

Calare QUIZ

1. One of the most strategically significant locations for the future of transport and logistics in Australia is located where?
2. Which western town of Calare hosts an unusual racing event and what is it?
3. In what year was Forbes' famous Albion Hotel tragically burnt down?
4. Which valley is the widest enclosed valley in the world, second to the Grand Canyon?
5. Which Calare town hosts an annual tribute to its Irish heritage?
6. Which historic hospital will be celebrating its 150th birthday this year?
7. How many laps do drivers of the Bathurst 1000 have to complete?
8. The first payable goldfield found in Australia is located where?
9. What is the unusual rock feature that overlooks Tarana?
10. Which Calare town is named after a character from Shakespeare's, A Midsummer Night's Dream?

1. The Hub - Parkes, 2. Forbes Camel Races, 3. 2009, 4. Capertee Valley, 5. Tullamore Irish Festival, 6. Carcoar Hospital, 7. 161, 8. Ophir, 9. Evans Crown, 10. Oberon.

ANSWERS



Budget neglects agricultural skills shortage

Labor's plan to direct an extra 6,000 skilled migrants into regional areas on a short-term basis from 2012 is too little, too late.

The Budget fails to address the critical skilled labour shortage in regional Australia, particularly at a time when the agricultural industry is only just beginning to return to pre-drought production levels.

The National Farmers Federation claims there are approximately 80,000 skilled positions to fill within the agricultural sector alone. The problem is that approximately 40 per cent of the skilled migrants accepted in this year's intake of 10,000 are dependants such as family and children.

A significant amount of people that will qualify for a permanent visa under this scheme are already in Australia on temporary work visas. As a result, Labor's plan will not materialise into 6,000 new workers on the ground.

Regional Australia is in desperate need of skilled workers, yet agriculture and horticulture are specifically excluded from the raft of apprenticeships being funded.

With skilled workers moving away from agriculture and into the mines, this worrying trend has not been addressed in the Budget. Whilst we might have skilled migrants relocating to the regions, it will not address the skills shortage in the agricultural sector because it has been excluded from the training funding.

The farm sector drives \$155 billion a year in economic production, yet Labor has taken yet another swipe at agriculture, slashing another \$32.8 million from its budget. \$400 million has also been ripped out of water-saving infrastructure for Murray Darling Basin, yet water buy-backs are set to accelerate.

At a time where we have a growing food crisis, abandoning our farm sector is short sighted in the extreme.



Cobby in Burraga



Parkes Men's Shed - Cobby joins the blokes for a cuppa



Cobby visits Black Springs Public School

The Hon. **John COBB** ^{MP}
Federal Member for Calare
Shadow Minister for Agriculture & Food Security

Calare *in* Focus

The Budget and Calare

Treasurer Wayne Swan recently handed down his fourth Budget. The Treasurer claims 'this Budget delivers for regional Australia like no other', yet there has been \$500 million cut from regional programs and nothing has been offered for Calare.

As it stands, Labor has created a deficit of \$107 billion, which equates to \$4,700 debt for every single Australian. What's more, the Government is borrowing an enormous \$135 million a day to pay for its reckless spending.

The 2011-2012 Budget did not reveal anything that we didn't already know. What we see is a series of rehashed and revisited promises. However, the devil is really in the detail.

At a time when Australian families are feeling the pinch with rising petrol, groceries, electricity and cost of living expenses, the Labor Government has robbed \$2 billion from families.

Not to mention the giant hole in the Budget – the Gillard-Brown Carbon Tax. Instead of

ending months of uncertainty surrounding the controversial tax, the Budget failed to provide detail on how the proposed tax will actually impact on our cost of living and jobs.

Regional Australia has been robbed in this budget. There is not one cent of new money for roads or rail and it appears regional development will be contingent on the looming mining tax.

What this Budget has revealed and reconfirmed, is that the government is weak, unstable and directionless. It lacks leadership and their priorities are clearly wrong. The government has managed to cut \$2 billion from families, yet find \$1.7 billion to pay for a bungled border protection scheme.

This year's Budget resembles an onion and it won't be until we peel away the layers that we get to the crux of where this government is heading.



Caring for Calare

“That's what Australia needs: not a carbon tax but an election. Only an election could make an honest politician of this Prime Minister. Only an election can give Australia a government with authority to make the tough decisions to build a stronger Australia and help Australians get ahead.”

