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Australian
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ACOSS Federal Budget Briefing 2007

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Overview

ACOSS has prepared this briefing on the 2007-08 Federal Budget. This paper explains the funding announcements made in the Budget in relevant areas of interest to ACOSS members. It does not offer extensive comment on the merit of these measures. It is intended to assist member organisations in their work.

For ease of analysis, at times the Budget announcements are set out by population group, even where this crosses Government portfolios. Revenue and expenditure measures are also set out under relevant portfolios, which explains why some programs are repeated.

Major initiatives include:

- *Personal Income Tax Cuts* - \$31.5b over 4 years. The tax cuts are staged over 2 years. Because they include changes to the second-lowest threshold, they provide a tax cut to a majority of tax-payers. However, those whose income is too low to pay tax (including most income support recipients) do not benefit. The key changes are that:

From 1st July 2007:

- 30% threshold increased to \$30,000 (from \$25,000)
- Low Income Tax Offset (LITO) increase from \$600 to \$750 pa with phase out from \$30,000 (up from \$25,000). Cuts out at \$48,750 (up from \$40,000)
- Those eligible for LITO will not pay tax until income exceeds \$11,000 (up from \$10,000)

From 1st July 2008:

- 40% threshold will increase to \$80,000 (from \$75,000)
- 45% threshold will increase to \$180,000 (from \$150,000)

- *Superannuation co-contribution* - \$1.1b in 2006-07 only – the co-contribution paid to the super funds of low income earners making personal contributions to super will be doubled in 2006-07 only (in respect of contributions they made in 2005-06).
- *Child care* - \$1.9b over 5 years – increasing the maximum rate of Child Care Benefit (CCB) to \$3.37 (no change to the CCB thresholds) and converting the Child Care Tax Rebate to a direct payment. This will increase the amount of financial assistance provided to high income households (instead of the 30% offsetting taxable income, it will be paid as a direct payment). However, an estimated 100,000 (reported Government figure) low income families do not receive the full benefit of the CCTR as their incomes were too low. For these families, the change is positive.

- *Child care JET* - \$15.4m over 4 years for JET Child Care Fee Assistance programme (note that this measure introduces new restrictions on the assistance a person can get for the same activity – e.g. study - in consecutive 12 month periods).
- *Indigenous Initiatives* - \$748.3m over 5 years – *A Better Future For Indigenous Australians* – initiatives over 8 departments counterbalanced by reductions in CDEP expenditure. This funding comprises initiatives to move from CDEP to alternative labour market programmes in strong labour markets. Two other areas of spending are education initiatives and housing and infrastructure. Note that the latter has a focus on housing repairs and also promoting home ownership (little detail is available on this initiative).
- *Dental services* - \$455.2m over 4 years. The major initiatives are funding for a new rural dental school in NSW (\$65.1m) and extension of the existing Medical Benefits Scheme items for GP's to refer patients to dentists where the patients' oral health is contributing to, or complicating, chronic or complex medical conditions (\$377.6m).
- *Climate Change* - \$741m over 5 years (excluding the Murray Darling Basin initiatives), focussed on water saving initiatives, more investment in photovoltaics (solar power) and an initiative looking at forestry in south-east Asia and the Pacific. Also includes the phase out of inefficient light bulbs. \$3.1b announced over 10 years to address over allocation of water in the Murray Darling Basin (part of the \$10b announcement in February 2007).
- *Realising Our Potential* - \$1.7b over 4 years – education package, with components in higher education, VET and schools. Includes the very welcome extension of Rent Assistance to Austudy recipients (\$87m over 4 years) and an extension of Commonwealth Learning Scholarships, with 2,000 targeted at disadvantaged students.
- *One off payments to Carers and seniors* - Once again the Government has provided a series of one-off payments to Carers and to older Australians. For the fourth year, Carers will receive lump sum payments (\$1,000 for Carer Payment recipients and Carer Allowance recipients will receive \$600 for each eligible person in their care). People in receipt of Carer Allowance and a Wife Pension or Veterans pension will receive both bonus payments. The cost is \$394m. In addition, people of Age or Service pension age receiving the Utilities Allowance or Seniors Concession Allowance will receive a \$500 payment (cost \$1.3b).
- Overseas aid – a \$2.6 billion increase over 4 years.

The balance between tax cuts and social spending

Budget announcements have the effect of halving the projected budget surplus for 2007-08 – reducing it by \$12 billion down to a new estimate of \$10 billion. Of this \$12 billion in new ‘spending’:

- \$5.3 billion comprises tax cuts
- \$2.2 comprises new social expenditure (mainly education, child care and overseas aid).

The other major area of new spending is in defence (not shown in the table below).

Federal Budget 2007 – Tax cuts and social spending

Category of spending/tax cuts	Cost (\$ millions in 2007-08)	% of total cost
Personal tax cuts	5,305	70%
Other major tax changes	35	<1%
Major social spending*		
Other major spending <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Childcare (\$657.8m) • Education (\$720.9) • Overseas aid (\$544m) 	1,923	25% (9%) (10%) (7%)
Other ‘minor’ spending <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Aged care (\$207m) • Seniors bonus payment (\$11.3m) • Carers bonus payment (\$3.9m) • Indigenous Australians (\$102.1m) 	324.3	4% (3%) (<1%) (<1%) (1%)
Total (major social spending plus tax cuts)	7,587	100%

* Social security, health, education, employment and community services.

N.B. Superannuation (\$1.1m) is not included because this cost is being met in 2006/2007.

Estimates for key economic indicators

Continuing strong growth in the economy is predicted and further reductions in unemployment. This is predicted to have little impact on inflation and wages.

The Welfare to Work changes that commenced last year will increase both labour force participation and unemployment in 2007-08, according to Treasury.

Dwelling investment was originally forecast to be negative but is now forecast as positive with a modest growth. This is partly due to projected increases in rents. The welcome extension of rent assistance to AUSTUDY recipients will assist some tenants to cope with rent increases, but other low income people are likely to experience hardship.

	2006-07	2007-08
Gross domestic product	2.5%	3.75%
Employment	64.5%	64.75%
Unemployment **	5.1%	4.75%
Consumer price index	2.75%	2.5%
Wage cost index	4.25%	4.25%
Dwellings investment	2.5%	2.5%
Business investment	4%	7.5%
Current account deficit ***	(5.75%)	(6%)

Source: Budget Paper No 1. Notes: ** Average level during the year *** Percent of GDP

Taxation Budget Brief

Summary

Tax cuts are budgeted for the majority of tax-payers from July 2007. More tax cuts are budgeted for high income earners next year.

