

Budget roundup

What the Territory and Federal budgets said

FEDERAL

The government has committed \$800,000 to a Corporations Law Simplification Programme and a "commensurate amount" in each of the next three and a half years.

The Attorney-General, Michael Lavarch, said he will establish a Task Force and a private sector Consultative Group to undertake the programme.

The programme is intended to reduce the cost of becoming aware of one's rights and responsibilities under the Corporations Law.

The outcome should be a "user friendly" Corporations Law which will "...result in increased international competitiveness and reduced complexity in our companies and securities laws," Mr Lavarch said.

An \$885,000 increase will go to the office of the Sex Discrimination Commissioner for education campaigns targetted at womens groups, unions, employers, educational institutions and the providers of goods and services.

That allocation also provides for extra conciliation staff to deal with the expected increase in complaints received by the Human Rights and Equal Opportunities Commission.

\$700,000 has been allocated to extend the Family Court's pilot mediation programme for another 12 months.

A new electronic system containing up-to-date Commonwealth Acts and Statutory Rules will be introduced by July next year, with consolidations

and amendments being available through SCALE, the Attorney-General's Department legal database.

The database will also contain information and reports from major Commonwealth and State courts and tribunals.

\$2.428m has been allocated for the project in 1993-94.

The public will be able to access the database through the Australian Government Publishing Service bookshops and through the Attorney-General's department.

Plans for the future include making Australian laws publicly available in court buildings, business centres, libraries and other appropriate outlets through a variety of technologies.

\$497,000 was allocated for consumer affairs projects, the breakup of which is:

seed funding of \$300,000 to establish an independent Consumer Financial Advisory Service;

\$90,000 to establish a consumer education programme for new arrivals to Australia; and

a \$54,000 funding increase for the Australian Federation of Consumer Organisations.

As an aside, future federal budgets will be brought down before the end of the financial year, so (notwithstanding threats to block supply) we can expect another federal budget in 10 months time.

NORTHERN TERRITORY

\$20m has been allocated for the construction of a new prison in Alice Springs.

A further \$381,000 has been allocated to engage consultants for the project.

\$192,000 has been allocated to the Domestic Violence Legal Help Service of which \$72,000 will go to Alice Springs and \$120,000 to Darwin.

\$6.4m has been allocated for the construction of a new Arts and Law building at the Northern Territory University.

The DPP has been allocated \$338,000 for outfitting new premises at Moonta House.

Police Prosecutions and Consumer Affairs will also move to Moonta House with relocation allocations of \$175,000 and \$139,000 respectively.

Oenpelli and Daly River will each have a new police station and cell block at allocations of \$700,000 and \$550,000 respectively

\$1.46m has been allocated for the construction of a new court house in Katherine.

\$3m has been allocated for the construction of a new fire station and upgrade of police cells in Alice Springs.

\$118,000 has been allocated to assist with establishing a regional NT Industrial Supplies Office in Alice Springs, and \$100,000 has been allocated to establish a Business and Licensing Information Centre in the Sitzler Building in Alice.

\$208,000 has been allocated for a youth refuge in Alice.