Tony Abbott
Leader of the Opposition

What wasn't included:

- No details on the proposed Carbon Tax
- No funding for the Bells Line Expressway
- No funding for a new Lake Rowlands Dam
- No funding for the \$98 million CSU Medical School
- No funding for Peak Hill Multi-Purpose Service
- No funding for mental health GPs
- No funding to address agricultural skills shortages

What we can expect:

- \$1.5 billion in mental health funding
- \$109 million for regional universities
- 16,000 skilled permanent migrants for the regional workforce
- \$2 billion stripped from families – where both parents work
- \$500 million cut from regional programs
- \$308 million blown on a digital set top box give away
- The Labor Government is borrowing \$135 million a day
- \$1.7 billion to pay for Labor's inability to secure our borders

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The facts:

- \$2 billion stripped from families
- Indexation of Family Tax Benefit (FTB) A and B supplements will be frozen for the next three years
- The indexation of the higher income thresholds for family payments for the next three years will also be frozen
- Thresholds include: \$150,000 limit for FTB-B; the \$75,000 Baby Bonus limit for family income; the \$150,000 paid parental leave income limit; and higher income threshold for FTB-A.
- All up – Labor has hit Australian families and businesses with \$6 billion in new and higher taxes



Labor launches assault on the middle class

At a time when Australian families are facing severe cost of living pressures, Labor's Budget has cut support for families and hit them with new and higher taxes.

Electricity prices are up 51%, grocery prices up 14%, education and health costs up by approximately 20% and we have seen seven interest rate rises in a row increasing average mortgage repayments by over \$500 a month.

There is nothing in this Budget for families doing it tough. What's more, families are still yet to learn what the outcome is of the Gillard-Brown Carbon Tax.

It appears the government is being tough on families because it's failed to be tough on itself.

Investing in Australia's Regions

During the 2010 Federal Election, Prime Minister Gillard repeatedly assured that the government would have a 'renewed focus on regional Australia. However regional Australia has again been short changed by a city centric government which has cut \$500 million in regional funding.

From the \$4.3 billion to help the regions share in the nation's growth, there is not a single new cent in the Budget for road or rail projects across Australia.

The Budget revealed promises of building the Inland Rail link, however funding will not be seen and work will not begin until late 2014 - and that is only for the planning stages. All we have seen is rehashed announcements with funding reshuffled from existing allocations.

The majority of funding announced for regional projects will also be dependent upon revenue from the proposed mining tax.

However, of interest in the Budget was the announcement that \$109 million would be allocated to universities with regional campuses. No detail has been revealed, but one hopes that Australia's largest university, Charles Sturt University, will in some way benefit from this funding, particularly CSU Orange and Bathurst in Calare.



Cuts to regional Australia programs:

- \$350 million from the Priority Regional Infrastructure Program.
- \$100 million from the Building Better Regional Cities program.
- \$50 million redirected from the Regional Development Australia fund for projects in Mr Oakeshott's electorate of Lyne.

What others said about the Budget

- "Rural Australians will be disappointed by the government's failure to put forward critical plans to address severe shortages of GPs in rural Australia" – Professor Ian Goulter, Vice-Chancellor CSU
- "We're all very excited that the work we have done here has been recognised and that the government sees this as the right model to roll out across the country" – Narelle Stocks, Headspace Central West Service Manager
- "Worryingly, almost the entire \$6 billion set aside for the Rural Infrastructure Fund rests on the Mineral Resource Tax passing parliament" – Charles Armstrong, NSW Farmers' Association President
- "The role and status of Parkes as a national logistics hub was significantly enhanced by the Gillard Labor Government budget on Tuesday night" – Ken Keith, Parkes Shire Council Mayor
- "The government must not lose sight of some key priorities for agriculture that remain in limbo without funding security" – Jock Laurie, National Farmers Federation President
- "The policy is no longer to stop the boats but to swap the boats – at a budget cost of nearly \$70,000 a person or more than ten times the cost of a Sydney – Kuala Lumpur first class air ticket" – Tony Abbott, Leader of the Opposition

Mental Health Budget Win

The \$1.5 billion investment towards mental health has been welcomed by the Coalition. For Calare, Headspace will benefit greatly from the funding announcement. 30 new Headspace centres are set to be opened across Australia, similar to the Bathurst facility which was one of the first centres established in Australia in 2008.

practice which is likely to impact on patient health outcomes. In addition to the mental health funding, \$1.3 billion has been allocated to regional health infrastructure, funding 63 projects. I am pleased there is a significant amount of money going to our regions, yet there appears to be nothing substantial for Calare. I am hopeful that a portion of the \$120 million directed towards increasing the number of sub-acute beds or regional multi-purpose services will find its way to Calare. The number of rural and remote communities eligible to apply for multi-purpose service funding has also been expanded. Let's hope that towns in need of MPS, such as Peak Hill, are able to benefit from this deal. By far the biggest disappointment in health funding was that there was no money allocated for the Charles Sturt University Medical School. The establishment of a medical school would certainly help in easing the national shortage of general practitioners in rural areas.

However there is grave concern that this investment has reduced the critical role of the GPs in coordinating mental healthcare for their patients. The Royal Australian College of General Practitioners have stated that the budget clearly lacks direct investment into general



Main Pic: Cobby meets Bathurst prison wardens on their Kick the Dog Tour 2011
 Right Top: Local timber treatment mill at Burruga
 Right Bottom: Cobby talking sheep at Rydal Show
 Far Right: John in a dental chair