Tax cuts

Item	Description	Effects
Tax cuts 2007	Raise 30% threshold, increase Low Income Tax Offset (LITO)	Tax rebate for people earning up to \$48,750 (phase out begins at \$30,000)
Tax cuts 2008	Raise 40% and 45% thresholds	Tax cuts for people earning >\$75K & \$150K
Co-contributions	Once-off additional payment in respect of 2005-06 super contributions	Bonus to people entitled to a co-contribution in 2006-07

The tax cuts are staged over 2 years and because the changes are to the second-lowest threshold, it provides a tax cut to most tax payers. The changes on 1st July 2007 include:

- 30% threshold increased to \$30,000 (from \$25,000).
- Low Income Tax Offset (LITO) increased from \$600 to \$750 pa with phase out from \$30,000 (from \$25,000).

On 1 July 2008:

- 40% threshold will increase to \$80,000 (from \$75,000)
- 45% threshold will increase to \$180,000 (from \$150,000)

Superannuation co-contribution

This payment will be doubled in the 2006-07 financial year for eligible low income earners who made personal superannuation contributions in 2005-06. Although there is no information on the family circumstances of this group, it is likely that a majority are the partners of high income earners, since they can better afford to make large personal contributions to superannuation.

Effects of the tax cuts on disposable incomes

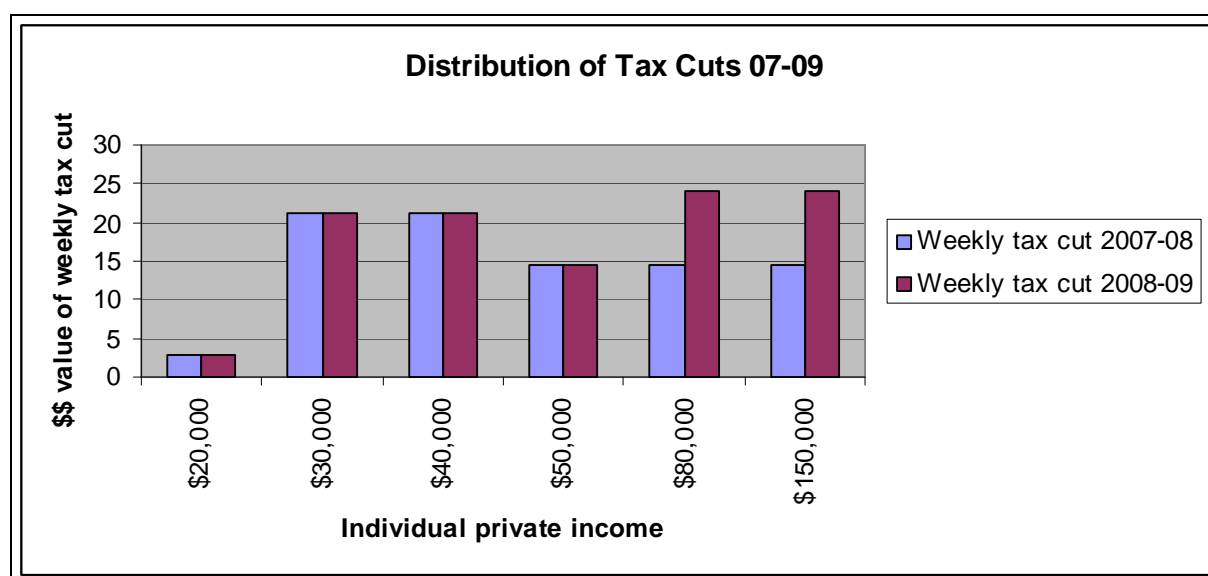
Government estimates of income gains for individuals and families from tax cuts and changes to Low Income Tax Offset – 2007-08 and 2008-09 are presented below.

Private Income (per annum)	Single without children (\$ per week)	Single parent (2 children 3 & 8) (\$ per week)	Couple with children (2 children 3 & 8) (\$ per week)
\$0* (jobless)	0*	0*	0*
\$20,000	2.88	15.62	2.88
\$30,000	28.73	21.15	21.15
\$40,000	28.73	20.79	21.15
\$50,000	22.00	14.42	14.42
\$80,000	31.62	24.04	24.04
\$150,000	31.62	24.04	24.04

Source: Budget Papers and ACOSS Calculations

* ACOSS estimate¹

The graph below shows how the tax cuts are distributed among taxable individuals.



¹ Apart from the estimates for jobless people (those with zero income), which were calculated by ACOSS, these estimates are taken from the Budget Papers, and adjusted from annual to weekly figures.

Growth in disposable incomes over the past 10 years

Treasury modelling of growth in disposable incomes included in the Budget Papers indicates that some household types are falling behind. This 10 year analysis of income growth indicates that people on higher incomes (above 167% of average earnings), single income couples with children, and retirees on relatively high incomes (e.g. with at least one third of their income coming from investments) have gained the most – their average real disposable incomes rose by over 30% since 1996. Pensioners, low income single people, sole parents with low earnings, and dual income couples without children fell behind - their average incomes rose by 16-26%.

Indigenous Budget Brief

Summary

- \$748.3m over five years – *A Better Future For Indigenous Australians* – initiatives over 8 departments. The major initiative sees CDEP being converted to alternative labour market programmes in strong labour markets, which sees an almost equal balancing of new spending (\$640.3m) and programme cuts (\$639.8m). The most significant area of net new spending is housing and infrastructure (with a focus on housing repairs and promoting home ownership) followed by education and health.

The major initiatives include:

Housing and infrastructure:

- \$293.6m over 4 years for housing and infrastructure:
 - for construction of new housing and expanded program for repairs and maintenance in remote areas
 - aims to reduce backlog and overcrowding
 - also focuses on promoting opportunities for home ownership and strengthening tenancy arrangements.

Employment

- \$61.3m over 4 years to convert CDEP positions to 'normalised employment':
 - covers positions providing government services
 - is intended to create a career path for Indigenous Australians
 - this net spend comprises \$97.2m in new funding and cuts of \$35.9m in CDEP funding.
- A net saving of \$30.9m over 5 years from replacing CDEP in strong labour markets with an employment brokerage service Structured Training and Employment Projects (STEP):
 - CDEP will continue to operate in remote areas and in regional locations with weak labour markets
 - In these areas, CDEP providers will receive an incentive payment to place people in non-CDEP work for more than 26 weeks (from 1 July 2007)
 - This net saving comprises \$496.9m in new spending and cuts of \$527.8m CDEP funding.
- \$23m over 5 years to remove remote area activity test exemptions in remote communities.
- A net saving of \$52.9m from compliance and eligibility checks for CDEP, comprising new spending of \$23.2m and cuts to CDEP of \$76.1m.

