



CARING FOR PEOPLE A NATIONAL ANTI-POVERTY STRATEGY

The Greens' long term plan to reduce poverty in Australia

There are 2.3 million people living below the poverty line in Australia. Nearly 600,000 of them are children. The Greens are the only party talking about this, and who are willing stand up for vulnerable families by committing to a long term plan to address the underlying causes of poverty.

By world standards we live in a wealthy country but poverty is becoming increasingly entrenched in parts of our society. We cannot delay action any longer.

> OUR GOAL IS TO REDUCE AND ULTIMATELY ELIMINATE POVERTY

Currently, the underlying contributors to poverty such as affordable housing, food security and access to education and employment are being tackled separately, across different Government departments, and different levels of Government.

That's why the Greens are announcing our plan to begin work on creating a National Anti-Poverty Strategy.

A successful strategy will facilitate coordinated action across all levels of government and the community services sector to reduce poverty and address its underlying causes.

The Greens will:

- **Establish an expert group** to begin work on assessing the current landscape and put forth recommendations that could be adopted by COAG to facilitate coordinated action.
- Invest **\$12 million** over 4 years to advance the development of a nation strategy.
- Set **poverty reduction targets** to be reported against annually in Parliament

Much like a national action plan on mental health, or Closing the Gap, this initiative would ensure that action is undertaken in conjunction with service providers, in order to develop a national response that is focused on enhancing collaboration.

> WE NEED A COMPREHENSIVE, NATIONAL PLAN TO TACKLE THE CAUSES OF POVERTY

Piecemeal and inconsistent responses to poverty are inadequate and ineffective approaches.

There is no silver bullet to solve the long term challenge of poverty. The problems of poverty are too widespread and complex.

The underlying causes are complex and so our efforts to address the issue must be holistic and comprehensive. Yet the lack of coordination federal, state and local government will continue to result in wasteful overlaps and serious gaps in service delivery.

Addressing poverty requires a coordinated, systemic effort across areas such as income support, housing affordability and access to health and community services. We need concerted long term commitment at federal, state and local government levels.

In 2002, the Australian Senate established an extensive inquiry into poverty. That inquiry made 95 recommendations including:

That a comprehensive anti-poverty strategy be developed at the national level

Social justice and social welfare organisations such as Catholic Social Services and ACOSS are still consistently calling on the Government to implement this recommendation.



> TARGETS AND REPORTING

The Plan will be underpinned by specific goals, including targets for particular vulnerable groups like children and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples. The strategy will require annual reporting to Parliament on achievements against these targets.

> POVERTY IS NOT AN ACCEPTABLE IN A CARING SOCIETY

The old parties are ignoring poverty in Australia. A caring society invests in reducing and preventing poverty by addressing its root causes. We can't keep neglecting all those Australians who struggle to make ends meet.

The development of an overarching National Anti-poverty Strategy will complement the Greens' other work in this area including our targeted initiatives to:

- **Raise Newstart by \$50 a week** and effectively reversing the impact of the cuts to Parenting Payment, which will reduce the pressure on our most vulnerable families
- **Address homelessness** and the housing affordability crisis
- **Invest in better access to healthcare, denticare, mental health care and justice**

> THE SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC COSTS OF POVERTY

We need to invest in this now – not doing so has costly social and economic implications for our future.

While the old parties have turned their backs, the Greens are continuing to stand up for vulnerable people across the country

ⁱ The Senate, Community Affairs References Committee, *A hand up not a hand out: Renewing the fight against poverty: Report on poverty and financial hardship*, March 2004.



NUCLEAR WASTE

A PROCESS NOT POSTCODE APPROACH

The Greens' plan for world's best practice in nuclear waste management

There are no long-term storage solutions for nuclear waste, however, Australia's accrued nuclear waste must be stored, transported and managed in a transparent, consensual and scientific manner.

There are no long-term storage solutions for nuclear waste, which is why the Australian Greens believe that nuclear industry activities should be ceased entirely.

The Greens will continue to stand up against the idea promoted by the Pangea Corporation and most recently Bob Hawke that Australia should become the world's nuclear waste dump.

Each nation must responsibly deal with their nuclear mistakes, not transport their toxic waste 'out of sight out of mind.'

The old parties have legislated to impose nuclear waste upon unwilling Aboriginal communities in the Northern Territory. Their preferred site at Muckaty station, 120km north of Tennant Creek, is on an earthquake fault and prone to heavy flooding in the wet season.

The Muckaty proposal is currently being contested in the Federal Court by the indigenous peoples who live in the area on the grounds they have not been consulted.

In order to establish a process for site selection based on science, consultation and consent, the Australian Greens propose the establishment of an Independent Commission on the Long Term Safe Storage, Transport and Management of Australia's Radioactive Waste.

> WE MUST FACE UP TO THE NUCLEAR MISTAKES OF THE PAST

The Greens know that Australia must responsibly deal with the nuclear mistakes of the past which have generated a total of

- 4020 cubic metres of so-called low-level and short-lived intermediate radioactive waste
- Approximately 600 cubic metres of long lived waste in this country
- 32 cubic metres of spent research reactor fuel that is returning to Australia from reprocessing in France and the UK in 2015-16.

An Independent Commission would apply world's best practice to responsibly deal with Australia's radioactive waste inventory, which will have to involve a more sophisticated management regime than dumping the waste containers in a shed on a cattle station - the current irresponsible approach of the old parties.

The Australian Greens will provide \$2.7 million to fund an Independent Commission on the Long Term Safe Storage, transport and Management of Australia's Radioactive Waste to deliver:

- The best practice model for radioactive waste management in Australia;
- An audit of the volumes of nuclear waste and the activity and contractual arrangements in place for the Commonwealth, States and Territories;
- An inventory of the waste management procedures currently being used by States and the Commonwealth;
- Community, independent expert and industry consultations and recommendations that are publicly canvassed;
- Recommended procedures for ongoing scrutiny of the implementation of the decisions arrived at through this proper independent process.

The Commission will:

- Consist of 5 people appointed by the Governor-General on a full time basis;
- Be genuinely independent, informing itself in any way it sees fit, consulting with anyone it sees fit, receiving written and oral information, conducting public seminars, establishing working groups, and not be subject to the control or direction of the Minister; and
- Report to the Minister in 15 months.

The fact is that, whether we like it or not, we have radioactive waste in this country, and we must responsibly deal with the consequences of irresponsible decisions made in the past.



