



# Resilient Families, Strong Communities

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A roadmap for regional  
and remote Aboriginal communities

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# Regional Services Reform Unit

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# Acknowledgement

Australian Aboriginal cultures are the oldest continuous human cultures.

Aboriginal people are the first people of Western Australia, the traditional and enduring custodians of the land.

Aboriginal people have the rights of all other citizens, and the right to retain their cultural expression, kinship, language and identity.

All West Australians deserve to participate in, and benefit from, the State's economic and social prosperity. For too long, Aboriginal people, particularly those living in regional and remote areas, have not shared in this prosperity.

This challenge has been decades in the making. There are many reasons and causes, but for Aboriginal families and communities the impact of past government policies and decisions, the trauma caused, and the long-term disadvantage created, remain all too real.

Government must partner with Aboriginal people, and recognise their unique history and social organisation in the design of policies and services. Better outcomes will be achieved through genuine engagement and collaboration between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal West Australians.

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# Foreword

Western Australia has changed enormously in less than a lifetime. Fifty years ago, whaling and logging were key industries in the South West and iron ore had just started to trickle out of the Port of Dampier. The State comprised 800,000 people but, as in the rest of Australia, the Census legally excluded the Aboriginal people who had lived here for some 40,000 years.

Today, whale-watching and forest walks are international tourist attractions. Dampier is the second-largest bulk export port in the world. Global demand for steel and energy has generated unprecedented investment, jobs and wealth. The State's population has tripled to 2.6 million and international migration has turned Perth into Australia's most diverse capital.

Western Australia's State Constitution now acknowledges Aboriginal people as the first people and traditional custodians of the land. However, social and economic progress has been slower. Aboriginal people remain generally poorer, less educated, less healthy and more dependent on welfare than other West Australians. Overall, these outcomes are worse in the regions and much worse in remote areas.

These are not recent problems—they've been in the making for more than 50 years. Without action, without change, there's a real risk that Aboriginal people in remote areas will be excluded for another 50 years from the opportunities available to other West Australians. This is a risk that the Liberal-National Government is not prepared to take. This is why the Government has committed to long-term reform.

We believe that all Aboriginal children in regional and remote areas should be well-nurtured and kept safe, be well-educated through to adulthood, have access to employment, and have the skills, hope and resilience to fulfil their life aspirations.

Our vision for the regions is for Aboriginal families to be more resilient and for Aboriginal communities to be stronger. This document is called 'a roadmap' because it sets out the direction to achieve this vision and provides immediate steps to start the journey.

Change will take time and some of it will be hard. There are no quick fixes. We recognise that in this change, government, communities and families all have their own responsibilities and roles to play. Government will walk alongside Aboriginal people towards a single destination. We are committed to the journey, and invite you to be part of it.

Hon Andrea Mitchell MLA  
**Minister for Child Protection**

Hon Terry Redman MLA  
**Minister for Regional Development**

# Overview

Western Australia is undergoing a social and economic transformation fuelled by global demand, international migration and investment in the capital city and regions.

A significant and historic gap remains between the life outcomes of Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal West Australians. Generally, Aboriginal people have shorter lives and are poorer, less educated, less healthy and more dependent on welfare. Typically, these outcomes are worse in the regions and much worse in the State's remote areas.

The State Government has committed to long-term reform to improve outcomes and provide Aboriginal people in regional and remote areas with access to the life opportunities enjoyed elsewhere in the State.

This roadmap sets out the Government's directions for reform, its priority actions for the next two years, and areas for consultation.

Key features of the roadmap include:

- consultation with Aboriginal people and other stakeholders on specific initiatives
- working with Aboriginal people and communities on key projects and actions
- better education opportunities for children
- more employment opportunities for adults
- investment in the future through early childhood development and empowered parents
- earlier intervention to help 'at risk' families
- services tailored to local needs and aspirations
- new approaches in housing to enable families to break out of the welfare trap
- State Government investment concentrated in places where there are jobs and education
- larger remote Aboriginal communities to have safe, reliable and metered power and water supplies, and appropriate municipal services
- some smaller remote Aboriginal communities supported to become self-sufficient over time
- better services and opportunities for Aboriginal people who live in town-based reserves
- State Government agencies accountable for improved service delivery and outcomes
- families accountable for everyday school, work and household obligations
- partnerships and collaboration with the Commonwealth Government, local government, industry and the not for profit sector.



# The Roadmap

There is a significant gap between the life outcomes of Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal people in Western Australia. The gap is worse in regional and remote areas and, for some outcomes, is not closing. Everyone wants things to be better, but there's no clear path or single starting point. Problems are complex, entrenched and multi-dimensional. There is no one-size-fits-all solution: every region in Western Australia has a different demography, geography, history and economy, and different Aboriginal cultures and languages.

The State Government has committed to address these challenges through regional services reform, with an initial focus on the Pilbara and Kimberley. Key State ministers and the head of the Regional Services Reform Unit have engaged with remote communities and towns in these two regions during the past 12 months.

They have talked with elders, community members and organisations, and people from all levels of government—local, State and Commonwealth—to understand the issues more comprehensively. Here's what they have learned so far:

- No-one is prepared to defend the status quo. Everyone accepts that things need to change. Tinkering will not work. Change should be long-term and systemic.
- There is no quick fix. Some modest change can be achieved in two years, and more in five and 10 years. Some things will require intergenerational change.
- Aboriginal people have a voice and need to be heard. Reform will only be effective if it works with, and for, Aboriginal people.
- Aboriginal leaders are sick of their people being stuck in a welfare trap. They believe the keys to greater success are education and employment, while retaining connection to culture, country and kin.
- Government-funded services need to be

redesigned to meet the differing needs of families, communities and regions. Services need to help people move forward, not stay stuck. Innovative family-centred approaches, partnerships and sustained effort are required.

- Lots of money is being spent on services but it is not well targeted, and nobody is clear if it is making any meaningful difference.
- Success will require collaboration with Aboriginal people and organisations, private industry, local governments, the Commonwealth Government, and the not-for-profit sector.
- Collaboration is critical but there are also things only governments can do, things only communities can do, and things only families can do. Families, communities and governments all have their own responsibilities and roles to play.

For all of these reasons, this roadmap does not attempt to provide all of the answers or instant solutions for what are long-term, complex challenges. Instead, this roadmap sets out the direction for reform. **Direction statements are highlighted in orange text boxes.**

The State Government, through its Regional Services Reform Unit, will engage Aboriginal families and communities on the roadmap's directions and during the design and implementation of key initiatives. **Consultation focus areas are highlighted in green text boxes.**

At the same time, the State Government has committed to 10 priority actions that it will start now. **These are highlighted in blue text boxes.** The actions will offer immediate, tangible opportunities for Aboriginal families and communities. They will also provide the Government and Aboriginal people with opportunities to practise better ways of working together.