Education

- \$177.4m over 5 years for education:
 - expand Indigenous Youth Mobility Program from 640 places to 1,500 places over 4 years
 - expand Indigenous Youth Leadership Program from 250 places to 1,000 places over 4 years
 - infrastructure work on non-government boarding schools in remote and regional areas for repair and replacement of existing and new work to accommodate more students
 - establish 3 new boarding hostels and expand 2 existing hostels
- \$27.7m over 4 years to provide a once-off \$4,000 payment for 1,000 Indigenous students to help with the cost of attending university
- \$3.0m over 4 years to extend Youth Allowance independent status to ABSTUDY recipients and other changes to ABSTUDY

Health

- \$38.2m over 4 years to establish 6 regionally based multi-disciplinary teams to provide primary health care in rural and remote areas where access to health care is limited.
- \$37.4m over 4 years to provide home visits to children by health teams.
- \$36.9m over 4 years to establish best practice and quality care standards in health sector.

Children's services

- \$23.5m over 4 years to establish 20 new child care service hubs in rural and remote communities with high Indigenous populations and to change funding arrangements for 25 existing centres to operate under mainstream funding arrangements (Child Care Benefit) rather than direct budget funding.
- \$13.8m over 4 years for playgroup services for Indigenous families.

Changes in Federal Budget 2007

Item	Description	Effects
Housing		
<p>Indigenous housing and infrastructure reforms</p> <p>Cost: 2007-08: \$8.8m 2008-09: \$94.5m 2007-11: \$293.6m</p>	<p>Replace Community Housing and Infrastructure Program (CHIP) with Australian Remote Indigenous Accommodation (ARIA).</p>	<p>Funding is in addition to existing funding and will provide for the construction of additional new Indigenous housing and an expanded programme for repairs and maintenance of existing Indigenous housing in remote areas.</p> <p>Includes promoting opportunities for home ownership and 'strengthening tenancy arrangements.'</p>
Child care		
<p>Improved access to child care and early childhood services</p> <p>Cost: 2007-08: \$1.8m 2008-09: \$7.8m 2007-11: \$23.5m</p>	<p>Establish 20 new child care service hubs in rural and remote communities with high Indigenous communities.</p> <p>Changes funding arrangements of 25 existing child care services to operate under mainstream funding arrangements for child care rather than direct budget funding.</p>	<p>Assists integrated delivery of children's services in selected rural and remote communities.</p> <p>Provides parents who use these services with access to Child Care Benefit and Child Care Tax Rebate.</p>
Education		
<p>Opportunities for education</p> <p>Cost: 2006-07: \$50m 2007-08: \$16.9m 2008-09: \$28.9m 2007-11: \$177.4m</p>	<p>Expansion of Indigenous Youth Mobility Program and Indigenous Youth Leadership Program.</p> <p>Funding for three new boarding hostels and infrastructure works by existing non-government boarding schools in remote and regional areas.</p>	

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Item	Description	Effects
<p>Assistance with the cost of attending university</p> <p>Cost: 2007-11: \$27.7m</p>	<p>Provide a once-off \$4,000 payment for 1,000 Indigenous students to help with the cost of attending university</p>	
<p>ABSTUDY and Youth Allowance</p> <p>Cost: 2007-11: \$3.0m</p>	<p>Extend Youth Allowance independent status to ABSTUDY recipients and other changes to ABSTUDY</p>	
<p>Employment</p>		
<p>Building an Indigenous workforce in government service delivery</p> <p>Cost: 2007-08: \$15.0m 2008-09: \$12.9m 2007-11: \$61.3m</p> <p><i>These are net figures, comprising \$97.2m in new spending over four years and \$35.9m in cuts to CDEP funding.</i></p>	<p>Converts CDEP positions into employment in commonwealth, state and territory government services.</p>	<p>Development of professional career paths and delivery of government services such as education, childcare, health, environmental, heritage protection.</p>
<p>Indigenous employment services</p> <p>Saving: 2006-11: \$30.9m</p> <p><i>Note that these are net savings comprising \$496.9m in new spending over five years and cuts of \$527.8m in CDEP.</i></p>	<p>Replaces CDEP in strong labour market areas with an employment brokerage service, Structured Training and Employment Program (STEP)</p>	<p>STEP provides pre-employment preparation, supported employment, mentoring and post placement assistance.</p>

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Item	Description	Effects
<p>Compliance and eligibility checks for CDEP participants</p> <p>Saving: 2006-11: \$52.9m</p> <p><i>Note that this is a net figure comprising \$23.2m in new spending and cuts to CDEP of \$76.1m.</i></p>	<p>Strengthen the compliance framework of the CDEP programme.</p>	<p>Will involve checking the eligibility of participants through data matching with Centrelink and the ATO and establishing a rolling compliance programme for all participants.</p>
<p>Enhancing opportunities for employment and participation in remote communities</p> <p>Cost: 2006-07: \$1.3m 2007-08: \$6.3m 2007-11: \$23m</p>	<p>To accelerate the removal of area exemptions that apply to activity testing for working age recipients living in remote communities.</p>	<p>Income support recipients in these communities will be required to look for work or undertake other approved activities that will enhance their employment prospects.</p>
<p>Health</p>		
<p>Accommodation support for education and health</p> <p>Cost (capital and recurrent): 2007-08: \$14.8m 2008-09: \$6.6m 2007-11: \$29m</p>	<p>To build and operate hostel accommodation for remote Indigenous people who relocate from their community to access education, health and aged care services</p>	<p>40 students at Kununurra, WA 45 bed aged care at Kenwick, WA and hostel accommodation for 80 non-admitted renal dialysis patients in NT, Qld, WA</p>
<p>Family centred primary health care</p> <p>Cost: 2007-08: \$6.3m 2008-09: \$8.9m 2007-11: \$38.2m</p>	<p>Establish six multi-disciplinary teams to provide family focused primary health care in rural and remote areas where access to health care is limited.</p> <p>Includes \$6.1m over four years for training and skill development for managers of Indigenous services</p>	

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Item	Description	Effects
<p>Health @ Home Plus</p> <p>Cost: 2007-08: \$4m 2008-09: \$8.8m 2007-11: \$37.4m</p>	<p>Funds child and family support through home visits for ATSI children aged under nine years in targeted remote and outer regional areas. Health professionals will provide regular nurse-led home visiting services to all Indigenous children from birth until they reach two years of age. Aboriginal Health Workers will provide home visits for at-risk Indigenous children aged 2-8 in these regions.</p>	
<p>Continuing the National Illicit Drug Strategy – Indigenous Communities Initiative</p> <p>Cost: 2007-11: \$14.6m</p>	<p>Continues funding for projects in Indigenous communities that aim to address drug and alcohol abuse.</p>	
<p>Establishing quality health standards</p> <p>Cost: 2007-11: \$36.9m</p>	<p>To establish best practice and quality care standards across the Indigenous heal sector</p>	<p>All Indigenous health care services will be required to meet accreditation standards by 30 June 2011.</p>

Department of Education, Science and Training Budget Brief

Summary

Higher Education

- *Higher Education Endowment Fund* - \$5b in 2006/2007 plus \$912m between 2008-11
 - To establish an endowment fund to be distributed annually to individual universities for capital works and research facilities.
 - Allow receipt of philanthropic donations.
 - Government intention is to contribute to the fund from future surpluses.
 - Fund managed by the Future Fund Board of Guardians. Funds to be distributed by Education Minister on advice from an expert advisory Board.
- \$1.07b over four years to encourage specialisation, increase the number of Commonwealth Learning Scholarships from 8,500 to 12,000 and other measures.