> AUSTRALIA CAN UPHOLD INTERNATIONAL BEST PRACTICE

Australian can learn from other countries and institutions about principles of transparency, participation and accountability on nuclear waste. Australia is either a member of these institutions and treaties, or we have strong relationships with these countries considered to be like-minded on many fronts, which it makes it all the more regrettable that Australia is lagging behind on this aspect of international best practice.

> THE INTERNATIONAL ATOMIC ENERGY AGENCY

The International Atomic Energy Agency stated in 2007 that governments that have used undemocratic methods lacking public involvement and acceptance regarding nuclear waste "had to reconsider their programs". The IAEA study concluded that "reassessment can become necessary because past decisions were not reached through socially acceptable process." According to the IAEA, there is a need for, "public involvement in the decision making process; adequate financial provisions; clear, integrated, plans on how spent fuel and radioactive waste will be managed to ensure continued safety into the future, and as this could be for decades, to avoid creating a legacy situation that would impose undue burden on future generations..."¹

> THE UN JOINT CONVENTION ON THE SAFETY OF SPENT FUEL MANAGEMENT

Australia is party to the agreement which notes that "public consultation on radioactive waste management strategies was not only a good practice to follow, but was also essential for the development of a successful and sustainable policy."²

> OECD NUCLEAR ENERGY AGENCY

The OAEK recognises, "that public, and especially the local public, are not willing to commit irreversibly to technical choices on which they have insufficient understanding and control". The Nuclear Energy Agency's report on the *Decommissioning and Dismantling of Nuclear Facilities, Status, Approaches, Challenges* stated, "It is openly accepted that openness and transparency are essential for the winning of public approval...The local public is increasingly demanding to be involved in such planning and this may accelerate the introduction of concepts such as "stepwise decision making". The challenge for the future, therefore, will be satisfactory

development of systems of consulting the public, and local communities in particular, and the creation of sources of information in which the public can have full confidence."³

> THE UK

The UK government's Committee on Radioactive Waste Management's stated that, "There is a growing recognition that it is not ethically acceptable for a society to impose a radioactive waste facility on an unwilling community." The Committee sets out a very detailed set of recommendations on how to proceed with the siting of a radioactive waste facility.

Recommendation 11: Willingness to participate should be supported by the provision of community packages that are designed both to facilitate participation in the short term and to ensure that a radioactive waste facility is acceptable to the host community in the long term. Participation should be based on the expectation that the well-being of the community will be enhanced.

Recommendation 12: Experience from the UK and abroad clearly demonstrates the failure of earlier 'top down' mechanisms (often referred to as Decide-Announce-Defend) to implement long-term waste management facilities. It is generally considered that a voluntary process is essential to ensure equity, efficiency and the likelihood of successfully completing the process. There is a growing recognition that it is not ethically acceptable for a society to impose a radioactive waste facility on an unwilling community.⁴

> THE EUROPEAN UNION

The EU requires member states to adhere to certain social principles in terms of site selection. The European Union *Inventory of Best Practice in the Decommissioning of Nuclear Installations*, concluded, "Final waste repositories must be sited where local communities are willing to give their consent to these facilities for many generations. Experience has shown that, without this consent the project will sooner or later be cancelled, stopped or indefinitely delayed – one way or the other. Therefore siting must focus on three key issues: the safety of the repository system; the impact on local image and socio-economy, the importance of public acceptance and how it can be reached."⁵ From the citations above, it is clearly difficult to miss the emphasis placed by the IAEA, by the OECD Nuclear Energy Agency, International Commission on Radiological Protection, EU, and the UK on winning public confidence and obtaining social licence and community consent for the siting of radioactive waste facilities.

³ NAE OECD <http://www.oecd-nea.org/rwm/reports/2002/3714-decommissioning.pdf>

⁴ CORWM <http://corwm.decc.gov.uk/assets/corwm/pre-nov%202007%20doc%20archive/plenary%20papers/2006/20-21%20june%202006/1781%20-%20implementation%20recommendations%20following%20pse4.pdf>

⁵ EU 30 June 2006, http://ec.europa.eu/energy/nuclear/decommissioning/doc/05_2006_11_decommissioning_best_practice_report.pdf

¹ IAEA-TECDOC-1566, October 2007, Factors Affecting Public and Political Acceptance for the Implementation of Geological Disposal http://www-pub.iaea.org/MTCD/publications/PDF/te_1566_web.pdf

² The Joint Convention opened for signature on 29 Sept 1997 and entered into force on 18 June 2001 <http://www.iaea.org/Publications/Documents/Conventions/jointconv.html>



DENTICARE BRINGING DENTAL CARE INTO MEDICARE

The Greens plan to ensure all Australians have access to dental care.

Millions of Australians are unable to afford proper dental care. Many more put off dental visits and struggle to pay dental bills when emergencies arise. It's time we fixed this gaping hole in our world-class health system.

The mouth is part of the body and dental health should be part of our universal health care system. The Greens will bring dental care under Medicare so that everyone can get necessary treatment no matter what their circumstances may be.

> PUBLICLY-FUNDED DENTAL CARE

The Greens plan, Denticare, adds dental treatment to the Medicare Benefits Schedule, meaning dentists can bulk-bill dental services like doctors do. **Our plan for Denticare will:**

- **Provide dental treatment covered by Medicare.** Phased in over five years, Medicare will cover preventative and restorative dental treatment so that everybody can afford to go to the dentist.
- **Start with the most disadvantaged.** Low-income earners, kids and teens, pensioners and concession card holders will be among the first to access dental treatment under Medicare, before rolling out the scheme to everybody.
- **Ease pressure on the public system.** Because of the Greens, billions of extra dollars are being injected into public dental services. By maintaining this investment, public dental services will be able to treat complex cases and hard-to-reach sectors of the community without sending waiting lists skyrocketing.

Through our work in Parliament, the Greens have already secured the biggest reform to dental health in a generation. It's time to extend the benefits to all Australians.

> FIXING A HEALTH CRISIS

Australia's oral health is poor and getting worse. Less than half of Australians have good oral health and dental visiting patterns. This is largely due to the high cost of dental treatment. 60% of dental care is paid for out-of-pocket by consumers, with one-third saying they can't afford to or delay going to the dentist because of the expense.ⁱ

Good oral health is important for overall health and wellbeing. Complications from dental disease can make other medical issues worse and lead to life-threatening situations.

