

Michael McCormack MP

Putting the Riverina & Central West first



June 2018

Federal Budget delivers for Regional Australians

BUILDING local infrastructure, connecting local communities and creating local jobs is the focus of the 2018-19 Budget which delivers for the Riverina and Central West.

I am pleased the Liberal and Nationals' Government is delivering on our commitment to manage the Budget in a responsible way, while ensuring the services Australians need and deserve.

As your local Federal Member, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Infrastructure and Transport, I am proud to be a part of a Government which is building vital infrastructure and providing essential services for locals in rural and regional Australia, especially in the Riverina and Central West.

From helping younger Australians undertake their living-away-from-home studies with our \$53.9 million injection into Youth Allowance to helping older Australians stay in their homes longer by delivering an additional 14,000 high level home care packages. The Government is delivering for all Australians.

It is great to be part of a Government which is improving health care in regional Australia. The Riverina and Central West will benefit from the Murray-Darling Medical Schools Network.

The Government has invested \$95.4 million in the Budget to establish the network, which will include Wagga Wagga (University of New South Wales).

As Minister for Infrastructure, I am particularly proud of the \$3.5 billion included in the Budget to deliver the Roads of Strategic Importance initiative which will upgrade key freight corridors in regional Australia.

The successful Building Better Regions Fund and the Stronger Communities Programme are both continuing. Both allow communities in the Riverina and Central West to



HEALTHY RELATIONSHIP: Celebrating the establishment of the Murray-Darling Medical Schools Network with the head of University of NSW Medicine's Wagga campus, Associate Professor John Preddy.

apply for funding to improve local facilities and create more local jobs.

I understand how hard the 60,000 taxpayers in the Riverina and Central West work. We as a Government know your hard-earned money is exactly that – your money – which is why I am pleased the Budget allows for responsible tax relief in the upcoming 2018-19 financial year.

The Liberal and Nationals' Government has again extended the \$20,000 Instant Asset Write-Off for small businesses with a turnover of less than \$10 million, which has helped and will continue to help businesses in our local communities to invest in new equipment and create new employment opportunities.

You can find more information on the 2018 Budget by visiting the www.budget.gov.au website or by contacting my electorate office on 6921 4600.

I will continue to cover as much of the 48,988 square kilometres of the electorate that I have been privileged to represent and meet as many of the more than 110,000 of you who call this beautiful region home.

Michael McCormack

**Michael McCormack MP
Federal Member for Riverina
Deputy Prime Minister
Minister for Infrastructure and Transport**



SITE TO SEE: With chair of the Rural Medical School Implementation Committee and Wagga Wagga radiologist Associate Professor Nick Stephenson.

Budget 2018, what it means for you...

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TAX RELIEF FOR HARD WORKERS

THE Liberal and Nationals' Government understands you deserve more of your hard-earned money in your pocket and that's why we are providing responsible tax relief.

More than 60,000 taxpayers in the Riverina and Central West stand to benefit from low and middle income tax relief in the upcoming financial year.

For example, a shop assistant on \$45,000 will have an extra \$440 in their pocket from the Budget year onwards, with an extra \$3,740 in their pockets over the first seven years of the tax plan.

ASSISTING OLDER AUSTRALIANS

THE Government is helping older Australians stay in their homes for longer through more high-level home care packages.

I am pleased to be part of a Government which is helping more than 30,000 people aged over 65 and their families in the Riverina and Central West to live longer, happier and healthier lives.

We are delivering 14,000 new high-level home care packages on top of the 6,000 announced in September last year.

We are ensuring better access to care especially for older Australians living in regional, rural and remote areas.

The measures we are taking in the aged care sector means an improved quality of care which respects the dignity of older Australians and supports their independence.



BETTER CARE: With Minister for Aged Care Ken Wyatt AM.

Rural medical answer to do

RESEARCH shows if doctors are trained in the regions they are likely to stay and serve the local community.

It is a once-in-a-generation boost to health care for rural and regional Australians and I am proud to deliver a network of rural medical schools which will directly benefit the Riverina and Central West.

I have fought and lobbied for years for this to become a reality and am pleased rural and regional Australians will soon be getting the healthcare service they deserve and expect.

The Government will invest \$95.4 million to establish a Murray-Darling Medical School Network to support end-to-end training for rural students to study medicine in the regions.