# The Challenge

If Western Australia was a country, it would be the 10th largest in the world by land area. The Goldfields region alone is nearly the size of New South Wales. Distances in the State on an international scale: a trip from Perth to the northern-most settlement of Kalumburu is roughly the same distance as a trip from London to Moscow.

People are few and far between in this enormous space. Distance, isolation and an often-harsh climate create unique challenges for residents and governments. This is especially the case in remote communities, which are some of the most isolated settlements in Australia.

Western Australia has about 95,000 Aboriginal residents, nearly half of whom live in the Kimberley, Pilbara, Goldfields and Mid West. In these regions, the State Government estimates that about 15,000 Aboriginal people reside in either town-based reserves or remote Aboriginal communities, with about 30,000 Aboriginal people living in regional towns.

Despite high and increasing levels of expenditure, progress in closing the gap in Aboriginal disadvantage in Western Australia has been slow. On a wide range of indicators, Aboriginal West Australians are worse off than other West Australians. Outcomes are particularly poor in the State's regions, and decline further with remoteness. For instance:

- about 20 per cent of Aboriginal adults living remotely were employed in 2011, compared to 43 per cent of Aboriginal adults in regional towns and 65 per cent of all West Australian adults
- only 16 per cent of Aboriginal adults who live remotely have completed Year 12, compared to 24 per cent of Aboriginal adults in regional towns and 53 per cent of all West Australian adults
- 16 per cent of remote Aboriginal residents live in a house of eight or more people, compared to 5 per cent of Aboriginal residents in regional towns and 0.4 per cent of all West Australian residents<sup>1</sup>
- Aboriginal residents in very remote Western Australia, relative to both Aboriginal residents elsewhere in the State and overall State averages, are more likely to have diabetes, cardiovascular disease and kidney disease.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Australian Bureau of Statistics 2011, *Census*: data for Goldfields, Kimberley and Pilbara

<sup>2</sup> Australian Bureau of Statistics 2012–13, *Australian Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Survey*



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## The challenge in remote communities

Many factors contribute to the outcomes experienced in remote Aboriginal communities.

**Size and location:** there are about 274 remote Aboriginal communities in Western Australia, with an estimated total population of 12,000 Aboriginal residents. By contrast, in Queensland there are only 18 remote communities with about 20,000 residents.

In Western Australia, about 9,000 residents and 244 communities are in the Kimberley and Pilbara, with most of the remainder in the Goldfields and some in the Mid West. The State Government's best estimation is that there are:

- 16 communities with more than 200 residents
- 19 communities with 100 to 199 residents
- 19 communities with 50 to 99 residents
- 91 communities with 10 to 49 residents
- 60 communities with fewer than 10 residents
- 69 seasonal communities with no permanent residents.

Bidyadanga, a former mission south of Broome, has 600 or more residents. On the other hand, there are 130 or so communities with fewer than 10 permanent residents. Some communities are not that remote: Mowanjum, another former mission, is 10 kilometres from the West Kimberley town of Derby. Others are more than 500 kilometres from the nearest town, with little or no sealed road in between. The average distance from a remote community to the nearest town is 200 kilometres (and some of those towns are themselves small and remote).

**History of exclusion:** some communities were established in the colonial and Federation eras, and began as mission stations or ration camps. Others arose from the exodus of Aboriginal people from pastoral stations during the 1960s and the 'homelands' movement of the 1970s.

Some community locations reflect long-held settlement patterns and traditional meeting grounds.

**Living conditions:** these vary enormously between communities, from those in which housing and public areas are impeccably maintained, to communities in which environmental health conditions are dismal. Poor living conditions contribute to higher rates of infection, injury and chronic disease, and low community amenity and perceptions, which all in turn reduce family wellbeing and participation in school and work.

**Impediments to self-determination:** most communities sit on a Crown reserve, with a lease from a statutory body to an Aboriginal corporation over a single lot. There are no individual household lots, housing is communally owned through the corporation, and there is no capacity for any resident to own their home. With a handful of exceptions, there are no gazetted roads or parks to be maintained by local governments. In turn, those local governments have no legal ability to levy rates on households or communities. These arrangements are not replicated elsewhere in Western Australia and restrict the ability of families and communities to self determine their future.

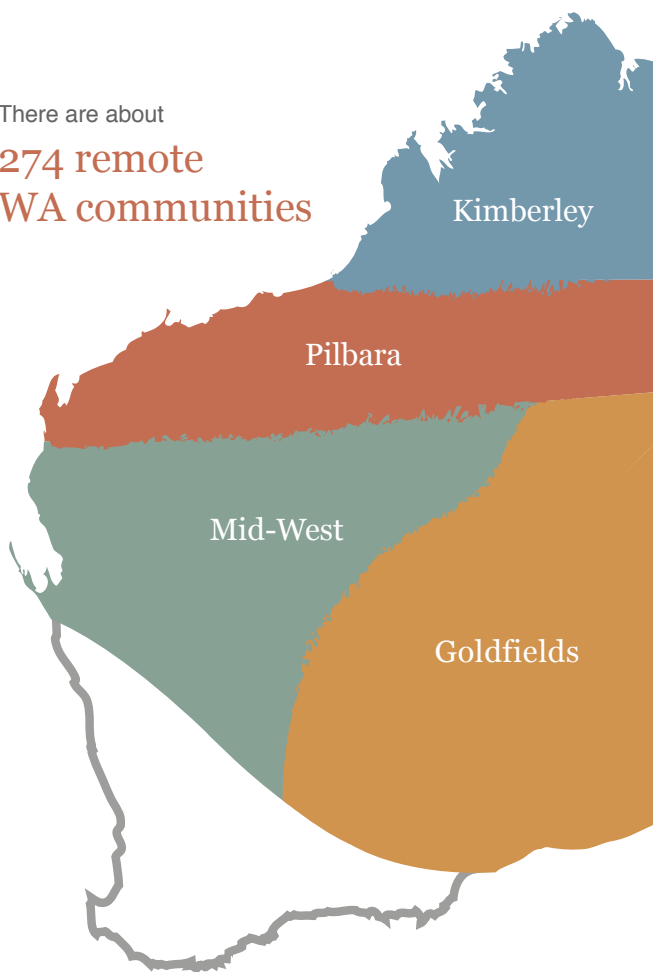
**Distance to markets:** few remote communities have significant prospects of developing or becoming part of a market economy that provides local jobs. Most communities were not established by the usual market forces, household choices and government investment that created settlements elsewhere in the State around agriculture, forestry, mines, railways and ports. Communities with real economic prospects are few and far between, and many survive almost entirely on social welfare payments and government programs.

**Delivery arrangements for key services:**

arrangements in remote communities for electricity, water, sewerage, rubbish collection and road maintenance are different to those that apply elsewhere in the State. Almost all communities are assumed to self-provide these services, with some government support and subsidies. Usual regulatory standards do not apply and, with the exception of a few communities that receive Horizon Power services, normal utility providers are absent. No household in a community has its own water meter, and while some have an electricity meter, the charges are below those that apply in other areas. Infrastructure in many communities is unreliable and over-stretched, and in some cases, unsafe.