Untreated dental disease results in an unnecessary burden on the health system: dental issues cause up to 10% of GP visitsⁱⁱ and more than 60,000 potentially avoidable hospital visits a yearⁱⁱⁱ. This costs the country approximately \$500 million in direct costs and up to \$2 billion in lost productivity every year.^{iv}

An estimated 400,000 people are on waiting lists for public dental care, with average wait times of 27 months and in some cases longer than five years.^v

Just as the mouth is an integral part of the body, so too should dental care be an integral part of the public health system. The Greens propose that dental care should be incorporated into Medicare under a universal dental health scheme: Denticare.

> A FAIR AND MORE CARING SOCIETY

The evidence shows that the health burden of dental neglect falls heavily on disadvantaged groups. Low-income earners, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, the elderly and people in rural and regional areas are all significantly more likely to suffer from untreated dental disease.

Dental neglect can have serious consequences for people's lives. It can lead to poor nutrition. It can disturb sleep. Cosmetic issues can lead to social isolation and could potentially prevent somebody from getting a job or finding rental accommodation.

It is unacceptable that disadvantaged Australians are left to suffer or must endure never-ending waiting lists to get basic treatment many of us take for granted. Under Denticare, nobody is left behind.

Australia can afford to be a more caring country.



> MAKING DENTAL HEALTH A PRIORITY

The Greens have made dental health reform a top health priority. After the 2010 election, the Greens helped establish a National Advisory Council on Dental Health which made recommendations for future reforms. In the 2012 budget, the Greens secured over half a billion dollars in new funding for dental health. Less than six months later, the Greens negotiated one of the biggest dental health reforms in Australia's history.

Thanks to this reform, for the first time, many Australians will be able to access publicly-funded dental care.

The new dental health package announced in August 2012 by the Greens and the government provides an extra \$4.1 billion for dental services over four years from 2013–14. The package includes:

- **\$2.7 billion for a Medicare-style entitlement for children aged 2–17 to get dental care in public or private dental practice.** 3.5 million children in families that receive Family Tax Benefit A will be eligible to access the scheme which will provide \$1000 in benefits over two years.
- **\$1.3 billion in Commonwealth funds for public dental services, to be administered by state dental services.** Over four years this represents almost 50% in extra funding to public dental services. This will allow the states to drastically cut waiting times and invest in much needed new infrastructure and staff. This money is in addition to the \$346 million in public dental funding announced in the 2012–13 budget.
- **A further \$246 million set aside for flexible grants to fund programs that fill gaps in the dental system,** particularly in Indigenous communities and in rural and remote areas.

In parallel, workforce reforms will ensure that dental health professionals are on the ground to carry out the services and that the money is spent as efficiently as possible.

> A REFORM WE CAN AFFORD

The Greens Denticare plan has been fully costed by the Parliamentary Budget Office at \$4.87 billion over the forward estimates, using the 2013 budget figures. The Parliamentary Budget Office estimates the Denticare scheme when fully implemented will cost \$8.5 billion in 2018–19.

The Greens election platform will be fully costed by the independent Parliamentary Budget Office, and all spending will be balanced by revenue measures.

Australia can afford Denticare and the Greens will make it a priority.

> JUST LIKE GOING TO THE DOCTOR

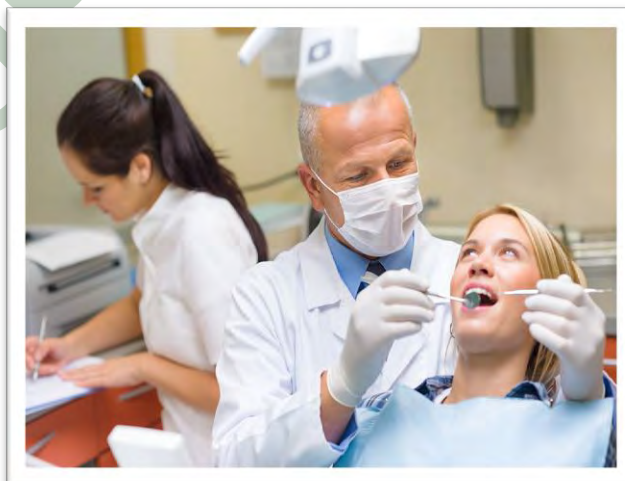
Under Denticare, dentists in private practice will be able to access up to \$1000 in Medicare items per patient every two years, covering a range of preventative and restorative dental services provided directly to the public. This will work just the way it does with doctors, and dentists will be able to bulk-bill Medicare without any out-of-pocket cost to the patient.

Simply present your Medicare card – just like going to the doctor.

> THE PATH TO DENTICARE

Denticare will be phased in over five years, starting with those most in need of treatment and growing to become universal in the fifth year.

2014	Children aged 0–17 in Family Tax Benefit A (FTBA) eligible families.
2015	Pensioners, Newstart and other income support recipients, FTBA children aged up to 18.
2016	All concession card holders, and FTBA children aged up to 19.
2017	All children and young adults aged up to 20 years old.
2018	All Australians.



ⁱ AIHW, Dental attendance patterns and oral health status (2011)

ⁱⁱ Menzies Centre for Health Policy, Dental and Oral Health: Policy Issue Paper, p. 2.

ⁱⁱⁱ AIHW, Oral health and dental care in Australia: Key facts and figures 2011, p. 16.

^{iv} Menzies Centre for Health Policy

^v Report of the National Advisory Council on Dental Health 2012, p. 16



A STRONGER SOCIAL HOUSING SYSTEM HALVING THE WAITING LIST IN A DECADE

The Greens' plan to significantly boost the supply of social housing

Australia's social housing system is in crisis. There are almost 225,000 families on the waiting list, and the numbers keep growing. Those under the most pressure and in the most need have been abandoned, with people on the list waiting anywhere from 2 - 10 years for a home. A society that cares for people invests in affordable rental housing for all in need.

Despite having one of the strongest economies in the world our housing system is failing many of us. A quality social housing system, where governments and not-for-profit organisations rent affordable housing to low income households, remains vital to a fully functioning housing market. For many it represents the only option for secure, affordable housing¹.

Social housing is affordable rental housing provided by the government (public housing) and not-for-profit organisations (community housing) to people with low incomes. Most tenants are recipients of government benefits, and more than half are aged pensioners and people with disabilities².