VET

- \$549m over 4 years for apprenticeships – additional wage, fee and tax exemption benefits.
- \$59m over 4 years to develop and implement fast track apprenticeships.
- \$84m over 5 years to establish new tech colleges in Brisbane, Perth and Sydney.

Schools

- \$843m over 4 years for vouchers and payments to schools related to literacy and numeracy, improved teacher training and national standards for curriculum.
- Require States and Territories as a condition of funding to provide principals with greater autonomy over staffing decisions, including pay and career structure.

Income support

- \$ 87m over 4 years to extend Rent Assistance to Austudy Payment recipients, to remove an anomaly between education and unemployment payments.

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Changes in Federal Budget 2007

Item	Description	Effects
Higher Education		
Higher Education Endowment Fund Cost: 2006-07: \$5b 2007-08: nil 2008-09: \$324m 2006-11: \$912m	Fund to be distributed annually to individual universities for capital works and research facilities.	Will allow receipt of philanthropic donations
Additional Commonwealth Learning Scholarships. Cost: 2007-08: \$11.6m 2008-09: \$22.3m 2007-11: \$91.4m	Expand number of scholarships from 8,500 to 12,000 each year.	Around 2,000 of the new scholarships will be extended to students from disadvantaged backgrounds.
Relaxing caps on university places Cost: 2007-08: \$51.3m 2008-09: \$56.6m 2007-11: \$223.2m	Will provide universities with full additional funding for over-enrolments up to five per cent and abolishes penalties for over-enrolments. Removal of all caps on the proportion of domestic full-fee paying places.	More flexibility for universities.
VET		
Support for young Australian Apprentices in skills-shortage areas Cost: 2007-08: \$69.3m 2008-09: \$87.1m 2007-11: \$342.5m	Provides tax exempt payment of \$1,000 per annum to first and second year apprentices under 30 in skill-shortage trades.	Assists apprentices complete their first two years of training
Fee Assistance for Australian Apprentices Cost: 2007-08: \$47.8m 2008-09: \$52.2m 2007-11: \$206.4m	Assists with payment of course fees for first and second year apprentices in areas of skills shortages.	Vouchers up to \$500 will be paid to these apprentices.

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Item	Description	Effects
<p>Fast Track apprentices</p> <p>Cost: 2007-08: \$6.4m 2008-09: \$11.8m 2007-11: \$58.5m</p>	<p>Provides funding to Registered Training Organisations to partner with industry and local employers to develop and fast-track apprentices with competency-based progression so that apprentices can be trained and enter the workforce more quickly.</p>	
<p>Establish new technical colleges in Brisbane, Perth and Sydney</p> <p>Cost: 2007-11: \$86.3m</p>		
<p>Extend FEE-HELP to full-fee paying students in Diploma and Advanced Diploma courses.</p> <p>Cost: 2007-11: \$14.6m</p> <p>Revenue: 2007-11: \$49m</p>	<p>Extends FEE-HELP to full fee paying students in courses that are accredited as VET qualifications, where significant credit towards a university degree is guaranteed and agreement is reached with States and Territories to ensure TAFE fees do not increase as a result.</p>	<p>Note: Amounts loaned under HELP are treated as financial assets and do not impact on the fiscal balance. Public debt interest incurred by the Government is separately accounted for in the Budget papers. Payments by students of the indexation and loan fees are treated as interest revenue.</p>
<p>Schools</p>		
<p>Rewarding schools for improving literacy and numeracy</p> <p>Cost: 2007-08: \$2.2m 2008-09: \$17.0m 2007-11: \$53.2m</p>	<p>Following the introduction of national literacy and numeracy tests in 2008, public and private schools that demonstrate improvements in literacy and numeracy outcomes will be eligible to apply for rewards of up to \$50,000 per annum.</p>	

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Item	Description	Effects
<p>Additional Support for non-government regional and rural schools</p> <p>Cost: 2007-08: \$15.4m 2008-09: \$32.2m 2007-11: \$121.1m</p>	<p>Funds a regional/remote loading in addition to current funding delivered to non-government schools.</p> <p>State/Territory governments will be required to provide an equivalent increase for regional/remote government schools in the 2009-12 schools funding agreement.</p>	
<p>National Literacy and Numeracy Vouchers</p> <p>Cost: 2007-08: \$70.9m 2008-09: \$120.9m 2007-11: \$457.4m</p>	<p>Builds on the current Reading Assistance Voucher Program to assist all children not meeting literacy or numeracy benchmarks with the cost of out-of-school tuition.</p> <p>Provides \$700 tutorial voucher per child.</p>	
<p>National teacher training and registration standards</p> <p>Cost: 2007-08: \$2.7m 2008-09: \$2.2m 2007-11: \$4.9m</p>	<p>Work with State and Territory education authorities, representatives of the teaching profession and other stakeholders to develop national teacher training and registration standards.</p> <p>Adoption of standards will be conditions of funding in the 2009-12 schools funding agreement with the States and Territories.</p>	
<p>Develop core curricula standards in Maths, Sciences, English and History</p> <p>Cost: 2007-08: \$4.4m 2008-09: \$8.6m 2007-11: \$13m</p>	<p>Adoption of standards will be conditions of funding in the 2009-12 schools funding agreement with the States and Territories.</p>	

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Item	Description	Effects
Income support		
Extend Rent Assistance to Austudy Recipients Cost: 2007-08: \$13.2m 2008-09: \$24m 2007-11: \$86.9m	Expand eligibility for Rent Assistance (RA) to Austudy recipients.	Brings Austudy recipients into line with Youth Allowance and Newstart Allowance who are currently eligible for up to \$104 per fortnight in RA. Will assist around 11,000 students aged 25 and over.

Department of Employment and Workplace Relations Budget Brief

Summary

Announcements included:

- extension of Mobility Allowance to Parenting Payment and Supported Wage recipients.
- increased number of Personal Support Program (PSP) places – 2,000 over 4 years
- increased number of specialist disability service places – 1,480 in rehabilitation and 987 in the ‘capped stream’ of the Disability Employment Network
- changes to social security legislation to require the Social Security Appeals Tribunal to ‘take account of evidence of work capacity’ provided by Job Capacity Assessors.

