

Securing a Stronger Economy

July 2000. Introduced the New Tax System including:

- The largest income tax cuts in Australia's history - \$12 billion
- A cut in the corporate tax rate from 36 to 34 per cent
- A halving in the rate of capital gains tax and the abolition of the wholesale sales tax and a range of stamp duties
- The introduction of a broad based goods and services tax to provide revenue for essential Government services and one that does not tax Australia's exporters

July 2000. Crack down on black economy means 1,500 companies are paying tax for the first time

March 2001. Current home loan interest rates are the lowest since 1970, saving \$300 per month on the average home mortgage

May 2001. More than 800,000 jobs have been created since 1996

July 2001. \$50 billion of Labor's debt has been paid back, saving \$4 billion a year in interest which can now be invested in areas like health and education

2001. Since 1996 productivity has grown at an average rate of 2.6% a year, amongst the highest rates in the world

Securing a More Productive Workplace

December 2000. The previous twelve-month period produced the lowest number of working days lost to industrial disputes since 1959.

2001. Since 1996 real wages have grown on average by 2% a year, including for lower paid workers, six times faster than under Labor

June 2001. Waterfront reform has produced average crane rates of 26.4 containers per hour in Australian ports - almost double the previous performance

June 2001. The number of apprenticeships has more than doubled. There are now more than 300,000 people in apprenticeships compared with 135,000 in 1995

May 2001. The "Work For The Dole" scheme which strengthens the experience, skills and work ethic of those seeking employment has provided 129,258 young Australians employment opportunities

2001. The Government continues to fight for legislation that would exempt small businesses with fewer than 15 employees from unfair dismissal laws for new employees

Securing a Fair Go for Families

April 2000. The Prime Minister announces the \$240 million Stronger Families and Communities Strategy designed to help parents with young children and build stronger community relationships, with particular emphasis on rural and regional areas

July 2000. Tax reform delivers major benefits to families including:

- Large income tax cuts and new tax rates worth \$12 billion a year with 80 per cent of taxpayers paying no more than 30 cents in the dollar in income tax

- A new family benefits system worth \$2 billion a year with over two million families receiving more generous and simplified benefits

May 2001. Budget delivers \$47 million funding increase for the "Jobs Pathways" programme to help the transition from school to the workforce for people aged between 15 and 19, thus reducing the risk of their becoming unemployed

Securing a Better Future for Older Australians

December 1997. Pensions linked to 25% of male total average weekly earnings

January 1999. An additional 220,000 older Australians receive the "Commonwealth Seniors Health Card" which provides concessional pharmaceutical benefits through an increase in income thresholds

January 1999. An additional 50,000 Veterans receive "Gold Card" benefits

July 2000. The Government delivers a real increase in pensions of 2%. This is in addition to the 1997 measure that pegged pensions at no less than 25% of male total average weekly earnings

May 2001. Budget extends eligibility for the "Commonwealth Seniors Health Card" to a further 50,000 older Australians through a further increase in the income threshold

May 2001. Budget increases the tax-free threshold so that a single person of aged pension age has a tax free threshold of \$20,000 per year. For couples where the income is evenly shared, the threshold increases to \$32,612 per year

May 2001. Budget increases the Medicare levy threshold from \$13,500 to \$20,000

Securing a Sustainable Environment

March 1997. Commencement of the first project under the Government's Green Corps programme to involve young people in environmental projects

May 1997. Launch of the Government's Natural Heritage Trust, the largest environmental restoration programme in Australia's history with the commitment of \$1.25 billion

May 1999. Addition of \$250 million to the Natural Heritage Trust

July 2000. Since the inception of the Natural Heritage Trust an estimated 300,000 volunteers have contributed to projects in communities across Australia

October 2000. Announcement of the first ever national action plan to address salinity and water quality supported by \$700 million in Federal funding and to be matched by a further \$700 million from State Governments