The Greens' Stronger Social Housing plan will:

- **Fund the building of 12,200 new social housing dwellings every year** for the next ten years.
- **Set a 1/3 target of fast build, modular, or prefabricated housing** – which will be faster and more affordable to build.

Our plan would see 122,000 new homes built over the next ten years, taking about quarter of a million people out of housing crisis and off the social housing waiting list.

> WHO WILL THIS HELP?

In Australia today there are almost 225,000 applicants on the social housing waiting list³. The time spent on the waiting list has also blown out. Average waiting times range from 9.4 months in QLD⁴, 1.8 years in the ACT⁵, 1.6 years in Victoria⁶ 2.5

years in WA⁷, 6 years in the NT⁸ and between 2-10+ years in NSW depending on the location⁹. These figures are also deceptive, in Melbourne's southern suburbs one applicant had to wait for 18 years and 10 months before they were given a home¹⁰.

More than 67,000 (34%) applicants on the waiting list are classified as being the 'greatest need' – they are homeless, or their life, safety or health is at risk in their current housing. The undersupply of social housing is so bad it is currently taking between 3 months to 2 years to house families on the priority list.

A caring society provides shelter for those in need. We require more housing to relieve the pressure on our social housing system. Building more houses will also create jobs in the economy as the construction phase of the mining boom slows.

> WHAT WILL IT COST?

The Greens will introduce two new funding streams to ensure long term growth in our social housing system:

- **Direct finance** for 5000 new dwellings per year, through a competitive grants stream that awards projects on merit and also assumes matched funding from the states or housing organisations. We will commit \$1.2 billion over the forward estimates, with an ongoing commitment of \$710 million a year over the next ten years¹¹

¹ National Shelter Policy Platform 2012 p16

² Western Australian Department of Housing, Housing Authority Annual Report 2011-12, p157, cited in Community Housing Coalition WA (2013) 'Building the housing system we need'.

³ At June 30 2012 there were 224,876 applicants on the waiting list. Productivity Commission (2013), *Report on Government Services 2012*, Commonwealth of Australia, Canberra, tables 16 A.5 and 16 A.7.

⁴ Queensland Housing Services advice to the Parliamentary Library, July 22 2013,

⁵ <http://www.dhcs.act.gov.au/hcs>

⁶ <http://www.theage.com.au/victoria/crisis-in-public-housing-20110130-1a9p1.html#ixzz2ZPQGHODo>

⁷ Sunday Times (2013) 'Housing wait blows out' 14 July 2013

⁸ http://www.housing.nt.gov.au/public_housing/accessing_public_housing/wait_times

⁹ <http://www.housingpathways.nsw.gov.au/How+to+Apply/Expected+Waiting+Times/>

¹⁰ <http://www.theage.com.au/victoria/crisis-in-public-housing-20110130-1a9p1.html#ixzz2ZPQGHODo>

¹¹ Costings include phasing in the direct funded social housing at ¼ in Year 1 (\$180m), 0.5 in Year 2 (\$350m), and 100% in Year 3 (\$710m).



- **Affordable Housing Supply Bonds** to finance 7200 new dwellings per year. Raising the \$2 billion needed for these dwellings from our housing supply bond proposal would cost to Government \$145 million over forward estimates.

(See the Greens' "Safe As Houses – Affordable Housing Supply Bonds" policy initiative for more details).

> A SYSTEM IN CRISIS

The Greens do not believe the failures in our system or the excruciating time on the waiting lists are acceptable in a modern and prosperous economy.

Core funding for social housing has been in decline for the last 15 years. The states have also been selling off public housing stock and using federal funding to prop up their housing programs with little transparency on how many new dwellings they are building.

Meanwhile, demand for social housing will keep growing dramatically. The National Housing Supply Council has projected demand for public housing will be higher than that for private rental housing or home ownership in coming years.

Most of the demand is projected to come from singles and older households as our population ages¹². Roughly a quarter of the public housing waiting list is senior Australians, and the proportion is increasing each year, many are single and alone. The National Housing Supply Council has predicted in the next 20 years, 28% of all households will be 65+ years and pressure on the rental market (both private and public) from elderly Australians will more than double by 2028¹³.

We need to put every effort into providing new supply that suits an ageing population and a growing number of single households.

This is why the Greens are prioritising social housing and affordable rental housing in our National Housing Plan.

We are the only party that is committed to:

- Adequate investment in public and community housing to ensure its social and economic viability.
- Minimal waiting times on public housing waiting lists and urgent and sufficient funding to reduce current waiting lists for public and community housing.
- Social housing that is accessible, affordable, secure, comfortable and in locations that provide good access

¹² AHURI Research and Policy Bulletin February 2009, 'Older persons in public housing: policy and management issues. Cited in Community Housing Coalition WA (2013) 'Building the housing system we need'

¹³ National Housing Supply Council report 2010 pxvi at http://www.fahcsia.gov.au/sa/housing/pubs/housing/national_housing_supply/Documents/StateofSupplyReport_2010.pdf

to employment, health-care, public transport, schools and other social facilities.

- Participation by tenants and homeless people in decisions regarding their housing services.

> INTERNATIONAL COMPARISON

Australia has one of the smallest social housing sectors in the world and a very low level of social housing by international standards. There are about 415,000 social housing dwellings in Australia¹⁴ - making up less than 5% of our overall housing stock.

Compared to other countries in the OECD this is very low (Figure 1). In countries such as the UK, Austria, Denmark and France, social housing makes up about 20% of all housing; in the Netherlands it is 35%.

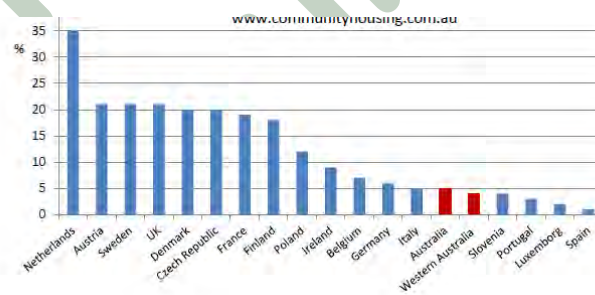


Figure 1: Social housing as a percentage of overall housing stock, Australia and select OECD countries¹⁵

Affordable housing and homelessness form core parts of social inclusion policy in other OECD countries, with benchmarks and targets for affordability, appropriateness and adequacy of housing, and rates of homelessness.

> THE ROLE OF INDIGENOUS SOCIAL HOUSING

Australia's social housing system includes State Owned and Managed Indigenous Housing (SOMIH) and Indigenous community housing. These housing agencies play a vital role and together provided housing and assistance to almost 20,000 households¹⁶.