There are about

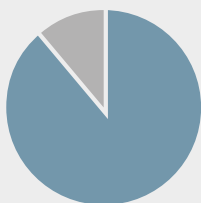
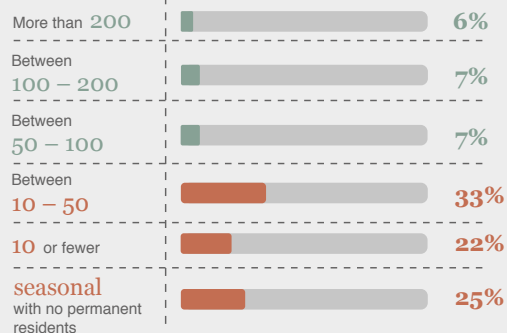
**274 remote  
WA communities**



Approximately **15,000**  
Aboriginal people reside  
in town-based reserves  
or remote communities

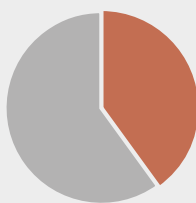
Number of  
residents

**274**  
remote communities



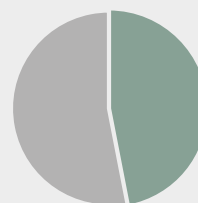
**89%**

of remote Aboriginal  
communities are in the  
Kimberley or Pilbara regions



**40%**

of remote Aboriginal  
communities receive  
no government funding



**47%**

of remote Aboriginal  
communities have 10 or fewer  
permanent residents

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## The challenge for government-funded services

Governments across Australia have grappled over many years with how to enable Aboriginal people to succeed. Despite increasing levels of investment, and more services being funded by government agencies, there is little evidence of significant long-term change.

The experience in Western Australia has been no different. For example, during 2012–13, government expenditure (State and Commonwealth) on services for Aboriginal people in Western Australia was \$4.9 billion, or \$53,000 per Aboriginal person, a figure that had grown 20 per cent over the previous four years. By contrast, combined government expenditure on services for non-Aboriginal people in the State in 2012–13 was about \$20,000 per non Aboriginal person, a figure that had grown 0.3 per cent over the same period.<sup>3</sup> State Government analysis suggests that expenditure on services for Aboriginal people is higher in regional areas of the State than in metropolitan areas.<sup>4</sup>

Australian governments at all levels have struggled to work effectively with each other and Aboriginal families and communities to achieve better outcomes. A large part of the challenge is that governments have applied most of their resources to dealing with acute and immediate symptoms of disadvantage and dysfunction, such as law enforcement and crisis services in response to violence, child neglect, substance abuse, and self-harm. These problems cannot, and should not, be ignored.

However, government services have been less successful in addressing the causes of the disadvantage and dysfunction experienced by Aboriginal people. The result has been an array of uncoordinated services, which are expensive and difficult to deliver but do little to support individual and family success. Importantly, the design and delivery of services, in combination with government policy settings, often disempower

and disengage Aboriginal families and reduce the incentives for those families to take up school, training and job opportunities. For example, until a change of policy in 2010, low income limits for accessing public housing, combined with expensive or non-existent private housing markets, meant that in some locations in the Pilbara and Kimberley a person could be faced with a stark choice between being unemployed and housed or employed and homeless.

Effective human services can assist families to navigate difficult circumstances and build resilience. However, recent reviews have reported limited human services effectiveness in regional and remote areas of Western Australia, with many providers delivering an array of services with little or no coordination between funders or between providers.

For example, a 2014 study looked at government and non-government funding and services in the town of Roebourne and three Martu communities in the East Pilbara. In Roebourne, there were 63 government and non government providers delivering over 200 services to about 1,400 people. Other issues identified in government reviews include:

- A lack of coordination has caused under-servicing and over-servicing, duplicated efforts, and an inability to prioritise funding towards critical need.
- State-wide programs are not being effectively translated into place-based services that focus on individual families or communities.
- Funding and outcomes are set centrally at a program-level based on episodes or events, and lack the flexibility to be tailored (and measured) to a family's needs and circumstances.

- Many services contracts do not contain meaningful performance or outcome measures.
- Services are almost exclusively developed and delivered within single agencies, with relatively few cross-agency service models.
- Agencies typically only work together in critical situations that require a statutory (e.g. police or child protection) response and which are driven by urgency and immediacy.
- There is relatively little focus on prevention, and secondary and earlier intervention services that can prevent critical situations and deliver better outcomes for a lower long-term cost.
- Community input on the design and implementation of services is rare.
- There is a 'long tail' of small, short-term programs and services that consume a substantial amount of funder and provider administrative effort for limited or no outcomes.

<sup>3</sup> Productivity Commission 2012–13, *Indigenous Expenditure Review*

<sup>4</sup> Department of the Premier and Cabinet (WA) 2014, *Location Based Expenditure Review*

# The Direction

The State Government and many Aboriginal leaders believe that success comes from living in a safe and healthy environment, having access to good educational and employment opportunities, and being able to take up and excel in those opportunities.

This belief generates the five principles that underpin regional services reform:

1. Every child lives in a safe environment that nurtures early childhood development.
2. Every child receives an education to equip them to make life choices.
3. All adults can access training and employment or other purposeful occupation.
4. Aboriginal people can maintain links to country, culture and kin.
5. Aboriginal people living remotely have certainty about the State Government's framework for investing in remote communities.

A long-term outcome of reform is high-functioning regional networks based around towns. Towns have the scale to support better infrastructure, services and governance. Reform is intended to ensure that towns can offer families more educational and economic opportunities, access to quality services, and appropriate accommodation for residents and for those who orbit in and out from across the region to access opportunities and services.

Within those networks, larger remote communities play a key role in ensuring young people can develop and have real choices about their future, as it is in those communities that the greatest numbers of remote residents live, and in which there are schools and health clinics.

On this basis, the State Government will:

- focus its efforts and investment on regional locations that have significant educational and employment opportunities, increasing the likelihood of better outcomes
- progressively work to ensure minimum standards for basic services in larger remote Aboriginal communities
- improve government-funded services in the regions to meet the needs and aspirations of communities, families and children, and support families to succeed
- support Aboriginal families to build the capability of their children wherever they live
- encourage and enable Aboriginal families to move to take up education and employment opportunities if there are none available where they live, while retaining the ability to connect to country, culture and kin
- maximise the economic opportunities that exist for Aboriginal families in the regions, including through public sector jobs and jobs via public sector contracting and procurement.

In concentrating on towns and larger communities, the State Government expects to support fewer communities over time, particularly as migration away from small outstations continues. However, the State Government will not prevent Aboriginal people from living remotely or continuing to access country for cultural purposes.