One of the five schools will be set up in Wagga Wagga through the University of NSW and will directly benefit residents throughout the Riverina and Central West.

The Wagga Wagga region has been well served by rural clinical schools established by the University of New South Wales (2000) and the University of Notre Dame (2011), but the regions still need more doctors.

Now is the time for a dedicated medical school network, based in the regions, where doctors can train from start to finish in a regional or rural area and residents in those areas get the health care they deserve.

Research shows if we train – from start to finish – more doctors in the bush we can attract more people who will want to make the regions their home.

The Nationals understand that simply training more doctors is not the answer. We are elected to speak up for the people who do not have access to a doctor.

That's why the Government has invested significantly to address the disparity in health care between metropolitan areas and rural and regional Australia.

I'm proud to be part of The Nationals' team which has fought hard for residents living in rural areas and, as a representative of a rural electorate, I am pleased to be able to deliver on such an important aspect of every person's life.

I have been a fierce advocate of addressing the maldistribution of doctors into rural and regional Australia since I entered politics in 2010 and this medical school funding announcement will help address shortfalls in smaller communities in the Riverina and Central West.

The facts...

Five medical schools will be established across the Murray-Darling network.

The Government will invest \$95.4 million to support end-to-end training for rural students to study medicine in the regions.

Network will complement other initiatives such as the Rural Junior Doctor Training Innovation Fund.

An additional \$84 million for the Royal Flying Doctor Service to provide critical dental, mental and ambulance services in the most underserved rural and remote regions.

Soon after my election to Parliament I helped establish a group of local doctors, community leaders and specialists who wanted to be part of the solution in the Riverina region.

I have worked with the Rural Medical School Implementation Committee, started in November 2011, to push the case for a medical school in Wagga Wagga.

I have had many discussions with the chair of the Rural Medical School Implementation Committee, Wagga Wagga radiologist Associate Professor Nick Stephenson.

He tells me in this region alone we are short of 40 General Practitioner proceduralists and that a system needs to be put in place where we are training the doctors with the right skills to go to our smaller towns.

The Liberal and Nationals' Government is proving its commitment to rural and regional Australians. We are bringing equity to the healthcare system through the Murray-Darling Medical Schools Network as well as appointing Australia's first National Rural Health Commissioner, Emeritus Professor Paul Worley. The Rural Junior Doctor Training Innovation Fund is another important initiative which is addressing the maldistribution of doctors.

We are dedicated to providing the framework to boost the standard of healthcare in rural and regional Australia.

\$53.9 million injection for Youth Allowance

Supporting regional students

Increase in Youth Allowance parental income cut-off for the regional workforce self-supporting independence criteria from \$150,000 to \$160,000. The new cut-off will be increased by \$10,000 for each additional child in the family.

The Government is also changing the year for assessing parental income to the year prior to any gap year. Students will know whether their parental income is above or below the cut-off before they make the decision to defer university studies, take a gap year and work, to qualify as independent.

\$38.1 million for ABSTUDY recipients to ensure secondary students who move away from home to study remain supported.

RURAL and regional students will benefit from a \$53.9 million injection from the Federal Government to allow more people to qualify for Youth Allowance.

I have fought for more support for students studying in the Riverina and Central West and was pleased with the announcement in this year's Budget.

Why should a student living outside metropolitan areas be held at a disadvantage?

As The Nationals' Leader, I believe your postcode should not limit you reaching your potential.

All young people should have access to the best possible education.

We know regional students face a number of challenges which their city cousins take for granted.

The Youth Allowance measures will be welcome news for many in rural and regional Australia.

The Nationals have been advocating for this for many years and I'm pleased we have delivered.