Changes in Federal Budget 2007

Item	Description	Effects
Mobility Allowance Cost: 2007-08 \$2.6m 2008-09: \$2.8m 2007-11: \$11.1m	Expanding eligibility criteria for the higher rate of \$104.00 per week to include Parenting Payment recipients and people with disability accessing the Supported Wage System. Eligibility will now also extend to people accessing Vocational Rehabilitation Services.	There are two rates of Mobility Allowance. The higher rate of \$104.00 is paid to people with disability with part-time participation requirements (outlined in previous Federal Budgets). The ‘standard’ rate is \$74.30 per fortnight.
Personal Support Programme Cost: 2007-08: \$2.8m 2008-09: \$4.4m 2007-11: \$15.8m	Additional 2,000 places.	The total number of places in the Personal Support Programme will now be approximately 47,900 places.
Changes to appeals arrangements for Job Capacity Assessments: 2007-08: \$1.3m 2008-09: \$0.4m 2007-11: \$1.0m	Appeals bodies to be required to take greater account of Job Capacity Assessments	Fewer Disability Support Pension claims will be granted and more DSP recipients will lose the pension on review. (estimated saving in benefit payments of \$1.6m over 4 years)

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Item	Description	Effects
Vocational Rehabilitation Services and the Disability Employment Network Cost: 2007-08: \$10.2m 2008-09: \$10.5m 2007-11: \$39.8m	Additional 1,480 places in Vocational Rehabilitation Services, additional 987 places in Disability Employment Network.	The total number of places available each in Vocational Rehabilitation Services will now be 24,680. The total number of places available in the Disability Employment Network each year will now be 38,987.

Department of Family and Community Services Budget Brief

Summary

Child care

- \$1.9b over five years – increasing the maximum rate of Child Care Benefit (CCB) to \$3.37 per hour and converting the Child Care Tax Rebate (CCTR) to a direct payment. CCB is available to all families on an income-tested basis. Previously CCTR was a non-refundable tax rebate which was only available to families with taxable incomes.
 - maximum rate of CCB increased by 10% over inflation to \$3.37 per hour (up from \$2.96):
 - no change to CCB thresholds
 - maximum rate, one child in long day care for 40 hours per week – an additional \$16.40 per week.
 - increase in CCB will result in reduced cost of CCTR which offsets the cost of the package
 - conversion of CCTR to a direct payment:
 - administered through Centrelink (additional funding provided for administrative purposes)
 - families receive 30% of out-of-pocket expenses up to \$4,000, in the next financial year
 - families receive 2005/06 rebate under existing rules (i.e. in 2007/08 tax assessment)
 - families to receive 2006/07 rebate in 2007/08 as a direct payment
 - families with insufficient taxable income will receive full rebate.
- Childcare JET - \$15.4m over 4 years for JET Child Care Fee Assistance programme (note that this measure introduces new restrictions for the amount of assistance a person can get for the same activity in consecutive 12 month periods).
- One-off lump sum payments of \$500 to seniors and carers.
- Review of Carer Payment eligibility requirements for parents caring for a child with a disability.
- COAG review of early childhood education.
- Continue Reconnect program for young people at risk of homelessness.

Changes in Federal Budget 2007

Item	Description	Effects
A Better Future for Indigenous Australians Costs: 2007-08: \$24.6m 2008-09: \$126.8 2007-11: \$\$410.9m	Package of 26 areas to address Indigenous disadvantage. Thirteen of these measures will be delivered within the FaCSIA portfolio. See separate <i>Indigenous Budget Brief</i> .	Measures in FaCSIA portfolio are aimed to address access to housing, education, and other issues.
Carer bonus Costs: 2007-08: \$3.9m 2008-09: Nil 2007-11: \$3.9m	Lump sum payment to carers	\$1,000 payment for people in receipt of Carer Payment. \$600 payment for Carer Allowance receipts for each eligible person in their care.
Carer ex-gratia payment Costs: 2007-08 \$6.5m 2008-09 nil 2007-11 \$6.5m	Payment for families who are not eligible to receive Carer Payment but have caring requirements for a child under 6 with a major disability or illness.	Detail to be advised
Child Care Benefit – increased rates Costs: 2007-08: \$142.6m 2008-09: \$136.5m 2007-11: \$547.6m	Child Care Benefit (CCB) will be increased by 10% on top of annual indexation.	Families will receive an extra \$16.40 per week from 1 July 2007. This will result in reduced Child Care Tax Rebate (CCTR) payments as families will have lower out of pocket costs.
Child Care Tax Rebate – conversion to a direct payment Costs: 2007-08: \$514.6m 2008-09: \$558.5m 2007-11: \$2346.7m	Conversion of existing Child Care Tax Rebate (CCTR) to direct payment administered through Centrelink.	Families will receive the CCTR as a direct payment of up to \$4,000 plus indexation.

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Item	Description	Effects
<p>Jobs, Education and Training Child Care Fee Assistance – additional resourcing</p> <p>Costs: 2007-08: \$16.4m 2008-09: \$0.2m 2007-11: \$15.4m</p>	<p>Additional funding for Jobs, Education and Training (JET) Child Care Fee Assistance.</p>	<p>Additional 30,000 eligible recipients per year. There is a limit on the assistance that a person can receive in consecutive 12 month periods (excluding job search activities).</p> <p>Significant additional funding only available in 2007-08.</p>
<p>Child care – increased quality assurance system</p> <p>Costs: 2007-08: \$2.5m 2008-09: \$2.3m 2007-11: \$9.4m</p>	<p>Integrate separate aspects of Child Care Quality Assurance and enable Indigenous child care and in home care services to participate in the system.</p>	
<p>Child care in regional and remote Australia – additional resourcing</p> <p>Costs: 2007-08: \$8.6m 2008-09: \$10.2m 2007-11: \$43.8m</p>	<p>Additional resourcing for regional long day care services with increase in operational funding support.</p>	
<p>Child care inclusion – support subsidy</p> <p>Costs: 2007-08: \$14.9m 2008-09: \$15.3m 2007-11: \$62.3m</p>	<p>Increase support for child care services that provide care to children with high support needs.</p>	
<p>Commonwealth State Territory Disability Agreement – negotiation of new agreement with States and Territories</p> <p>Costs: 2007-08: \$153.7m 2008-09: \$156.4m 2007-11: \$631.4m</p>	<p>Indexation only. Negotiation on new Commonwealth State Territory Disability Agreement (CSTDA) for the period 2007-08 to 2011-12.</p>	<p>Funding for the new agreement is conditional on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • improving transparency and accountability • quantifying unmet needs, • initiating independent accreditation systems, • improving access to mainstream disability services for Indigenous people