In taking this approach, the State Government recognises the need for collaboration with Aboriginal communities, leaders and families, the Commonwealth Government, local governments, and service providers. Success will require partnerships in which all partners play their roles, and interact with each other, in a way that is better than how they do things now.



Collaboration must be based on mutual respect, responsibility and accountability, recognising that there are actions only families can take, actions only government can take, and areas in which families and government must work together.

The State Government's contribution to this collaborative effort can be divided into three areas, which form the next three sections of the roadmap:

1. improved living conditions that enable families to prosper and don't hold them back
2. supporting families to build their skills, and overcome any barriers to doing so, through improved service design and delivery
3. education, employment and housing opportunities, and support for families to take them up.

Underpinning each area is recognition of the need to ensure Aboriginal people can maintain connection to country, culture and kin.

Regional services reform has an initial focus on the Pilbara and Kimberley, and will apply there first. Over time, reform will be extended to other regions and tailored to the circumstances of those regions. The State Government expects to extend regional services reform to the Goldfields during 2017–18.

The Pilbara and Kimberley were selected as the initial focus for reform as:

- Aboriginal people comprise a significant proportion of the total regional populations
- most of the remote Aboriginal communities and town-based reserves are in these regions
- some communities in these regions have expressed a strong interest in positive change.



## Better Living Conditions

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*Living conditions are the foundation for family wellbeing.  
They are a base from which families can prosper  
and children can develop.*

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# Better Living Conditions

Living conditions are the foundation for family wellbeing. They are a base from which families can prosper and children can develop. For this reason, state and territory governments regulate and/or deliver services that support decent living conditions. These services include:

- essential services – to supply safe and reliable electricity and water, and treat sewerage
- municipal (local government) services – such as road building and maintenance, environmental health, rubbish collection, and local planning and building controls
- housing services – social housing for those who can't afford a private rental, or in areas in which there is no private housing market.

Most West Australians take these services for granted where they live. However, the arrangements for delivering these services in remote Aboriginal communities are unusual and ad hoc, contributing in many instances to poor living conditions. The same is true in some Aboriginal reserves in regional towns.

These conditions affect more than just residents' health. A child is much less likely to go to school, and an adult is much less likely to go to work, if they do not have a safe, clean and uncrowded place to sleep, with access to safe and reliable electricity, and clean drinking water.

The State Government's view is that living conditions in regional and remote areas must improve through mutual accountability between households, communities and government. Each household must maintain their house and pay their bills. Communities are collectively responsible for the condition of public space. In larger communities, government should provide essential, municipal and, where applicable, housing services.

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## Remote communities

### Direction statement

The State Government will work progressively to meet minimum standards for essential and municipal services in larger remote Aboriginal communities, based on the principles set out in this roadmap.

Until 2014–15, the State Government supported essential service delivery in about 80 remote Aboriginal communities, with the primary criteria being that the community's permanent population was 50 residents or more. Since the transfer from the Commonwealth Government of responsibility for its Municipal and Essential Services program from 2015–16 on, the State Government has been supporting essential and municipal service delivery in about 165 communities. This support ranges from 14 communities that receive electricity supply and distribution from Horizon Power, to small outstations that receive a diesel fuel subsidy to run a generator.

The State Government does not fund any services or provide any funding to the smallest 110 or so remote communities, although any of the estimated 400 permanent residents of those communities may access universal services such as hospitals and schools elsewhere. With the exception of Ngaanyatjarra Lands communities, which have their own local government, remote communities receive few, if any, services from a local government.

Given the complexity of current arrangements and their ad hoc and unusual nature, it will take some time for the State Government and communities to develop more effective arrangements that result in better essential and municipal services being delivered which lead to better living

conditions, together with household obligations and charges that are consistent with those that apply in a region.

The State Government will apply the following principles to the provision of essential and municipal services in remote Aboriginal communities:

1. Focus on larger communities: 80 per cent of the State's remote community population live in the largest 50 communities (which all contain at least 50 permanent residents). Larger communities, even if isolated, offer the prospect of greater long-term sustainability due to better economies of scale and demand.
2. Tiered services and service standards: based on community size and location, which will enable larger Aboriginal communities to receive services commensurate to those received in settlements of similar size and location elsewhere in the State.
3. Household metering: increased service levels would be accompanied by individual household metering and the tariff charges that otherwise applies in the region.
4. Capped numbers: the State Government would not increase the number of communities that receive services, and may reduce that number in the application of these principles.
5. Transition to self-sufficiency: if any community receives services but would not receive them in the future under these principles, the State Government would support the community to transition to self-sufficiency.
6. Transition to become regional towns: the State Government would consult a small number of larger, economically-sustainable Aboriginal communities to see if they want to become regional towns to facilitate better community servicing and future investment.

These principles do not limit or affect access to country for cultural and family purposes.

### Consultation focus area

The State Government will consult with remote communities about future essential and municipal service delivery arrangements in accordance with the above principles.

### Priority action

The State Government will identify up to 10 communities by the end of 2016 with which it will work to upgrade essential and municipal infrastructure, and introduce commensurate charges.

Given the poor quality of essential and municipal infrastructure in many remote communities, the cost of ensuring a tiered minimum infrastructure standard in the largest 50 communities would require a very substantial capital spend (in the hundreds of millions of dollars). While it is likely that such expenditure would be spread across 20 years given the number of communities and their remote locations, it would still represent a major fiscal challenge. On the other hand, if living conditions are not improved and household responsibilities are not normalised, the status quo will remain and family wellbeing and public health may worsen.

The State Government would seek to sequence such an investment by prioritising communities that have:

- families and leaders who have demonstrated a willingness to ensure children are safe and in school, and adults are in work
- business or work opportunities in or near the community
- the capacity to be utilised as a service hub for smaller communities
- no natural limitations on growth (e.g. sufficient safe and natural water supply)
- effective governance, or a willingness to strengthen community governance.



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## Town-based reserves

### Direction statement

The State Government will work progressively to ensure that residents of town-based reserves receive the same services and opportunities, and share the same payment responsibilities, as other residents of the relevant town.

The State's town-based reserves share many similarities with remote Aboriginal communities. Up to 3,000 Aboriginal residents live in 37 town-based reserves across 20 towns. These reserves are inside or next to a gazetted town. Almost universally, residents do not receive the same services, and are not subject to the same responsibilities, as other town residents.

For example, in the reserves and in contrast to all other parts of the relevant towns:

- many households do not receive a utility-standard electricity or water service, or pay against an individual household meter
- few households receive local government services or pay local government rates
- residents cannot own their homes (and must rent)
- there are usually no individual household lots and no gazetted roads or parks.

The key difference between these reserves and most remote communities is that the reserves are within or alongside a gazetted town with economic and educational opportunities.