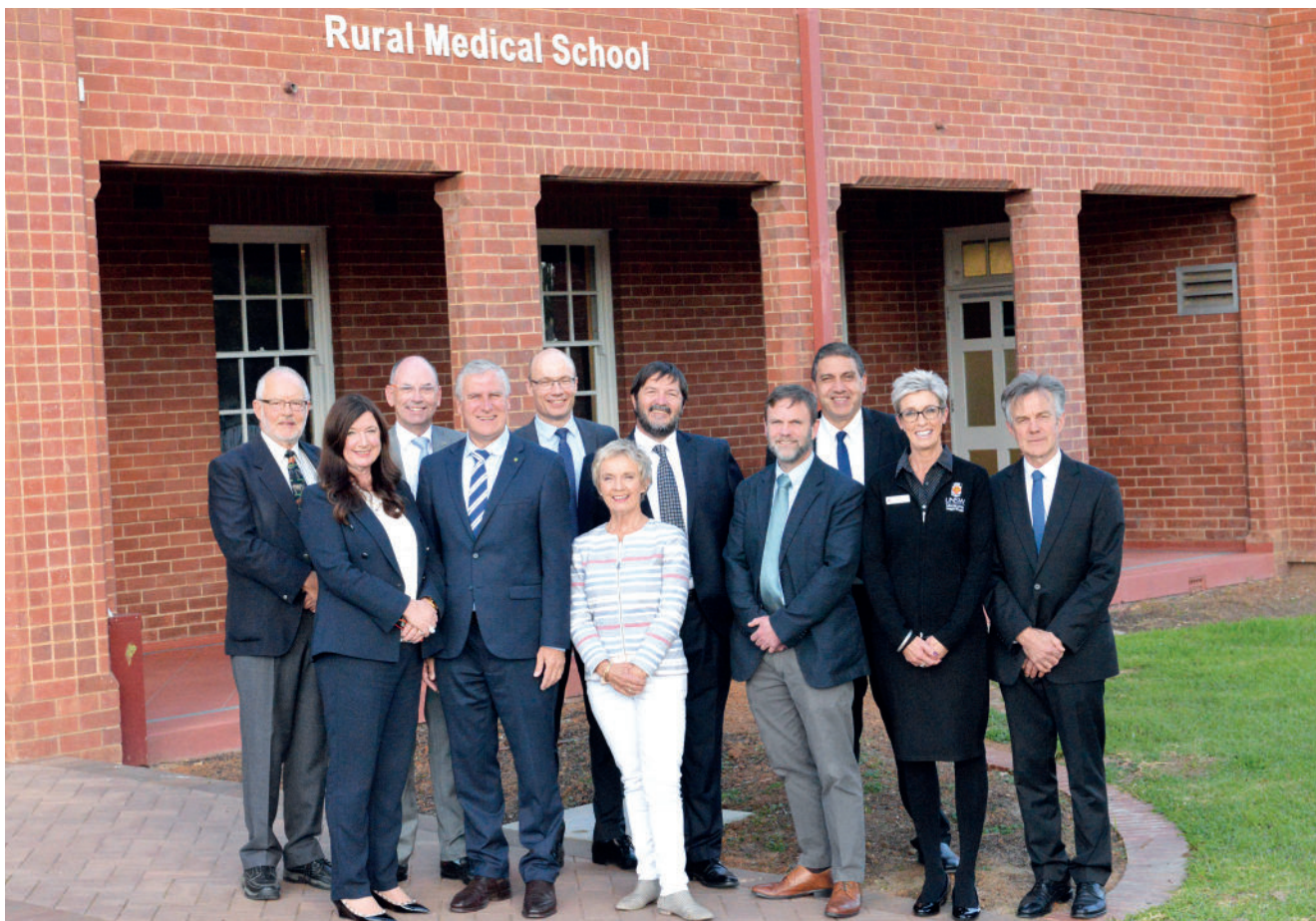
I've spoken to a number of families whose children have needed to leave home to go to university to study. I've held forums to listen to students about this very issue. I understand the pressure and the financial strain on not only parents, but on the students themselves.

This initiative will ease this pressure.



MARBLE LESSON: With Gundagai High School students during their visit to Parliament House.

1 schools the ctor shortfall



HEALTH CARE BOOST: With members of the Rural Medical School Implementation Committee and UNSW Medicine Rural Clinical School (from left) Professor Graeme Richardson, Dr Lesley Forster, Professor Gerard Carroll, Jonathan Pheasant, Kay Hull AM, Associate Professor John Preddy, Tony Jordan, Professor Anthony Kelleher, Melissa Van Lierop and Associate Professor Adrian van der Rijt.



BADLY NEEDED: Inspecting the state of the current infrastructure at Gundagai's sewage treatment plant. Funding of \$3.5 million has been secured for Cootamundra-Gundagai Regional Council towards building a new plant.