But it's not enough. In 2012 there were 9233 applicants just on the waiting list for state owned and managed indigenous

¹⁴ Figures based on Productivity Commission (2013) Report on Government Services at http://www.pc.gov.au/data/assets/pdf_file/0003/121782/24-government-services-2013-chapter16.pdf

¹⁵ Figure 7, Community Housing Coalition WA (2013) 'Building the housing system we need', page 18.

¹⁶ Indigenous Community Housing (Table 16A.8) at Productivity Commission (2013) Report on Government Services; SOMIH at AIHW 2012 Table A2.3 at <http://www.aihw.gov.au/WorkArea/DownloadAsset.aspx?id=60129542293>



housing. Since 2009 there has been no identified funding for adding to Indigenous housing in urban and regional areas¹⁷.

The Greens believe in the vital and empowering role the indigenous housing sector plays, and would ensure sufficient funding under this initiative goes to this sector.

> THE ROLE OF THE COMMUNITY HOUSING SECTOR

The Greens recognise and strongly support the role the not-for-profit Community Housing sector plays in providing a diverse and sustainable mix of affordable housing in Australia. In 2012 the community housing sector provided housing to almost 73,000 households, including 21,400 Indigenous households¹⁸.

Community housing providers are able to provide support services to tenants with special needs, such as people with a disability or people who need crisis or transitional housing, and can also be more cost effective than state housing authorities or the private market. The Greens strongly support increased investment in community housing and the sector taking on a much greater role in providing affordable housing and services.



Image 1: 'Bethanie Peel' community housing development in Mandurah, WA¹⁹.

Bethanie Housing is WA's largest not for profit aged care provider, and delivered 50 high quality, well located individual apartments catering to low income seniors for \$197,500 each as part of the 'Bethanie Peel' project in Mandurah, WA - far less than the average cost of \$300,000 per dwelling allocated under the federal government stimulus package²⁰.

> WHAT KIND OF HOUSING COULD WE BUILD?

The Greens believe new housing built under this package would meet three criteria: it must match the demographic needs of the waiting list, it must be built to the highest quality design, and it must be substantially more sustainable and efficient than business as usual (BCA six star rating), in order to reduce water and energy costs.

Many examples exist locally and internationally that demonstrate this can be done at well under the average cost of \$350,000 we have budgeted per dwelling. For example:

- The 'Apartments for Life' model developed by the Benevolent Society provide innovative age-friendly apartments for older Australians that include services on site, a men's workshop, transport and a café, with the aim that 95% of residents can remain in their own home for the rest of their life.
- In WA the first 9 star carbon neutral house using 119% less energy and 76% less water was developed in 2010. The 'Jade 909' home sells for \$205,000 and includes solar hot water, 3kW solar pv systems and a rainwater tank and Greywater system²¹.
- In July Environmental Scientist and Gardening Australia host Josh Byrne completed two 10-star rated 3x2 homes for under \$1200 per sqm (the average dwelling cost) using standard building methods. They include a 3kw solar system, rainwater tank and Greywater system, and will save about \$1600 per year in energy bills and \$400 in water²².
- Housing NSW has delivered two social housing developments in Sydney on cost-neutral budgets that achieved 5 Star *Green Star* ratings²³. The Redfern Housing Redevelopment has 66 apartments, 40 townhouses and two community rooms, with a high proportion of adaptable and accessible housing for older people and people with a disability and features many benefits including design that reduces energy consumption by 74 per cent²⁴.

²¹ <http://www.thefifthestate.com.au/archives/11864/>

²² The house plans and detailed information and fact sheets on 'Josh's House' are freely available at <http://joshshouse.com.au/welcome/>. Note the star rating tool refers to the Nationwide House Energy Rating Scheme (NatHERS) which is based on a scale of 0-10, with 10 being the highest rating score and requiring no heating or cooling. 6 stars is the minimum energy efficiency standard required under the Building Code of Australia.

²³ Note: 5 Star Green Star signifies 'Australian Excellence' in environmentally sustainable design, 6-star Green Star is the highest rating available under the Green Star system and signifies that a project has 'World Leadership' benchmarks.

²⁴ Note: 5 Star Green Star signifies 'Australian Excellence' in environmentally sustainable design, 6-star Green Star is the highest rating available under the Green Star system and signifies that a project has 'World Leadership' benchmarks.

²⁵ <http://www.gbca.org.au/green-star/redfern-housing-redevelopment/2905.htm>

¹⁷ Milligan, Phillips, Easthope, Liu, and Memmott (2011) Urban social housing for Aboriginal people and Torres Strait Islanders: respecting culture and adapting services, Final Report 172 AHURI: Melbourne

¹⁸ Housing Assistance in Australia 2012, Homelessness Australia

¹⁹ <http://www.bethanie.com.au/index.php?page=bethanie-peel-overview>

²⁰ Community Housing Coalition (2012) 'What is community housing', p14.



- In Tasmania an eight-star energy efficient home that reduces energy consumption by 80% was built for under \$230,000 including the land in New Norfolk by Leighton Building and Construction/Studio KO²⁵.
- In Boston USA a social housing provider teamed up with the Boston Architectural College to design and built brand new solar passive houses which generate more energy than they use and are highly insulated and sustainable for post-homeless clients - for \$285,000²⁶.



Image 2: Perth's first 9 star home the 'Jade 909' was built in 2010 and sells for \$205,000.

> ONE THIRD MODULAR TARGET

Our proposal to build 12,000 new social housing dwellings includes a 1/3 target for sustainable prefabricated or modular housing. This is because modular housing can be delivered in significantly less time and at up to half the cost of conventional housing. In suburban Perth a one bedroom house was recently delivered in just 14 weeks from the time of order to delivery on site – at a cost of around \$75,000 it can be installed in 10 hours by four people²⁷.

Modular and prefabricated housing is also far cheaper to run: its high level of insulation means the house is far easier to heat in winter and keep cool in summer, and typically use just 10% of the energy of a five star home. Prefabricated homes can also be built to any design and are extremely well suited to infill developments in urban centres.

Furthermore, our plan for social housing will also create jobs both in construction but also in manufacturing the modular and prefabricated housing. We can develop and expand a new and exciting industry while caring for people in need.