On this basis, the State Government's position is that reserve residents should receive the same services, and be subject to the same payment

responsibilities, as the other residents of the relevant town. This outcome can be achieved by extending services and obligations to residents in their current homes. However it may be achieved by residents relocating to other parts of the town that receive all relevant services and have all relevant responsibilities. For example, the State Government has offered residents of Nulleywah, a town-based reserve in Kununurra, public housing in the town and a number of residents have taken up this offer.

Applying the State Government's policy position in town-based reserves will require effective consultation with current residents and relevant agencies, and likely changes to land tenure and planning arrangements, housing, essential services and local government service delivery. Some changes would have future implications under the *Native Title Act 1993* (Cwlth) and require negotiations with native title holders or applicants.

### Consultation focus area

The State Government will consult with reserve residents, native title holders or applicants, and other stakeholders about how best to achieve the Government's policy commitment.

The State Government will commence implementation in a small number of towns so that lessons and costs can inform implementation across the State. To this end, the State Government has committed \$20 million towards the eight town-based reserves in the Pilbara. This project will be a joint initiative between the Pilbara Development Commission and Regional Services Reform Unit, and see consultations with residents and other stakeholders commence in



mid-2016. The State Government has also begun discussions about an early-implementation site in the West Kimberley town of Derby, which has four town-based reserves.

### Priority action

In 2016–17, the State Government will commence a \$20 million initiative to ensure that the residents of town-based reserves in the Pilbara receive the same services and opportunities, and are subject to the same payment responsibilities, as other residents of the relevant town.

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## Land tenure

### Direction statement

The State Government will make tenure changes progressively in remote Aboriginal communities and town-based reserves located on Crown land to:

- support improvements to essential and municipal services
- assist the supply and management of housing
- facilitate economic and social development that is restricted by current tenure.

Tenure is the system for determining rights to use and enjoy land. Land tenure is a key contributor to the unusual legal and service delivery arrangements in remote Aboriginal communities and town-based reserves. Appropriate land tenure facilitates capital investment by confirming ownership and enabling the transfer and mortgaging of property. Equally, unsuitable land tenure can stymie development.

The underlying tenure for about 180 of the 274 remote communities, all 37 town-based reserves, and the approximately 11,000 people living in those places, is either a Crown reserve or unallocated Crown land.

Most of the relevant Crown reserves are held by a single statutory authority, the Aboriginal Lands Trust (ALT), under the *Aboriginal Affairs Planning Authority Act 1972* (WA). Since the 1996 Bonner Report, the State Government's policy has been to divest the ALT estate to appropriate Aboriginal land holders. However, few parcels have been successfully divested, and there are significant, interrelated barriers to the divestment, including:

- often, there is no entity willing or able to accept the appropriate land tenure
- the reasons for, or effect of, changing the tenure is unclear
- substantial current or future liabilities on the estate
- difficulties resolving native title issues (such as the absence of a registered claim, or that current residents may not be the native title holders) or negotiating with native title holders
- lengthy (up to 99 year) leases granted over the estate prior to the Bonner Report, which restrict the ALT's ability to take key steps towards divestment.

Any changes to land tenure arrangements would need to comply with *Native Title Act 1993* (Cwlth) processes, and involve negotiations with relevant native title holders or applicants, as well as existing tenure holders and residents. Previous State Government experiences suggest such negotiations can take many years.

The State Government is considering policy and funding options to streamline arrangements for Aboriginal individuals or corporations that want to use the ALT estate more productively and take responsibility for relevant land parcels.

### Consultation focus area

The State Government will consult on land tenure arrangements in remote Aboriginal communities as part of its consultation on essential and municipal services, and to ascertain how tenure change could facilitate further economic or social development.



## Supporting Families

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*Family support and involvement  
is the key determinant of later success.*

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# Supporting Families

Government-funded services are intended to support individuals and families to have choices and aspirations, to be resilient and capable, and to realise their potential. Government can provide this support through universal services in areas such as health, early childhood and education. It can also provide safety net support (such as social housing and welfare payments) for those in need, and services to help people overcome barriers (such as family support, and targeted services such as drug and alcohol services). The core idea is not that government does things for families; rather, that it enables families to do things for themselves.

For example, much of a person's significant early development occurs in and around the home, which means family support and involvement is the key determinant of later success. Even as we get older, and our learning takes place in more institutional settings such as schools, that family component remains a powerful influence on our

personal growth. In the long-term, the family is far more important than government in shaping a child's life and future.

That said, government can make major improvements to the ways in which it supports families to succeed, particularly in regional and remote areas. As part of regional services reform, the State Government will innovate in service delivery to respond better to the needs and aspirations of Aboriginal families and communities. The Government is prepared to look at new approaches, strategies and experimentation to produce improved results.

Innovation will also involve building new partnerships and strengthening ways of working with Aboriginal communities and organisations, the Commonwealth Government, local government, the not-for-profit sector and the private sector, which all play roles in funding and delivering services.

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## Place-based services

### Direction statement

The State Government will make government-funded services outcome-focused and more responsive to the differing needs and circumstances of regions and communities.

State-wide policy settings and programs are often framed around the needs of the majority of the State's population, which is based in the greater Perth metropolitan area. Those policies and programs do not always take into account the significant differences in demographics, geography, environment and economy in the regions, or the differences between regions. To add to this challenge, State agencies typically operate in silos within a region, providing disconnected services to common clients.

There is enormous opportunity for State-wide programs to be better translated into place-based services that focus on the needs and circumstances of regions and locations. A range of options can be tested. Some of these would involve making incremental changes to existing services in line with findings in the State Government's Location-Based Expenditure Review 2014 and Aboriginal Youth Expenditure Review 2013. These could include:

- using preferred regional contractors to deliver services on behalf of government
- giving longer and bigger contracts to fewer service providers to help improve their economies of scale and sustainability, and simplify performance measurement
- improved transparency and accountability by funding bodies and agencies measured against key regional priorities

- working to improve agency and service provider capability.

As part of its innovative approach, the State Government will also consider structural solutions for regional service delivery. This could include coordination at a regional level of service provision, government contracting and agency budget submissions.

This work will necessarily involve other funders, notably the Commonwealth Government, local governments, and philanthropic and industry funders. Critically, it must also engage families and communities in the regions about their needs.

### Consultation focus area

The State Government will consult in key locations and communities about the willingness to participate in a place-based reorientation of government services to respond more effectively to local need and enable better local outcomes.

By way of example, the State Government's Regional Services Reform Unit will commence a project with the local community in Roebourne to respond to the outcomes of the Location-Based Expenditure Review 2014. The '6718 Advantage Plan' will involve working with the local community on community-identified priorities (youth, education and community safety) to develop interventions at the town level, and to measure local impact and change. The reform unit chose to work on this project because community leaders and organisations demonstrated a clear willingness and motivation to lead necessary changes at the local level.