BUILDING BETTER REGIONS BOOSTED IN BUDGET 2018-19

A VITAL regional infrastructure program which is delivering jobs and much-needed projects throughout the Riverina and Central West has been continued.

I'm proud to say the Liberal and Nationals' Government has allocated another \$200 million in the 2018-19 Budget to deliver a third round of the Building Better Regions Fund (BBRF).

In round one of the BBRF I worked hard to deliver \$3.5m for Cootamundra-Gundagai Regional Council's proposed new sewage treatment plant at Gundagai, as well as \$950,000 to help Weddin Shire Council build a medical centre at Grenfell and \$210,000 to allow House with No Steps to move its Aussie Biscuits Factory at Forbes into a new premises in the town.

These are much-needed projects which are now being built and delivered, helping local communities and creating local jobs.

I had the pleasure of turning the first sod for the much-needed Grenfell Medical Centre a few months ago and visited the Aussie Biscuits Factory just before its move. I have seen first-hand the real benefits the Building Better Regions Fund, as many locals in those areas can see too.

The minimum grant for Building Better Regions Fund projects is \$20,000 and the maximum grant is \$10 million.

While these are exciting projects, there is still great potential in the region for further investment, so I encourage the community to consider projects which can help strengthen local economies and build capacity and productivity around the region.

The fund is only for projects in regional Australia and I look forward to hearing more of the region's ideas when applications are called later this year.



SOD TURNING: With Grenfell medical centre site foreman John Anderson (left) and Weddin Mayor Mark Liebich.

Stronger commitment to communities

A FURTHER boost to local community organisations in the Riverina and Central West has been delivered thanks to the recent Liberal and Nationals' Government Budget.

The recent Federal Budget has delivered funding for an additional round of the popular Stronger Communities Programme, meaning local community organisations are set to share in \$150,000 made available solely for the Riverina electorate.

The grants - which are between \$2500 and \$20,000 - have helped deliver for the region in past rounds.

Communities big and small have shared in our allocation previously and I have enjoyed seeing that investment help sporting clubs, community groups and volunteer organisations continue their vital work throughout the Riverina and Central West.

The third round of this programme last year funded improvements to netball courts at Cowra, helped pay for laser levelling of the Wagga Wagga croquet courts, helped improve the club house at the Illabo sports ground and delivered outdoor exercise equipment at The Rock.

This funding is targeted at the sorts of organisations which make country communities such as ours so special, and I am excited to hear locals' ideas about how this additional allocation should be spent.

I encourage locals to start thinking about potential applications. If you have a group or a public facility which needs an upgrade, or which can help boost tourism, local volunteerism or build a stronger local community, please have a look at the criteria and share your idea. My office will advise when applications open.



OPENING DOORS: At the opening of Nangus Hall's roller door project in which I secured \$5,400 towards its completion.



THROUGH THE HOOP: With Wagga Croquet Club President Nola Scott. The club was granted \$3,643 through the Stronger Communities Programme.

Government securing nation's freight future

IT IS the biggest rail project this nation has seen since the link across the Nullabor 100 years ago.

And the Riverina and Central West is in prime position to benefit greatly from the 1,700-kilometre Inland Rail Project which will travel through the heart of the electorate.

The benefits of Inland Rail will go much further than the Primary Industry sector – the whole region and nation will reap the rewards.

The Liberal and Nationals' Government is continuing its commitment to see this \$9.3 billion project through. I was in Peak Hill earlier this year where the first 600 tonnes of steel was delivered for the Parkes-to-Narromine section of the project in which 14,000 tonnes will be needed to complete the 107-kilometre section of the track – the equivalent of five Sydney Harbour Bridges.

I was in Parkes in early last month where the Federal and New South Wales Governments signed a landmark Bilateral Agreement, which makes way for the start of works on the project in NSW.

I signed the Intergovernmental Agreement with NSW Deputy Premier and Minister for Regional NSW John Barilaro.

New South Wales is the second state to sign up to the nationally significant project. The new agreement provides consent for the Australian Rail Track Corporation (ARTC) to deliver Inland Rail in NSW.

I was also in Illabo in April to announce that the \$6 million feasibility design contract for the section of the Inland Rail from Illabo to Stockinbingal.

