

Tasmanian Council of Social Service Inc.



TasCOSS 2023/24 State Budget Briefing

26 May 2023



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Fair Funding for Community Services



- **Key announcements**
 - One-off \$2.1m community support assistance package.

Affording the Basics is Getting Harder



- **By the numbers...**
 - The cost of essentials — food, housing, energy, petrol, education — all surged by more than CPI and wages. (ABS)
 - One-in-four Tasmanians cannot afford the cost of living. (NAB)
 - 91% of Tasmanians are moderately to extremely concerned about the impact of cost of living increases. (3P Advisory)

Five Key Cost of Living Domains



1. *Affordable Housing Solutions*



2. *Providing Targeted Food Relief*



3. *Bringing Down Electricity Costs*



4. *Closing Tasmania's Digital Divide*



5. *Improving Transport Access*

1. Affordable Housing Solutions



- **By the numbers...**

- Tasmania has the least affordable rental market in the country. (RAI)
- 11.4% increase in median rents in the past year and 30% increase since COVID-19 (compared with a 6.6% increase in Vic). (ABS)
- 4,603 families on social housing waitlist — a record-high. (DPAC)
- 63.5% decline in new social housing supply since the first year of Liberal Government (2014). (AIHW)
- Average wait time of more than a year-and-a-half (81 weeks) for social housing. (DPAC)
- 45% increase in homelessness in five years, nine-times the national average. (ABS)

1. Affordable Housing Solutions



- **Key announcements**

- \$1.5m for Affordable Rentals Initiative — to secure private rentals at market rates and provide to renters at a reduced rate.
- \$38m for wrap-around services including short-term homeless accommodation and longer-term supported accommodation.
- \$7m per year for Safe Spaces.
- \$5.9m to expand Youth2Independence.

2. Providing Targeted Food Relief



- **By the numbers...**

- One-in-two Tasmanians are food insecure due to rising cost of living. (UTAS)
- One-in-five households regularly skip meals and go hungry (tripled in two years). (UTAS)
- Only 10% of people in food stress access emergency relief. (UTAS)
- 26,000 Tasmanian children are severely food insecure (haven't had enough to eat in the last year). (Foodbank)

2. Providing Targeted Food Relief



- **Key announcements**
 - \$2m to support the *Food Relief to Food Resilience Action Plan (2023-25)*.
 - Additional \$180,000 per year for Gran's Van, Loui's Van and Mission Beat.
 - \$360,000 to continue the School Lunch Program.

3. Bringing Down Electricity Costs



- **By the numbers...**
 - 11.8% increase in electricity prices in the past year. (OTTER)
 - 22% increase in the number of households in energy debt in the past year. (OTTER)
 - 47,000 Tasmanian households are living in energy poverty. (BSL)

3. Bringing Down Electricity Costs



- **Key announcements**
 - \$250 bill credit for 140,000 eligible households over two years.
 - \$40 increase in annual electricity concession to \$615 (CPI increase).
 - Continuation of Energy Saver Loan Scheme for energy efficiency upgrades.

4. Closing Tasmania's Digital Divide



- **By the numbers...**
 - One-in-five Tasmanians are unable to pay their telecommunications bill. (ACCAN)
 - 63,000 Tasmanians are digitally excluded and unable to access the benefits of the online world. (ADII)
 - Tasmania is the most digitally disadvantaged state in the country and the gap is widening. (ADII)

4. Closing Tasmania's Digital Divide



- **Key announcements**
 - \$150,000 for a Digital Inclusion Strategy.
 - \$3.3m for cyber security.

5. Improving Transport Access



- **By the numbers...**

- 41% increase in petrol prices in two years, three-times the rate of CPI. (ABS)
- Hobart is the worst capital and Launceston the worst city in the country for access to public transport. (BITRE)
- Tasmania has not met 100% bus stop compliance with *Disability Standards for Accessible Public Transport*. (UTAS)

5. Improving Transport Access



- **Key announcements**

- \$2.2 billion investment in roads and bridges:
 - Key projects include the Bridgewater Bridge, and Midland, Tasman, Bass, East & West Tamar highways.
- \$13.5m towards the Northern Suburbs Transit Corridor.
- \$28.2m for common ticketing solution.
- \$20.8m Targeting Congestion Package.
- \$350,000 for Community Transport Services Tasmania (CTST).

Other Key Announcements



- **Key announcements**

- \$2.4m for neighbourhood houses.
- \$50m over four years to deliver the third Family and Sexual Violence Action Plan.
- \$2m towards Closing the Gap.
- \$800,000 for Community Services Action Plans/Strategies supporting multicultural, LGBTIQ+ and older Tasmanians.
- \$6.5m for the Literacy Community-Wide Framework to achieve the aspirational target of 100% functional literacy.
- Additional \$5.5m into the Jobs Hubs.
- \$30m for the Tasmanian Government's response to the Commission of Inquiry.

Gender Budget Snapshot



- **Key announcements**
 - The 2023/24 Tasmanian Gender Budget Snapshot contains a more detailed analysis of eight budget initiatives (both new and ongoing).
 - Broader analysis is needed to more accurately assess the impact of budget and other decisions.