### Priority action

The State Government will work with community leaders and organisations in Roebourne in 2016–17 to co-design a reorientation of government-funded services to respond better to local needs and achieve better local outcomes.

To support this work, and other place-based projects of this type, the reform unit is mapping government-funded services in the Kimberley and Pilbara, and working on longer term mechanisms for the automatic collection and easier publication of this service data.

### Priority action

During 2016–17, the State Government will publish mapping of government-funded services in the Kimberley and Pilbara to support work between government agencies, other organisations and communities on developing place-based service systems.



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## Family-centred services

### Direction statement

The State Government will refocus government-funded services for Aboriginal families in the regions to be more family-centred.

For Aboriginal clients in the regions, there needs to be a much stronger focus on family centred services that take into account the cultural dimension of extended families and kinship obligations, and which respond to a family's specific circumstances. These may involve complex, long-term needs resulting from intergenerational trauma, physical and mental health issues, substance misuse, and family violence.

Connected to that requirement is the need for a better approach for families. Typically, government agencies provide fragmented services to common clients, often from the same family. A family may receive assistance from several government agencies or not-for-profit service providers, who may not share information or collaborate on solutions for the client. Greater collaboration is required between providers to share information, resources and solutions for their common families, who often have inter-related issues that no one provider can address in isolation. This will require changes to business processes and agency cultures.

A significant amount of government funding is applied to address the acute symptoms of long-term trauma and disadvantage; symptoms such as mental illness, violence, child neglect, substance abuse and self-harm. These problems cannot, and should not, be ignored. However, they require a considerable commitment from services such as law enforcement, child

protection and mental health that are necessarily reactive to the immediate challenge. Over time, the State Government will look to apply a greater proportion of resources to family-centred services that focus on prevention, earlier intervention, capacity-building, and family empowerment.

On this basis, the Department for Child Protection and Family Support is partnering with the Regional Services Reform Unit, other agencies, and local Aboriginal leaders and organisations, to co-design and trial an intensive, highly-coordinated, earlier intervention approach for troubled families in Kununurra. Kununurra was selected for this trial on the basis that community leaders and organisations have shown strong, progressive leadership on the Cashless Debit Card Trial and related issues. Subject to agreement between the relevant parties on the co-design, this trial will be operational in 2016–17.

### Priority action

In 2016–17, the State Government will commence an initiative in Kununurra with community leaders and organisations to co-design a family-centred, earlier intervention service delivery model to support and enable better outcomes for local families.

### Consultation focus area

The State Government will consult in key locations and communities about the willingness to participate in implementing new, family-centred models of service delivery.

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## Child-centred services

### Direction statement

The State Government will refocus government-funded services to support a better start in life for Aboriginal children in regional and remote areas, and reduce the risk of higher-cost interventions in adulthood.

A healthy start to life builds resilience and enables children to reach their full potential.

Prenatal, postnatal and early childhood factors are critical to brain development and future health and wellbeing. Good maternal health in pregnancy can lower or eliminate the risk of numerous preventable diseases and disabilities, while actions during the early years can reduce later risks of diabetes, learning difficulties, mental health problems, and contact with the justice system.

Aboriginal children in regional and remote areas in the Pilbara and Kimberley have very high rates of developmental vulnerability. For example, the percentage of developmentally vulnerable children in the East Kimberley rose from 47 per cent in 2012 to 54 per cent in 2015.

The State Government is committed to investing in the future of West Australian children by optimising their learning, development and socialisation opportunities during their early years. In recent years, the State Government has made significant investments in early years services, including Best Beginnings, Child and Parent Centres, and KindiLink.

Beyond these services, key aspects of an effective early childhood model for Aboriginal children in regional and remote areas would most likely include:

- culturally-secure health services that support preconception health and healthy behaviours for mothers during and post pregnancy (including avoidance of alcohol and drugs)
- community-based knowledge sharing about child-rearing practices that support infant and child health, and ongoing early childhood education activities in the community
- safe, healthy environments across the community
- early childhood health checks and services (e.g. immunisations) that are accessible and encourage participation by parents
- family-based support for positive behaviours such as good nutrition, education attendance and physical activity.

Based on these key aspects, the State Government is considering trialling a community-level model for prenatal, postnatal and early childhood development. Among other things, this approach would involve:

- embracing community co-design and retaining local-level ownership and control
- engaging Aboriginal women's groups on how to improve community knowledge sharing
- working with those groups, service providers and researchers on models to improve local service provision and collaboration.

### Consultation focus area

The State Government will consult in key locations and communities about the willingness to trial a community-based model for prenatal, postnatal and early childhood development.

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## Harm reduction

### Direction statement

The State Government will provide better coordination at the regional and local-level to reduce the harmful effects of alcohol and illicit drugs on families and children in regional and remote areas.

A key inhibitor of family development in the Kimberley and Pilbara is the problematic use of alcohol, and use of illicit drugs. This use constrains the effectiveness of early childhood, education, health and other human services, and works to diminish family resilience. Alcohol and drug-related medical conditions are also major causes of avoidable deaths in custody.

With the support of local communities, the State Government has in place a range of restrictions on the sale, possession and consumption of alcohol in many parts of the Pilbara and Kimberley. It also provides a range of mental health, and drug and alcohol services, including treatment and prevention services. Health and other agencies are also working to address the impact of foetal alcohol spectrum disorders (FASD). However, there are opportunities for agencies and other service providers to improve regional coordination.

The State Government will consult with communities that wish to introduce or strengthen restrictions on alcohol supply and consumption. It is also proposing to work with local governments and Aboriginal leaders and communities on the potential for region-wide alcohol restriction strategies to complement and connect locality-specific restrictions.

### Consultation focus area

The State Government will consult with and support Aboriginal communities that wish to reduce harm from alcohol.

Complementing the State Government's alcohol supply-side restrictions, in April 2016, the Commonwealth Government commenced a trial in the East Kimberley to ensure welfare payments are not used to purchase alcohol or drugs, or to gamble (the Cashless Debit Card Trial). The East Kimberley is the only trial site in Western Australia. The State Government will continue to work closely with the Commonwealth Government to provide practical local support for the East Kimberley trial and its evaluation.

### Priority action

The State Government will continue to support the trial and evaluation of the Cashless Debit Card in the East Kimberley.

In its 2016–17 Budget, the Commonwealth Government also announced a Compulsory Rent Deduction Scheme, under which occupants of public and some community housing who receive income support payments or Family Tax Benefit will have their rent and related tenancy costs deducted from their payments and automatically transferred to their housing provider. This scheme will reduce the likelihood of individuals accumulating rental debt, which should improve household stability, and decrease evictions and the chance of harm to families (particularly children) from homelessness or overcrowding.

### Priority action

The State Government will work with the Commonwealth Government to implement the Compulsory Rent Deduction Scheme in Western Australia.