Up to 95 per cent of freight from the Riverina – that's 31,500 containers per year – end up at Port Botany. I was with the Prime Minister in early May to announce \$400 million to duplicate the remaining 2.9 kilometres of the connection into Port Botany. This will ensure that Riverina



CORRIDOR OF COMMERCE: With (from left) Illabo resident and business owner Emma Muller and son Charlie, Cootamundra-Gundagai Council Deputy Mayor Dennis Palmer, Member for Cootamundra Steph Cooke and Junee Mayor Neil Smith.

and Central West food and fibre gets from paddock to port faster and more efficiently.

Locals know how exciting this project is and – as a local MP – I know how Inland Rail will create local jobs and investment opportunities throughout the regions, as well as dealing with Australia's future freight challenges well into the next century.

Australia's domestic freight is going to grow by 80 per cent by 2030. Without the Inland Rail, it would mean tens of thousands more trucks on our roads. Australia's domestic freight will almost double in the next 20 years.

More information about the Inland Rail project is available at <https://infrastructure.gov.au/rail/inland>.



HISTORIC MOMENT: Signing the Intergovernmental agreement at Parkes Railway Station with (front) NSW Deputy Leader John Barilaro and (back, from left) ARTC Chair Warren Truss and Parkes Mayor Ken Keith.

By the numbers...

164 metres: The length of each segment of steel segment being delivered along the Inland Rail route.

14,000 tonnes: The weight of the steel rail required for the first section – from Parkes to Narromine.

\$9.3 billion: Money committed by the Liberal and Nationals' Government to the project.

1,700 kilometres: The distance along the entire Inland Rail from Melbourne to Brisbane.

Meeting the needs of regional students

EVERY student deserves a quality school education and every student in the Riverina and Central West should be given every opportunity to succeed and thrive.

This simple message is the driver behind the Government's delivery of a needs-based model of funding recommended by David Gonski, because that is what we need in education and it means a fairer system for regional students.

Our message on education is clear: whether it's a degree or a trade, further education is good for everyone and a trade is every bit as good as a degree.

I want all children, those children in rural areas in particular, to get the best start and the best possible start is a happy home and a good education.

More than 25,000 students across the 129 schools in the electorate will benefit from an extra \$23.5 billion in schools over the next decade.

We are also ensuring 2,428 children in the Riverina and Central West can access 15 hours of quality early learning in the year before they start school with a multimillion-dollar preschool funding boost.



NO KIDDING: With Weethalle goat farmer Keith Cowen.

High-tech solutions for our farmers

REGIONAL and rural Australian economies rely heavily on the agriculture sector.

I'm pleased the Government is investing \$224 million to help grow our exports and jobs and support economic growth, underpinned by strong biosecurity.

The Liberal and Nationals' Government is also investing more than \$260 million in the global positioning system (GPS) technology that will create jobs and support the industry. More accurate GPS will improve productivity by allowing new technology to be created and used. This will lead to efficiencies in areas such as virtual fencing for farms and better management of livestock over vast distances.

We are delivering a \$121.6 million boost in biosecurity systems to support increased trade and ensure we can protect our clean, green pest and disease status.

I've spoken to many primary producers throughout the Riverina and Central West and, coming from a multi-generational farming family, I understand the challenges and opportunities facing our farmers.

The Nationals have always been and will continue to be the strongest advocates for regional and rural Australia, and farmers play a vital role in our communities west of the great divide.

MORE SUPPORT FOR FAMILIES

WORKING families know all too well the pressures of balancing the budget and supporting a growing family.

Families are the backbone of our society and the Liberal and Nationals' Government understand the cost pressures families face so we have taken action to fix a broken system.

The new child care package will provide the greatest hours of support to the families who work the longest hours, and the greatest subsidy and financial support to the families who earn the least.

If you are currently receiving payments from the Child Care Benefit or Child Care Rebate schemes you will need to rollover your details to the new system. Go to <https://www.education.gov.au/ChildCarePackage> to learn more.

Better child care

From 2 July, 5,456 local families in the Riverina and Central West stand to benefit from the Government's reforms to childcare.

\$2.5 billion increase in early childhood education and care.

A family on \$80,000 – both parent/s working full time, with two children aged under 6 in long day care five days a week at \$100 a day will be more than \$8,000 better off a year.



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