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Item	Description	Effects
<p>Disability Business Services</p> <p>Costs: nil <i>Funding has already been incorporated into forward estimates</i></p>	<p>Funding will be provided to extend case based funding for a further 4 years.</p>	
<p>National Disability Advocacy Program – enhancements</p> <p>Costs: 2007-08: \$2.8m 2008-09: \$3.3m 2007-11: \$18.4m</p>	<p>Provide additional funding for National Disability Advocacy Program. Funding will also be provided to establish a national quality assurance regime for better disability advocacy services.</p>	
<p>Health Care Card for ex-Carer Allowance (child) students aged 16-25 years</p> <p>Costs: 2007-08: \$1.5m 2008-09: \$0.5 2007-11: \$3.1m</p>	<p>Allows students aged 16-25 to retain a Health Care Card when their carer has been in receipt of Carer Allowance prior to the student turning 16.</p>	<p>Limited effect, only a small potential number of recipients</p>
<p>Reconnect</p> <p>Costs: 2007-08: nil 2008-09: nil 2007-11: nil</p>	<p>Provide funding to continue Reconnect program. Reconnect provides early intervention services for young people at risk of homelessness.</p>	
<p>Seniors bonus</p> <p>Costs: 2007-08: \$11.3m 2008-09: 2007-11: \$11.3m</p>	<p>One off payment of \$500 to individuals of pension age, and service pensioners.</p>	

Department of Human Services Budget Brief

Summary

The government will tighten social security administration to reduce the number of 'incorrect payments'. 'Efficiency savings' of up to \$150m over 4 years will be sought from Centrelink and the Child Support Agency. Overall the package is estimated to deliver net savings of \$288.2m between 2007-11. The major changes are outlined below.

Changes in Federal Budget 2007

Item	Description	Effects
Social security compliance		
Improving reporting of changes in income of people receiving Centrelink payments Saving: 2007-11: \$36.6m	Recipients will be required to bring evidence of earnings to Centrelink	Potentially, extra costs for recipients.
Age pension – additional assessments of the value of real estate assets Saving: 2007-11: \$130.9m	Additional reviews of rental property assets	
Preventing carer payment debt Saving: 2007-11: \$40.2m	Face to face, rather than paper-based reviews.	
Enhanced profiling of Parenting Payment recipients Saving: 2007-10: \$31m	Expansion of face to face reviews of recipients 'at risk' of being incorrectly paid.	Less direct access for Centrelink clients to staff – greater use of internet and automated phone systems
Efficiency Savings in Centrelink and Child Support Agency 2007-11 up to \$150m	Savings in head office, shared human resource processing, Centrelink clients using 'self-service' channels	

Department of Health and Ageing Budget Brief

Summary

The major new area of health spending was in dental care for people whose oral health is compromising a pre-existing chronic health condition and the establishment of a new dental school in Orange, NSW.

Changes in Federal Budget 2007

Item	Description	Effects
Oral health		
New dental school Charles Sturt University Costs: 2007-08: \$54.2m 2008-09: \$4.0m 2007-11: \$65.1m	60 additional dentistry places— 30 dentists and 30 para-dentists associated with Higher Education Loans Programme.	In the long term will address the waiting list issue.
Improved rural access to dental services Costs: 2007-08: \$7.3m 2007-11: \$12.5m	Clinical placements in rural settings for 30 dentistry students annually and 3 scholarships for Indigenous people to train in oral health.	Encouraging practitioners to move to rural areas.
Expand access to dental treatment for patients with chronic and complex conditions Costs: 2007-08: \$37.5m 2008-09: \$94.3m 2007-11: \$377.6m	Expanded MBS item for initial assessment and subsequent treatments. \$125 for assessment per patient (up from \$77.95) and subsequent treatment to a value of \$2,000 per year. Applies to people being treated under a GP management plan and team care arrangements or under a multidisciplinary care plan in an aged care facility. Available when the oral health is likely to impact on the patient's chronic medical condition.	Provides initial dental assessment and subsequent dental treatments. Original program had poor results.

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Item	Description	Effects
Rural health		
Rural Women's GP Services Costs: 2007-11: \$4.3m	Female GP's will travel to rural areas.	Improves access to Primary Health care in rural and remote for women.
Rural Clinical schools Costs: 2007-11: \$16.3m	To expand the rural clinical schools program in the University of Woollongong to support medical students to undertake long term medical placements.	To support 60 medical students each year to undertake a two year medical placement. This is good as it encourages doctors to see the rural setting as a viable longer term option.
Royal Flying Doctor Service (RFDS) – additional funding Costs: 2007-08: \$47.2m 2008-09: \$42.8m 2007-11: \$156m	Providing access to rural and remote areas to the RFDS. To continue delivering traditional services, to meet ongoing capital costs such as aircraft replacement. Allows for extension of the services into Bass Straight Island communities	Announced on the 16 April 2007
Public health		
Encouraging Breast feeding Costs: 2007-08: \$3.1m 2007-14: \$8.7m	Education and support amongst parents and healthcare professionals in the form of advice, research and information.	
National immunisation program for HPV Costs: 2006-07: \$25.6m 2007-08: \$51.4m 2006-11: \$103.5m	Provides assistance to the States and Territories to provide the vaccine to schools for ages 12-13 and catch up for ages 16-18. Includes funding through MBS for ages 18-26.	Previously announced on the 7 March 2007.

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Item	Description	Effects
<p>Rotavirus</p> <p>Costs: 2006-7: \$25.4m 2007-08: \$19.0m 2006-11: \$124.5m</p>	<p>To fund new vaccines for rotavirus.</p> <p>Applies to all Australian babies born from 1 May 2007 at no cost to stop the contraction of gastroenteritis.</p>	<p>Announced on the 28 March 2007.</p>
<p>COAG- reducing the risk of type 2 diabetes</p> <p>Costs: 2007-08: \$1.9m 2008-09: \$22.5m 2007-11: \$103.5m</p>	<p>Targets people aged 40-49. Encourages them to take a tick test with GP. Those with a high risk referred to accredited lifestyle modification program. Government will provide a subsidy of \$210 and consumer to pay a co-payment of \$50.</p> <p>Cost shared initiative between State and Territory governments.</p>	<p>Focus on at risk, middle aged people to assist with risk assessment lifestyle modification.</p>
<p>Combating Illicit drugs – strengthening the NGO Treatment Grants Program</p> <p>Costs: 2007-08: \$13.7m 2008-09: \$21.6m 2007-11: \$79.5m</p>		<p>Announced on the 22 April 2007</p>
<p>Health services</p>		
<p>Medicare – better access to after hours GP services</p> <p>Costs: 2007-08: \$0.1m 2008-09: \$17.2m 2007-11: \$71.8m</p>	<p>New Medicare Benefits Schedule items to extend the after-hours service for urgent out-of-surgery visits. Higher rebates will apply for services provided outside normal surgery hours.</p>	<p>Improve patient access to general practitioners outside normal surgery hours.</p>