> OTHER PARTIES

Labor provided a one-off package for social housing as part of the federal Stimulus Plan in response to the Global Financial Crisis in 2009. It Invested \$5.6 billion in social housing (cut from

an initial amount of \$6.4 billion) to provide 19,200 new homes and repairs to another 70,000 by 2012²⁸. Since then the social housing waiting list has continued to grow and Labor has shown a lack of long term commitment at the scale needed.

The Coalition does not have a housing policy and cannot be trusted to invest in social housing. Tony Abbott has twice refused to sign on to the government's commitment to halve homelessness by 2020²⁹ - but many people on the waiting list are at the greatest risk of homelessness. Figures show 1 in 10 public housing tenants and 1 in 5 community housing tenants reported they had experienced homelessness at least once in the past 5 years³⁰. Under former Prime Minister John Howard's 13 year term, investment in public housing fell by 30% in relative terms and public housing dwellings fell by 8% or 30,756 properties³¹.

Fact box – Social Housing in 2013

- Social housing includes public housing, community housing, Indigenous community housing and state-owned and managed Indigenous housing.
- There are currently 224,876 applicants waiting for social housing³². More than 67,000 (34%) are in the greatest need. The number of applicants increased by 12% from 2008-2012³³.
- 1 in 10 public housing tenants and 1 in 5 community housing tenants had experienced homelessness at least once in the past 5 years. Of these, one quarter had slept rough³⁴.
- There are 415,785 social housing dwellings in Australia³⁵ - a very small proportion of overall housing stock (5%).
- Social housing assists about 403,700 households, with 80% in public housing, 15% in community housing, and 5% in Indigenous community or state owned and managed housing.
- In 2012 a household on the minimum wage paid 72% of its income on a median priced rental compared to 35% in 2003³⁶.
- In 2010-2011 only 5% of homes sold or built nationally were affordable for low income households³⁷.
- In 2012 there was a shortage of 146,000 properties that are affordable to the lowest 20% of income earners, and an overall cumulative supply gap of 243,700 new homes³⁸.

²⁸ <http://www.fahcsia.gov.au/our-responsibilities/housing-support/programs-services/national-rental-affordability-scheme>

²⁹ For example see <http://www.smh.com.au/national/abbotts-tough-love-not-their-cup-of-tea-20100215-o2vx.html>

³⁰ <http://www.aihw.gov.au/WorkArea/DownloadAsset.aspx?id=60129542293>

³¹ www.actshelter.net.au/policy_platform.pdf

³² Productivity Commission (2013) 'Report on government services 2013'

³³ National Shelter Policy Platform at <http://www.shelter.org.au/files/rpt12meetinghousingchallenges-long-draft.pdf>

³⁴ <http://www.aihw.gov.au/WorkArea/DownloadAsset.aspx?id=60129543382>

³⁵ Productivity Commission (2013) Report on Government Services

³⁶ Community Housing Coalition (2012) 'What is community housing', p14.

³⁷ National Shelter 2013 Housing Australia Factsheet

³⁸ National Housing Supply Council (2011) 3rd State of Supply Report.

²⁵ 'Tassie turning on to energy-efficient homes', The Mercury. Monday March 12, 2012 page 8.

²⁶ Boston Housing Assistance Corporation and Boston Architectural College (2009) project at <http://www.thebac.edu/Documents/Departments/Education/Design%20Studies/MDS/Ecotopian%20Booklet.pdf>

²⁷ Cockburn Herald 'Pre-fabulous'. September 15 2012



REWARDING ARTISTS

MAKING OUR ARTS PRIZES TAX-FREE

The Greens' plan for Australia's most esteemed artists

The arts inject meaning, thoughtfulness and reflection into our increasingly pressured daily lives. Just when we most need to stop and enjoy an inspiring Australian book or admire an artwork or performance, we are taxing our works of excellence.

When an artist produces a body of work that earns them income, they are rightly taxed on that income, just like anyone else. However, when that body of work is recognised by their peers as being of such exceptional quality that they receive a prestigious award, this money is taxed too.

The Greens want to reward and promote Australia's outstanding artists by making those awards tax-free.

> REWARDING EXCELLENCE

The Prime Minister's Literary Awards are tax free and the Greens see no reason why other prizes in recognition of artistic excellence should not also be tax-free. The Greens want to reward artistic excellence across the board.

The Australian Greens will list our prestigious arts awards in law so the prize money is exempt from income tax. Here are some of the important artistic prizes the Greens believe should be listed as tax-exempt:

- ABC Symphony Australia Young Performers Award
- Adelaide Festival Awards for Literature
- Adelaide Perry Prize for Drawing
- Archibald Prize
- Clemenger Contemporary Art Award
- Dobell Prize for Drawing
- Glover Prize
- Keith and Elizabeth Murdoch Travelling Fellowship
- Marten Bequest Travelling Fellowship
- McCaughey Prize

- Miles Franklin Literary Award
- Mosman Art Prize
- National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Island Art Award
- National Operatic Aria
- NSW Premier's Awards
- Patrick White Literary Award
- Portia Geach Memorial Award
- Queensland Literary Awards (established to replace Premier Newman's scrapping of the Queensland Premier's Awards.)
- Stella Prize
- Sulman Prize
- Tasmanian Literary Prizes
- Victoria's Premier's Awards
- Western Australia's Premier's Awards
- Wynne Prize

> BEING AN ARTIST IS A GAMBLE

Anna Funder, who won the Miles Franklin Award in 2012 with her novel *All That I Am*, backs the Greens and Trust Company's campaign. She has said: "It seems strange that TattsLotto and blackjack and the Melbourne Cup and other gambling winnings are tax free, when writers' awards are not.

"Writing is at least as much of a gamble, and has a lot more social benefit to the nation - we should encourage writers - who generally have other jobs that are taxed - and not tax them when they receive this recognition."ⁱ



The Greens agree. Artists have to work so hard for so long to carve their way to the top. They will have accrued financial losses for years before they finally break through into a sustaining artistic career.

> FAREWELL THE MISER

The Australian government taxes all the iconic awards issued by philanthropic bodies and State governments, but allows its own *Prime Minister's Awards* for literature, science and history to be awarded tax-free.ⁱⁱ If it is good enough for the federal government's awards, the Greens believe it is good enough for other nationally prestigious awards from state governments and not-for profit art bodies too.

Award money means so much more to the small number of Australians who inspire our nation than it does to the Australian Tax Office. The Parliamentary Budget Office have independently calculated the cost of foregone tax revenue on iconic arts awards at a mere \$220,000 annually.