## More Opportunities

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*Employment is a key driver of wellbeing;  
it enables individuals and families  
to control their own destinies.*

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# More Opportunities

Employment is a key driver of wellbeing, both to enable individuals and families to control their own destinies independent of government, and to provide meaning and purpose. Job and business opportunities provide an incentive for individuals to stay healthy, complete school, engage in training, find work, maintain a functional household, and then enable the next generation to begin the process anew.

The level of economic opportunity in regional and remote parts of the Kimberley and Pilbara varies enormously. These regions are home to some of the world's largest iron ore mines, with large onsite workforces. Then there are remote communities that have no economic demand beyond the internal provision of goods and services to residents.

Private industry is the main driver of economic activity in the regions, facilitated by appropriate publicly-funded infrastructure such as roads, ports and telecommunication facilities. Beyond this investment, the State Government can:

- provide educational options that equip children to take up employment opportunities, wherever and whenever those opportunities occur
- increase training and job opportunities for Aboriginal people in the regions in the public sector and through publicly-funded infrastructure and service provision
- ensure its investment decisions and policies improve participation in education and the market economy, and reduce dependence on welfare, wherever possible
- support individuals and families to move to areas where better education and job opportunities exist, with higher standards of services.



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## Education

### Direction statement

The State Government will intensify and accelerate existing strategies in the regions to ensure every student has the opportunity to achieve educational success.

With a healthy start to life, and good early years support, a child starts school with a far greater chance of educational success. Once started, the drivers of success appear deceptively simple: attendance at school every day; quality classroom teaching supported by good school leadership; and good family and peer influences. Yet those things are difficult across entire school systems, hard in regional and remote settings, and even harder when many students come from backgrounds of disadvantage and trauma.

Across the Kimberley and Pilbara, outcomes for Aboriginal students remain disproportionately and unacceptably low relative to State and national averages.

A substantial challenge in these regions is to ensure Aboriginal children are school-ready and attend school every day. Both the Commonwealth and Western Australian governments have focused attention on this challenge over the past decade, but made limited progress. In large part, this reflects a low level of sustained engagement between families and schools. Cross-agency and community support is required to re-engage families with schools to achieve better attendance and results, building on initiatives such as KindiLink, Child and Parent Centres, and the Department of Education's Aboriginal Cultural Standards Framework.

Another major challenge is that the remoteness and size of many schools in the regions— across the State, Catholic and Independent school sectors—makes it challenging to attract and retain experienced teachers and principals. In turn, this affects the ability of schools to sustain consistently high quality learning environments.

Against the background of these challenges, the State Government will provide \$25 million of Royalties for Regions funding to support Kimberley schools across the three systems that opt in to a project that focuses on:

- targeted teaching, supported by frequent measurement of achievement, evidence-based teaching strategies and quality materials
- better early childhood health and education, supported by community co-design of initiatives that build on and improve existing services, and engage families as first teachers
- regular attendance, through community co-design of strategies that respond to drivers of non-attendance in a particular community
- increasing student and community engagement, through greater use of two-way learning strategies and community initiatives.

### Priority action

The State Government will commit \$25 million towards a three-year Kimberley Schools Project, starting in 2016–17, that seeks to accelerate student improvement in schools and communities that opt-in to the project.

This work would recognise that while primary schooling can be delivered in the regional and remote locations where Aboriginal families reside, the broader secondary school curriculum can only be delivered in larger regional centres or through boarding arrangements in metropolitan areas. These arrangements could be enhanced by increasing the capacity of existing and/or building new hostels at regional secondary schools, enabling an easier transition for remote community students.

### Consultation focus area

The State Government will consult with schools and communities in the Kimberley about their willingness to participate in the Kimberley Schools Project.

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## Employment

### Direction statement

The State Government will increase job opportunities for Aboriginal people in the regions in the public sector, and through public sector contracting and procurement.

Despite a range of State Government initiatives, and despite record economic activity during the past decade, Aboriginal workforce participation in Western Australia continues to languish. By a range of measures, Aboriginal people are significantly under-represented in the State's overall workforce. No progress has been achieved yet in Western Australia on the national target of halving the gap in employment outcomes between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal Australians by 2018.

The situation is much worse in regional areas, due to a range of factors including the structure of local job markets, local housing markets, education and training participation rates, and underlying and entrenched disadvantage. Aboriginal workforce participation only gets worse with remoteness, reflecting the low levels of private sector economic activity in remote areas.

The urgency is growing in regional areas because the Aboriginal youth population continues to increase at a rate nearly double that of the non-Aboriginal population, and the Aboriginal youth unemployment rate is significantly higher than the rate for non-Aboriginal youth.

As an initial response to these challenges, the State Government will strengthen existing whole-of-government policies and practices to boost Aboriginal employment in the public sector through a focus on:

- regionally-defined targets (e.g. regions in which Aboriginal people make up a higher percentage of the workforce should have higher targets)
- agency engagement and performance (including through new mandatory provisions)
- greater regional coordination to develop and supply the Aboriginal workforce
- stronger accountability for results.

In doing so, the State Government will seek to provide more jobs directly for Aboriginal people in its regional workforce, and indirectly provide jobs for Aboriginal people through requirements for Aboriginal employment in its regional contracting and procurement.

Beyond these measures, and in the longer-term, the State Government will seek to:

- foster regional economic growth and jobs, consistent with the Kimberley and Pilbara Regional Investment Blueprints
- work with the Commonwealth Government through its Community Development Program to connect jobseekers with jobs, build jobseeker capability, and enforce job-seeking requirements.

### Priority action

From 2016–17, the State Government will create new opportunities for Aboriginal people and businesses in the regions through State Government recruitment, purchasing and contracting practices.

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## Housing

### Direction statement

The State Government will:

- only increase State Government-funded housing stock in locations with good educational and employment opportunities
- preference transitional housing over current models of public and community housing in any stock increase.

Housing is a critical policy lever for government. Appropriate and affordable housing helps families to attain and maintain good health, family, education and employment outcomes.

The Kimberley and Pilbara have unbalanced housing markets, with a high reliance on social housing at one end, unaffordable private housing at the other, and much more employer-provided housing than is the norm elsewhere in the State. In both regions, the majority of Aboriginal households are in social housing. Families who could move out of social housing find it difficult, due to limited land releases and high construction costs that push up housing prices and restrict the supply of affordable housing for low-to-moderate income earners.

However, the housing system, supported by appropriate human services, can also be a powerful policy lever to enable families to achieve better education and employment outcomes, and to become more independent and resilient.

Against this background, the State Government is proposing a two-part response. First, any growth in State Government-funded housing stock will be in locations with good educational and employment

opportunities. This position would mean that any increase in social housing would only occur in regional towns and any large remote community that can prove it has strong economic prospects.

This approach would not:

- relieve the State Government of its responsibilities under existing housing management agreements with communities
- prevent Aboriginal families from funding and building their own houses in the community (subject to meeting relevant building and other approval processes)
- limit or affect access to country for cultural and family purposes.