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Item	Description	Effects
<p>Chronic and Complex conditions - supporting complex care</p> <p>Costs: 2007-08: \$47.9m 2008-09: \$76.1m 2007-11: \$291.3m</p>	<p>Introduction of two new Medicare items for consultant physicians who assess and manage.</p> <p>Increases the schedule fees and time for initial consultation and two subsequent consultations.</p>	
Hearing services		
<p>Hearing Services Program</p> <p>Costs: 2007-08: \$13.0m 2008-09: \$17.8m 2007-11: \$70.7m</p>	<p>Funding to Australian Hearing for Community Service Obligation clients including children under 21, eligible adults with complex hearing needs and Indigenous Australians over 50 with access to hearing devices.</p> <p>Provides funding for new clients to access rehab services and for GP's to improve information access re hearing services.</p>	
Medicines		
<p>Extension of Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme listings.</p> <p>Costs: 2006-11: \$406.6m</p>	<p>Cholesterol lowering drugs - \$78m (2007-11)</p> <p>Drugs to treat Osteoporosis - \$227m (2006-11)</p> <p>Drugs to treat Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder - \$101.6m (2007-11).</p>	<p>Prevent coronary heart disease.</p> <p>Preventing fractures in older people-announced in April 2007.</p>
Aged care		
<p>Increased capital funding for residential care</p> <p>Costs: 2007-08: \$125.4m 2008-09: \$116.2m 2007-11: \$582.3m</p>	<p>Increased investment in aged care homes so that high care places will be available when needed.</p>	<p>Part of Government's <i>Securing the Future of Aged Care for Australians</i> package announced in February 2007.</p>

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Item	Description	Effects
<p>Introduction of Aged Care Funding Instrument</p> <p>Costs: 2007-08: \$18.2 2008-09: \$122.0m 2007-11: \$393.5m</p>	<p>Additional funding for care targeted more closely to those who require higher levels of care.</p>	<p>Part of Government's <i>Securing the Future of Aged Care for Australians</i> package announced in February 2007.</p>
<p>Day respite in residential aged care</p> <p>Costs: 2007-08: \$7.9m 2008-09: \$11.0m 2007-11: \$41.2m</p>	<p>20 services funded as demonstration sites in existing facilities.</p>	<p>Encouraging innovative approaches to day respite with high care needs. Vital support for carers involved in <i>EACH</i> packages.</p> <p>Still means respite is attached to residential care. Doesn't address other types of respite in community settings.</p>
<p>Improved health services for residents of aged care homes</p> <p>Costs: 2007-08: \$21.5m 2008-09: \$23.1m 2007-11: \$92.9m</p>	<p>To expand Aged Care GP panels to include allied health workers and increase the call out fee for GP's who are called out to Residential facilities.</p>	<p>More access to physiotherapy, oral health, occupational therapy.</p> <p>Funding to the divisions of GP to add allied health workers to existing aged care GP panels.</p> <p>A step in the right direction towards more holistic care.</p>

Climate Change Budget Brief

Summary

Climate Change - \$741m over 5 years including:

- \$3.1b over 10 years to address over allocation of water in the Murray Darling Basin (part of the \$10b announcement)
- \$200.7m over six years for Community Water Grants Programme (rainwater tank, water meter, water saving device installation)
- \$197.2m over 5 years to launch a Global Initiative on Forests and Climate – support forestry projects in South-East Asia and the Pacific
- \$126m over 5 years to establish the Australian Centre for Climate Change Adaptation and associated funding
- \$150m over 5 years for the Photovoltaic Rebate Programme – existing caps doubled up to \$8,000 per household
- \$18.5m over 5 years to reduce greenhouse gas emissions from coal mines (\$15.9m of funding is reprioritised funding from Greenhouse Gas Abatement Programme)
- \$7.9m over 5 years to phase out inefficient light bulbs

**Attorney General’s Department Budget Brief
Changes in Federal Budget 2007**

Item	Description	Effects
Family law		
<p>Helping separated parents and their children</p> <p>Costs: 2007-08: \$7.8m 2008-09: \$13.7m 2007-11: \$55.6m</p>	<p>Development of two new counselling services and the appointment of one judge and four magistrates to managed increased workloads due to proposed referral to the Commonwealth of jurisdiction over de facto property matters.</p>	
<p>Legal aid – support for legislative changes and regional initiatives</p> <p>Costs: 2007-08: \$4.8m 2008-09: \$4.9m 2007-11: \$19.7m</p>	<p>Supplements Commonwealth Criminal Law – Expensive Cases Fund, supports recent changes to child support arrangements and aims to improve access to legal aid services in regional and remote communities by encouraging the employment of young lawyers.</p>	

Immigration and Citizenship Budget Brief

Changes in Federal Budget 2007

Item	Description	Effects
Citizenship		
<p>Citizenship test Costs (less revenue): 2006-07: \$18.6m 2007-08: \$35.2m 2006-11: \$89.0m</p> <p><i>Note that these are net costs comprising \$123.6m in new spending over 5 years and revenue of \$34.6m</i></p>	<p>To develop a formal Citizenship Test for prospective Australian citizens and initiatives to enhance the integration of permanent residents and long-term temporary residents.</p>	
<p>Detention health review – increasing health care for people in detention</p> <p>Costs: 2007-08: \$4.4m 2008-09: \$3.7m 2007-11: \$15.5m</p>	<p>To meet the costs of increased acute psychiatric care for people in immigration detention.</p>	
<p>Humanitarian settlement initiatives – complex case support services</p> <p>Costs: 2007-08: \$2.0m 2008-09: \$10.9m 2007-11: \$35.2m</p>	<p>Specialised case management to help humanitarian entrants with intensive needs reach minimum standards of self-sufficiency.</p>	
<p>Humanitarian settlement initiatives – increased in-kind support</p> <p>Costs: 2007-08: \$2.2m 2008-09: \$2.1m 2007-11: \$8.5m</p>	<p>Further assistance for humanitarian entrants in the first month of arrival. Funding will provide increased assistance for short-term rental and utilities costs and assistance with public transport fares.</p>	

Disability Budget Brief

Changes in Federal Budget 2007

Item	Description	Effects
Child care		
Inclusion Support Subsidy Costs: 2006-07: \$9.0m 2007-08: \$14.9m 2006-11: \$47.4m	Increased support to child care services providing care to children with high support needs.	Should expand access to child care services for children with disability
Employment		
Mobility Allowance extension Costs: 2007-08: \$2.6m 2007-11: \$8.5m	Extension of the higher rate of Mobility Allowance to people on Parenting Payment and Supported Wages System workers.	These groups were not included when the higher rate was introduced under the <i>Welfare to Work</i> reforms.
Vocational rehabilitation services and the disability employment network (DEN) Costs: 2007-08: \$10.2m 2007-11: \$38.9m	Additional 1,480 places in vocational rehabilitation and 987 places in the disability employment network. The total number of places in VRS will be 24,680. The total in DEN will be 38,987.	
Vocational rehabilitation services and Disability Employment Network services for adult prisoners with disability Costs: 2007-08: \$0.7m 2008-09: \$0.3m 2007-11: \$1.3m	Extend access to vocational rehabilitation and disability employment services for adult prisoners with a disability in pre-release centres.	Currently prisoners are only able to access Job Network services. Around 150 prisoners are expected to benefit.