If we want to get our priorities straight on promoting Australia as a clever, diverse and creative country, then the other parties should support the Greens' proposal to make our iconic national awards tax-free.ⁱⁱⁱ



> WHAT ABOUT THE OTHER PARTIES?

The Greens have previously written to both the Assistant Treasurer and the Arts Minister requesting our policy be implemented. While the government admits it has considered the policy on numerous occasions, most recently in 2009, they have refused to act and this policy was notably absent from the Government's National Cultural Policy.

The Coalition cannot be trusted to care for the arts. Queensland's Liberal National Premier Campbell Newman destroyed that state's \$250,000 Premier's Literary Award as soon as he was sworn in as Premier.

Only the Greens can be trusted to stand up for those exceptional artists who inspire, challenge and guide our society into the future.

ⁱ <http://greensmps.org.au/content/media-releases/miles-franklin-more-rewarding-without-tax>

ⁱⁱ Section 51-60 of the *Income Tax Assessment Act 1997*.

ⁱⁱⁱ Picture kindly provided courtesy of Richard Onn – 2009 Archibald Prize Finalist.



A NEW DEAL FOR RENTERS

INTRODUCING A NATIONAL STANDARD

The Greens' plan to dramatically improve the standards of Australia's rental stock, and so the lives of our nation of renters.

Our rental market is broken and it's time to take urgent action to improve the conditions for 2.4 million Australian households living in rental housing. The Greens are the only party standing up for renters and for a better, fairer housing system.

The private rental market is a critical part of the Australian housing system, with 1.994 million households renting privatelyⁱ and another 415,000 in social housing. This brings the total to almost 2.4 million households or 30% of the population.

With an increasing proportion of Australians now seeing renting as their only option, including the emergence of 'renters for life', and an increasing proportion of renters under extreme pressure from a lack of choice and unaffordable rents, improving the conditions of our rental stock as well as the rights of tenants is well overdue.

Yet there is no national standard that actually governs the rental market, and very little advocacy or support provided to tenants.

In Australia we have national standards that cover our education, healthcare, work safety; there are even separate standards covering bike parking facilities and plastic monobloc chairsⁱⁱ. More than 95% of our rental housing is provided by the private market. Imagine if our health and education system operated in this way, without the strong protections of consistent, national standards. Housing should be no exception.

> IT'S TIME

The Greens strongly support a coordinated and fairer system for Australian renters.

In New Zealand the Greens have introduced performance standards to ensure "warm, healthy rentals" and in the ACT the Greens have introduced a 'Fair Go Rentals' bill which sets minimum energy efficiency standards to improve the cost of living and social equity. Our Greens colleagues in Victoria are also set to introduce a bill that will introduce minimum standards on rental properties. What is needed is a national package that sets stronger, fairer standards for renters and assists landlords to meet them.

The New Deal for Renters package would:

- **Establish a new national body responsible for setting, introducing and overseeing a new National Standard for all rental tenancies.** The cost is estimated to be \$0.3mpa.
- **Provide a funding package worth \$500 per property to assist private landlords make upgrades to meet the standard.** This would be phased in and occur at the change of lease or through tenant or landlord referral to the new body, through a simple checklist. A total package up to \$100 million per year would be allocated.
- **Urgently review and increase funding by \$3 million per year for Tenancy Advice Services** in each state and territory. This will dramatically increase the level of advocacy and consumer protection provided to renters.

This gives a total cost of \$103.3 million per year.

> A NEW NATIONAL STANDARD

The Greens new National Standard would set specific minimum standards for the urgent issues facing tenants today, including:

- **Security of tenure**
- **Stability and fairness of rent prices**
- **A new 'efficiency standard' to ensure the home is cheap to run and comfortable to live in.**
- **Safety and security of the home**
- **Better protection for vulnerable groups**



> THE CURRENT SITUATION FOR RENTERS

Tenants' rights across Australia are currently determined by respective state or territory legislation (*Residential Tenancies Acts*) and are extremely inconsistent. In almost all States and Territories there are variations on a formula that premises must be fit for habitation and in a state of reasonable repair. However, there is currently no national, consistent minimum standard for rental properties across Australia. As VCOSⁱⁱⁱ describes:

“This makes it perfectly legal for a landlord to rent out a property that has no heating, is not weatherproof, or has no window coverings.. It does not have to be possible or affordable to keep the property warm in winter or cool in summer.”

Surveys of rental housing in Victoria have found 10 per cent of properties have no fixed heating and that more than half of tenants have structural or repair issues with their properties^{iv}.

The 2010 “Better Lease on Life” report compared current tenancy laws across each state and territory and identified a number of significant concerns. It recommended a coordinated approach to tenancy law reform and the establishment of a nationally agreed minimum standards framework for tenants^v (See snapshot). It found significant inconsistencies and a many areas needing urgent improvement.

Landlords enjoy considerable power over tenants, particularly in Australia's tight rental market, and are able to offer rental housing to prospective tenants on a take-it-or-leave-it basis. The Greens don't want to take away any protections for landlords, but want to set a level playing field that is fair to both parties and nationally consistent and enforceable.

The Greens propose a model that is based on the same body that administers similar programs such as the Universal Design standard for housing policy, which supports the implementation of liveable housing designs for those with disabilities. The body would research, consult and set the standards, and oversee their implementation. Establishing minimum standards could either be met through COAG agreement or using Commonwealth funding as an incentive.

While ultimately the new national standard would be decided by the body, the Greens put forward the following five areas to be covered.

1. Improving security of tenure

The Greens Rental Health Survey revealed worrying figures on insecure tenure:

A SNAPSHOT OF HOW TENANTS' RIGHTS VARY ACROSS AUSTRALIA

There is great variation in tenancy laws and tenants' rights across Australia which highlights the need for a nationally agreed policy approach.