May 2001. Announcement of the extension of the Natural Heritage Trust with the commitment of \$1 billion over five years

May 2001. \$83.8 million to Bushcare, \$69.7 million to the National Landcare programme,

\$35 million for the Murray-Darling 2001 programme and \$24.4 million for Coasts and Clean Seas

July 2001. The Government has funded over 900 water quality projects, 2,400 coast projects, 2,700 Bushcare projects and 3,300 Landcare projects

Securing a Solid Education

1996. National Literacy and Numeracy Plan introduced for year 3 and year 5 students.

1996. The apprenticeship and training system is provided with an additional \$200 million to provide for more people to go into apprenticeships.

2000. National literacy testing results show that the proportion of students who cannot read at the basic level has fallen from around 27% in 1996 to 14% in 1999.

2001. Funding to all schools for the four year period 2001-04 increased by 37% compared with 1997-2001.

2001. The number of people on apprenticeships has more than doubled to over 300,000 from 135,000 in 1995.

2001. The number of students participating in vocational education and training in schools is 167,000, which is a six fold increase compared with 1995.

2001. Backing Australia's Ability provides an additional 2000 university places, which will total 21,000 places over five years. Also, an additional \$246 million for university infrastructure, and an additional \$736 million for Australian Research Council grants.

2001. Regional university places boosted with 670 new commencing places totaling 5,226 places over four years.

Securing a Healthy Future

1996. Rural Locum Relief Programme later results in 700 extra rural doctors

February 1997. National action plan on childhood immunisation

May 1998. A new \$82 million five year agreement with The Royal Flying Doctor Service

January 1999. Commencement of 30% rebate on Private Health insurance, benefiting all Australians with insurance

December 1999. \$655 million extra funding over the next four years to the States and Territories for public hospitals

May 2000. Budget delivers a \$562 million Regional Health Strategy to provide substantial new benefits in regional and rural areas

July 2000. Private Health Insurance membership soars by 2.25 million following the introduction of Lifetime Health Cover. Health insurance coverage increased from 30% in December 1998 to 45% of Australians in the March quarter 2001.

May 2001. Further strengthening Medicare and the health system by committing an additional \$900 million to benefit all Australians

Securing our Rural & Regional Industries

November 1996. Extra \$81 million for drought relief to extend support from 6 to 12 months

September 1997. Integrated rural policy package Agriculture - Advancing Australia

March 1999. Launch of a new Farm Management Deposit Scheme

September 1999. \$1.8 billion dairy structural adjustment package supplemented by a further \$142 million in May 2001

July 2000. \$3.5 billion in taxes taken off exporters and exports exempted from the GST

Cost of diesel for heavy country transport reduced by about 24 cents per litre

Cost of petrol used in the commercial operations of farmers reduced by about 7 cents per litre

July 2000. Family farms held in the same ownership for more than fifteen years to be exempted from capital gains tax

November 2000. Roads to Recovery programme provides \$850 million for rural and regional areas

May 2001. Providing \$600 million over four years to help protect our farms from pests and diseases

Securing Better Communications

June 1997. Committed \$250 million to the Networking the Nation Programme

July 1997. Legislated to enable new phone companies to offer a wider array of cheaper phone and internet services, including in regional Australia

January 1998. Introduced the Customer Service Guarantee requiring phone companies to install and fix phones on time

June 1999. Committed \$150 million to provide untimed calls in extended zones in remote areas of Australia.

June 1999. Committed an additional \$214 million to the Networking the Nation Programme

June 2000. Launched \$35 million Television Blackspots Programme to fix television reception in 200-250 areas.

July 2000. Provided SBS Television for the first time to over 1.2 million Australians in towns of 10,000 or more, costing \$70 million

May 2001. Additional \$163 million to improve mobile phone coverage, guarantee minimum internet speeds, and build health and education networks

May 2001. Announced \$71.2 million in additional programme funding for the ABC, with a particular emphasis on regional Australia