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Item	Description	Effects
<p>Additional Resources for HREOC</p> <p>Costs: 2007-08: \$1.9m 2007-11: \$5.4m</p>	<p>For work arising from changes to the <i>Workplace Relations Act 1996</i>. This is a continuation of funding provided to HREOC in 2006/2007 budget.</p>	
Education		
<p>National Disability Coordination Officer Programme</p> <p>Costs: 2007-08: \$2.4m 2007-11: \$6.3m</p>	<p>The National Disability Coordination Officer (NDCO) Programme replaces the current Regional Disability Liaison Officer and the Disability Coordination Officer programmes. The new Programme will commence 1 January 2008, following an open tender process. Current arrangements will be extended until 31 December 2007.</p>	<p>The additional funding is aimed at increasing access to the programme in regional areas, particularly in rural and remote locations.</p>
Income Support		
<p>Improved Centrelink advice on compensation payments</p> <p>Costs: 2007-08: \$0.5m 2007-11: \$2.1m</p>	<p>Improve Centrelink's financial advice to people who have received a compensation payment with an economic loss component.</p>	<p>The intersection of compensation payments and income support is an issue of great concern to people with disability. Work in this area is welcome.</p>
<p>Amend the <i>Social Security Act</i> in relation to Job Capacity Assessments</p> <p>Costs: 2007-08: \$3.3m 2007-11: \$1.9m</p> <p><i>(Note these are new costs comprising \$3.5m in new spending and savings of \$1.6m from expected reduction in administered expenses over the four years.)</i></p>	<p>Amend the <i>Social Security Act</i> to ensure that decisions of the Social Security Administrative Appeals Tribunal and the Administrative Appeals Tribunal take into account evidence of work capacity.</p>	<p>The likely effects of this change will become clearer when the proposed amendments are made public. The forward estimates anticipate a reduction in the cost of payments of \$1.6m over four years.</p>

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Item	Description	Effects
<p>Increase veterans' Disability Pension from 3 July 2007.</p> <p>Costs: 2006-07: \$43,000 2007-08: \$37.9m 2007-11: \$121.6m</p> <p><i>(total cost is \$162.4m, offset by a reduction in Aged and Disability Support Pensions of \$3.2m)</i></p>	<p>Special Rate increases by \$50/fortnight. Intermediate Rate increases by \$25/fortnight.</p>	<p>Will benefit around 29,600 veterans.</p>
<p>Carer ex-gratia payment</p> <p>Costs: 2007-08: \$6.5m 2007-11: \$6.5m</p>	<p>Provide a one-off payment to families who are not eligible for the Carer Payment but are caring for a child aged under 6 years who has a significant disability or illness. Review the Carer Payment (Child) and establish an advisory group to assess applications for ex-gratia payments.</p>	
<p>Review of Disability Support Pensioners</p> <p>Savings: 2007-11: \$88.3m</p> <p><i>Note that these are net savings comprising additions spending of \$13.4m and \$101.7m of savings.</i></p>	<p>Face-to-face reviews of DSP recipients at risk of being incorrectly paid as a result of not declaring changes in their circumstances. This is a continuation of a review programme that is already in place.</p>	

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Item	Description	Effects
Disability Services		
<p>Renegotiation of the CSTDA</p> <p>Costs: 2007-08: \$153.7m 2008-09: \$156.4m 2007-11: \$631m</p>	<p>Continuation of the Commonwealth-State/Territory Disability Agreement for 2007-08 to 2011-12</p>	<p>The funding reflects indexation only and is offered to the States and Territories on the condition that they agree to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • focus on improved transparency and accountability; • quantify unmet need; • introduce independent accreditation systems; and • improve access for indigenous people to mainstream services.
<p>National Disability Advocacy Programme</p> <p>Costs: 2007-08: \$2.8m 2008-09: \$1.5m 2007-11: \$12.3m</p>	<p>Funding to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • assist in meeting some of the unmet demand for individual advocacy services by increasing the level of support available to people with disability and their families; • improve coverage of disability advocacy services in rural and regional areas; • ensure people with disability and their families have easier access to disability advocacy services; and • ensure people with a disability and their families receive quality services. 	
<p>Respite care</p> <p>Costs: 2007-08: \$1.5m 2007-11: \$6m</p>	<p>The budget continues the Respite Support for Carers of Young People with Severe and Profound Disabilities with increased funding of \$6m over four years.</p>	<p>Will provide respite services for an additional 1,000 carers.</p>

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Item	Description	Effects
<p>Continence Aids Assistance Scheme</p> <p>Costs: 2006-07: \$65,000 2007-08: \$5.2m 2008-09: \$8.5m 2007-11: \$41.5m</p>	<p>Extend the Continence Aids Assistance Scheme to include children aged 5 to 15 and to adults over 64 years. Extend the Scheme for people holding pensioner concession cards to all people with permanent incontinence, not just those with incontinence caused by neurological conditions.</p>	<p>It is expected to help 54,000 people.</p>
<p>Health</p>		
<p>Health Care Card for ex-Carer Allowance (child) students aged 16-25</p> <p>Costs: 2007-08: \$4.5m 2008-09: \$8.5m 2007-11: \$19.3m</p>	<p>Allow students to retain a Health Care Card where their carer has been in receipt of the Carer Allowance.</p>	
<p>Hearing Services</p> <p>Costs: 2007-08: \$13m 2008-09: \$17.8m 2007-11: \$70.7m</p>	<p>Improve access to hearing services for children under 21 years, adults with complex hearing needs and indigenous Australians aged over 50.</p>	<p>The funding will provide:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • expanded access to hearing related rehabilitation services; • upgraded technology to help students to hear better in class; and, • improve GP knowledge of hearing services.
<p>Treating patients with chronic and complex conditions</p> <p>Costs: 2007-08: \$47.9m 2008-09: \$76.1m 2007-11: \$291.3m</p>	<p>Provide two new Medicare items for physicians assessing and managing patients with chronic and complex conditions. Introduced on 1 November 2007.</p>	



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