrates' chambers on level two, two security lifts and holding cells, and installation of cutting-edge audiovisual equipment. It will double the number of public seats in the arrest court

to 80 and increase the number of courtrooms from 10 to 13. A total of \$2.6 million has been provided in 2010–11 to complete the \$4 million project this year.

## **Brisbane Supreme and District Court complex**

The state's flagship courthouse project has been allocated \$290 million in 2010–11. The Supreme and District Courts complex in the heart of Brisbane will cost an estimated \$600 million over five years and create almost 5,000 jobs during construction, both on and off site. Its design sets a new benchmark in courthouse security, justice technology and environmental efficiency. It also delivers unprecedented facilities for victims of crime, vulnerable witnesses, jurors and members of the public. The project is scheduled for completion in 2012.



Brisbane Supreme and District Court complex.

## Enhancing justice services

### A greater say in sentencing

Funding of \$6.7 million over four years has been provided to establish a sentencing advisory council. Council members will include representatives of the general community, victims of crime, law enforcement agencies and other justice stakeholders. As an independent statutory body, the council will help to boost public confidence in the sentencing process.

### Recovering proceeds of crime

The Crime and Misconduct Commission (CMC) will receive an extra \$1 million a year to target the proceeds of crime and support its other core activities such as forensic computing, misconduct complaints and public policy research.

### Expanding prosecution services

An extra \$460,000 a year has been provided to create five new positions in the Office of the Director of Public Prosecutions. It will be used to employ an additional crown prosecutor and legal officer in Ipswich, and legal officers in Brisbane, Beenleigh and Cairns.

### Resolving more disputes

Extra funding of \$1.5 million a year has been provided to the Queensland Civil and Administrative Tribunal for additional adjudicators, case managers, support staff and training to deal with the significant growth in minor civil disputes and guardianship matters.

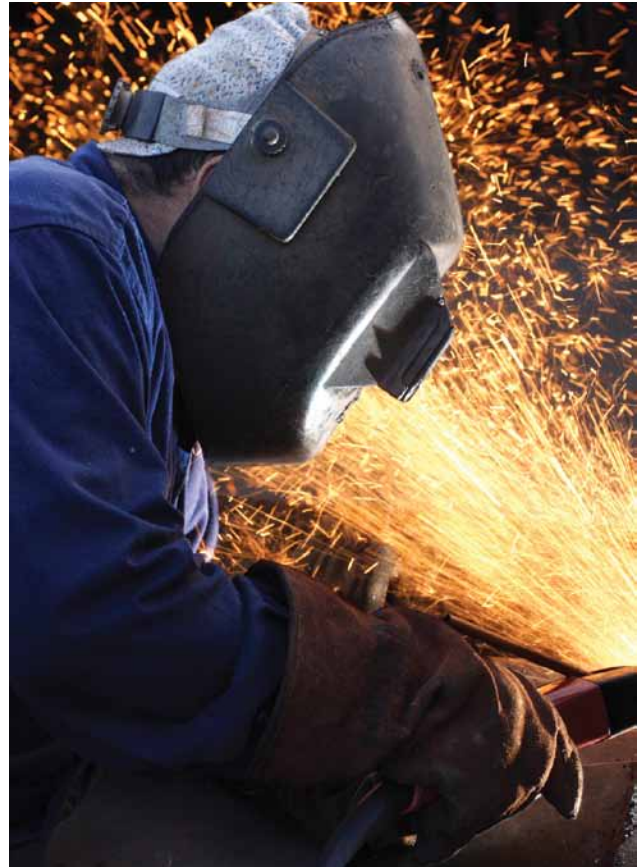
## Improving community safety

### Safe and productive workplaces

One of the department's key priorities is to ensure workers return home safely at the end of each day. Workplace Health and Safety Queensland will receive \$24.9 million from the budget and \$43.2 million from the workers' compensation scheme to fund a wide range of education, compliance and enforcement programs.

### Reducing workplace injuries

As part of continuing reforms to workers' compensation, \$8 million has been provided over four years to reduce the incidence of work-related fatalities, injuries and disease. This initiative will focus on high-risk businesses. It will involve a review of their claims history and provide advice on how to improve injury prevention, rehabilitation and return-to-work processes.



### Enhancing electrical safety

The Electrical Safety Office will receive \$15.3 million from industry to reduce the number of injuries and deaths caused by workplace, domestic and recreational accidents involving contact with electricity, through its education, compliance, enforcement and reform programs.

Queensland will continue to lead the national electrical equipment safety system review through legislative reform, development of a national registration database and finalisation of new rules controlling pre-market certification processes.

It will also amend the *Electrical Safety Act 2002* to introduce model occupational licensing legislation for the start of a National Licensing Body on 1 January 2011, and the *Electrical Safety Regulation 2002* as part of the national commitment to enhanced electrical safety.

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### **Fair, productive workplaces**

#### **Building workplace partnerships**

Queensland will continue to encourage cooperative, successful enterprises by engaging with employers, unions and other key stakeholders through the implementation of the Workplace Partnership and Productivity Pilot Project.

#### **Improving work-life balance**

The department will continue to develop the Work-Life Balance Strategy for both the private and public sectors, with a focus on part-time work and flexible working arrangements.

#### **A fair, informed workplace**

Industrial Relations Services will continue to ensure employees have access to professional advice and advocacy on wages and conditions following the national workplace reforms. The budget allocates \$21.2 million for its education, compliance and enforcement programs.

#### **Fair and productive public sector workplaces**

The department will continue to partner with key stakeholders to maximise outcomes from the restructure of the Queensland Government's asset portfolio (Forestry Plantations Queensland, Port of Brisbane Corporation, QR Limited, Queensland Motorways Limited), and to represent the government in the planning, preparation and/or negotiation of certified agreements covering the Queensland Public Sector.

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**Queensland**  
Government

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