

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- While maintaining a sustainable fiscal position, the Commonwealth is working with the States and Territories (the States) to implement historic reforms to school funding and disability care which will shape a stronger, fairer and smarter Australia. These reforms build on the Government's substantial investments in education, infrastructure, disability care, and health; delivering significant improvements to Australia's social and economic infrastructure.
- As part of this Budget, the Commonwealth is introducing once-in-a-generation reforms of school funding arrangements. These reforms will provide for a more consistent and equitable system that will direct funding to those schools and students most in need. Significant additional funding will be provided to those States that sign up to the new funding arrangements and other reforms as part of the *National Education Reform Agreement*.
- This Budget announces the next wave of the Commonwealth's flagship Nation Building Program. The Government will spend around \$24 billion on productivity enhancing roads, rail and ports from 2014-15 to 2018-19. Key measures announced in this Budget include \$715.0 million to fund the Brisbane Cross River Rail project, \$3.0 billion towards the Melbourne Metro rail project and \$2.4 billion towards the upgrade and maintenance of Queensland's Bruce Highway.
- The Commonwealth is increasing its commitment and share of disability spending by establishing DisabilityCare Australia, a national disability care and support system across Australia for people with a significant and permanent disability. The States will be allocated a share of the DisabilityCare Australia Fund to support their commitment to this important initiative.
- The Commonwealth will continue to invest in health in a number of initiatives including major investments to support the implementation of the *National Health Reform Agreement* and funding for regional areas from the Health and Hospitals Fund.
- In 2013-14, the Commonwealth will provide the States with \$95.3 billion in total payments, including payments for specific purposes of \$44.1 billion and general revenue assistance of \$51.2 billion. This contribution represents approximately 24 per cent of total Commonwealth expenditure in 2013-14.