It would mean that the State Government's housing policies are explicit about the need to connect Aboriginal people to school and work, and that it will not fund housing growth in places that don't have access to those two requirements.

Second, when increasing housing stock in regional towns and larger, economic communities, the State Government's preference is to build transitional housing rather than public or community housing.

Transitional housing started in Kununurra as a partnership between the Housing Authority, Wunan Foundation and Community Housing Limited, and has now been extended to Halls Creek, Derby and Broome. The core concept in transitional housing is that residents must meet certain conditions to access a standard of housing that is better than ordinary public housing: any children must have at least 85 per cent school attendance; at least one adult in the house must be in work; and the family agrees to tenancy obligations and to work with a wrap-around support service designed to assist the family to transition to private rental or home ownership.

There is strong demand for this model in the Kimberley, as Aboriginal families seek to move out of community and public housing. After four years of the original Kununurra project, the results are excellent. This is evident from continued high rates of school attendance and participation in training or employment, properties maintained in excellent condition, support services engaged, and several participants having achieved home ownership. Multiple, high-value outcomes have been achieved from a single project.

The State Government will support an expansion of transitional housing in the Kimberley, and into the Pilbara, through the establishment of a North West Aboriginal Housing Fund of up to \$200 million to increase housing choices and support services for Aboriginal families. The fund will include \$96 million of repurposed State Government funding and assets, and is expected to include \$25 million of Commonwealth Government funding. Among other things, the fund will seek to facilitate co-investment with native title trusts in housing options and home ownership opportunities for native title holders.

### Consultation focus area

The State Government will consult Aboriginal organisations and communities about improvements to the current models of, and the location of new, transitional housing.

### Priority action

The State Government will establish an Aboriginal Housing Fund of up to \$200 million to increase housing choices and support services for Aboriginal families in the North West over four years.





## Summary

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*This roadmap sets out long-term directions to create better opportunities for Aboriginal families and communities in regional and remote areas.*

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# Priority actions

This roadmap sets out long-term directions to create better opportunities for Aboriginal families and communities in regional and remote areas.

Below is a summary of 10 priority actions that the State Government will deliver in the first two years of this long-term reform process.

## Better Living Conditions

1. Identify up to 10 communities by the end of 2016 with which it will work to upgrade essential and municipal infrastructure, and introduce commensurate charges.
2. Commence in 2016–17 a \$20 million initiative to ensure that the residents of town-based reserves in the Pilbara receive the same services and opportunities, and are subject to the same payment responsibilities, as other residents of the relevant town.

## Supporting Families

3. Work with community leaders and organisations in Roebourne in 2016–17 to co design a reorientation of government-funded services to respond better to local needs and achieve better local outcomes.
4. Publish during 2016–17 mapping of government-funded services in the Kimberley and Pilbara to support work between government agencies, other organisations and communities on developing place-based service systems.
5. Commence in 2016–17 an initiative in Kununurra with community leaders and organisations to co-design a family-centred, earlier intervention service delivery model to support and enable better outcomes for local families.
6. Continue to support the trial and evaluation of the Commonwealth Government's Cashless Debit Card in the East Kimberley.
7. Work with the Commonwealth Government to implement the Compulsory Rent Deduction Scheme in Western Australia.

## More Opportunities

8. Commit \$25 million towards a three-year Kimberley Schools Project, starting in 2016–17, that seeks to accelerate student improvement in opt-in schools and communities.
9. Create new opportunities from 2016–17 for Aboriginal people and businesses in the regions through State Government recruitment, purchasing and contracting practices.
10. Establish an Aboriginal Housing Fund of up to \$200 million to increase housing choices and support services for Aboriginal families in the North West over four years.

# Consultation

Below is a summary of the seven State Government commitments around consultation over the remainder of 2016 as part of the reform process.

The State Government will consult:

## Better Living Conditions

1. Remote communities about future essential and municipal service delivery arrangements in accordance with the principles set out in the roadmap.
2. Reserve residents, native title holders or applicants, and other stakeholders about how best to achieve the Government's policy of ensuring that residents of town-based reserves receive the same services and opportunities, and are subject to the same responsibilities, as other residents of the relevant town.
3. On land tenure arrangements in remote Aboriginal communities as part of its consultation on essential and municipal services, and to ascertain how tenure change could facilitate further economic or social development.

## Supporting Families

4. In key locations and communities about the willingness to:
  - a. participate in a place-based reorientation of government services to respond more effectively to local need and enable better local outcomes
  - b. participate in implementing new, family-centred models of service delivery
  - c. trial a community-based model for prenatal, postnatal and early childhood development.
5. With and support Aboriginal communities that wish to reduce harm from alcohol.

## More Opportunities

6. With schools and communities in the Kimberley about their willingness to participate in the Kimberley Schools Project.
7. With Aboriginal organisations and communities about the location of new transitional housing, and potential improvements to the current models of transitional housing.

Community-based and stakeholder consultation will focus on the Pilbara and Kimberley, which are the initial regions for regional services reform. However, feedback is welcome from any organisation or person.

# Governance

The Government of Western Australia announced regional services reform in May 2015 as a catalyst to improve the lives of Aboriginal people in remote and regional Western Australia.

The two ministers leading the reform are the Minister for Child Protection, the Hon. Andrea Mitchell MLA, and the Minister for Regional Development, the Hon. Terry Redman MLA.

The Minister for Child Protection is leading the work on supporting families, which includes changes to the way the State Government delivers human services. The Minister for Regional Development is leading the work on better living conditions, which includes changes to the way the State Government funds infrastructure in remote Aboriginal communities and town-based reserves. Both ministers are working to deliver more education, employment and housing opportunities in regional and remote areas.

The ministers are supported by a strong governance structure that includes the:

- Aboriginal Affairs Cabinet Sub-Committee, chaired by the Minister for Aboriginal Affairs, the Hon. Peter Collier MLC
- Aboriginal Affairs Coordinating Committee, a statutory body of State directors general
- strategic regional advisory councils in the Pilbara and Kimberley, comprised of Aboriginal, State Government, Commonwealth Government and not-for-profit members
- district leadership groups in the Pilbara, West Kimberley and East Kimberley to bring together government agencies, service providers and community representatives
- a small, dedicated Regional Services Reform Unit to guide and coordinate the reform, led by State Reform Leader, Grahame Searle.

State Government agencies remain responsible for delivering existing services for Aboriginal families and communities in regional and remote areas, and continuing to improve them as part of their normal business. Cabinet has also required agencies to support and implement the reform.

Members of the Aboriginal Affairs Cabinet Sub-Committee, Aboriginal Affairs Coordinating Committee and strategic regional advisory councils have contributed to the development of this roadmap.

**Further information about the State Government's regional services reform is available at [www.regionalservicesreform.wa.gov.au](http://www.regionalservicesreform.wa.gov.au).**