- All jurisdictions except Tasmania allow tenants on periodic leases to be evicted without grounds, and notice ranges from 42 days (NT) to 26 weeks (ACT).
- No jurisdiction has a cap on how much the rent can be increased, and almost every jurisdiction allows rent to increase every six months (SA, TAS, Vic, NT, QLD, WA), except for ACT (one per year).
- While all jurisdictions have minimum notice periods for rent increases but the notice periods vary from 42 days (NT) to 8 weeks (ACT). Most are 60 days.
- WA provides no mechanism for tenants to challenge excessive rent increases. All other jurisdictions allow the tenant to appeal to the Tribunal (or equivalent) but the onus of proof rests on the tenant to prove the increase is excessive, and hearings are based on a market price test which is a self-fulfilling prophecy. (ACT being the one exception when rent increases are above 20% CPI). Tenants' appeals are infrequent due to fear of eviction.
- NSW is the only jurisdiction to pay tenants interest on their bonds.
- There is no nationally consistent law regarding maintenance and repairs obligations by landlords.
- Victoria is the only jurisdiction that includes energy or water efficiency, stating that any water appliance requiring replacement must be with an A rated appliance, however even this is inadequate as the best practice water rating is AAA (or 3 star)¹.
- In some jurisdictions people in the most marginal housing situations are not covered by tenancy laws, leaving them vulnerable to evictions at short notice, rent increases, and no means of getting repairs done. This includes boarders and lodgers people in emergency accommodation, caravan parks and even students in on-campus student accommodation.
- In WA and QLD the Tenants' advice services have recently been shut down.



- 65% of respondents have been forced to leave their rental through no fault of their own, 22% of them more than once in the past 5 years. The most common reason mentioned was that the house was sold
- 56% said they have had to stay with friends or family because they couldn't find a place to rent
- 50% have been renting for more than 10 years - but most (65%) have been in their current house less than 2 years
- 68% said they would like to be able to enter into a long term lease (of at least 2 – 5 years)

The Greens know that Australian renters endure conditions that leave them extremely insecure in their tenure.

This includes the ability to terminate tenancies using 'without grounds evictions'^{vi}, and the high rate of 'periodic leases' (or month to month leases) where tenants are literally renting from month to month and can be evicted with as little as 4 weeks' notice. Landlords are also not required to advise tenants' of the anticipated lease period when they commence the lease, which means the tenants have no long-term security or certainty. It's hard to make a home when you can only plan a month to one year maximum ahead.

Research shows security of tenure enhances household health and education outcomes^{vii}, especially for those in high need, and also enhances social connectedness^{viii}.

2. Stability and fairness of rent prices

A crucial task of the National Standard will be to investigate and introduce mechanisms that make rent more stable and fair.

The Greens Rental Health Survey found:

- 61% of respondents do not consider their rent affordable
- 75% had their rent increased in the past 2 years – most (28%) increased by \$11 - \$25 per week – but 14% by more than \$50 per week!
- 63% of respondents said they have moved, or considered moving due to rent increases
- 67% are in rental stress, paying more than 30% of their income on rent. Of these 47% are paying between 30–50% of their income on rent, and 14% pay between 51-70%.

Median rental prices have spiralled out of control over the last decade to a median weekly rent of \$404 across Australia, up from \$187 per week in 2000 – an overall increase of 116%. Darwin (\$471), Sydney (\$470), Perth (\$450) and Canberra (\$440) have the highest prices currently and on average have almost

tripled since 2000^{ix}. Australia's regions and boom towns like Port Hedland in WA which hit \$2100 this year^x.

The average Australian rent has tripled in Brisbane, Perth, Darwin and Canberra since 2000; and in every other city has at least doubled in the same period. The private rental sector has the greatest number and percentage of households affected by housing stress^{xi}.

Currently there are no checks and balances on rent rises - and in any other sector 10% - 50% price inflation, year on year would not be tolerated. Why should this be the case with our housing?

The new national standard should look at limiting the number of times rent can be increased, a fair minimum period of notice for an increase and by how much, and prescribing a formula linked to general pricing levels, such as the CPI. It could also set clear provisions for when and how rent can be increased, and provide an objective standard for determining whether an increase is excessive (as is done to some degree in the ACT, and in the Netherlands). In Sweden the Tenants' Union negotiates rent increases.

The standard could also introduce minimum notice periods for rent increases (National Shelter recommend four months), reverse the onus of proof that rent increases are excessive to the landlord not the tenant; and limit the number of times rent can be increased^{xii}.

Rather than being a radical idea, rent capping already exists in jurisdictions overseas including New York. A motion on rent capping was even proposed and defeated at the 2012 National Labor conference which read; "Labor will monitor the rent costs in the private rental market and examine mechanisms to maintain affordability such as the introduction of rent capping legislation."^{xiii}

3. A new efficiency standard that makes rentals cheap to run and comfortable to live in

Research has shown rental housing is the worst performing housing stock in terms of environmental and efficiency standards^{xiv}. This is supported by the Greens Rental Health Survey, which found:

- 75% of people said that their rental property was not cool in summer and warm in winter
- Just 13% said their home is well suited to their climate
- Only 4% of rentals have solar hot water and less than 3% have solar panels
- More than 70% do not have insulation
- 34% don't have windows that open with flyscreens



Insulation helps to ensure dwellings are warm in winter and cool in summer, and can assist in reducing household power bills and greenhouse gas emissions. In 2011, more than two-thirds (69%) of Australian households had insulation, with comfort being the most commonly reported main reason for households having installed insulation^{xv}. However homes in the private rental market are twice as likely not to be insulated as other housing^{xvi}.

The Greens acknowledge that poverty is tightly linked to rentals and increasing utilities prices. Poor quality housing is commonly identified as the number one cause of high costs of living, and VCOSS and Uniting Care for example have prioritised the provision of efficient fixed appliances such as heating and hot water heating as a way to address affordability. Low-income households make up a disproportionate share of the rental market and also spend a higher proportion of their income on energy^{xvii}.

An energy efficiency minimum standard would be a significant measure to mitigate climate change. In the VCOSS "Future focussed housing standard" the provision of fixed heating, and energy and water efficient fixed appliances is a key minimum standard^{xviii}.

NSW and Victoria are the only states requiring landlords to install water-efficient fittings^{xix}.

The new standard would explore a nationally consistent package to encourage retrofitting in rental properties.

4. Safe and secure homes

The Greens Rental Health Survey found:

- 32% of renters said they did not feel safe
- Less than 50% have basic security installed (security screens or locks on windows, security screens on doors or sensor lights); and
- Just 54% have deadlocks on doors

This is because there are no consistent requirements for landlords to provide repairs, maintenance, or adequate security. Due to short term leases and renewal being up to the landlord, tenants are often hesitant to request better security or maintenance and upgrades out of fear they will be perceived as a pest and their lease will not be renewed.

Safety and security in public housing has also been identified as a serious concern, with a 2012 study showing 18% of public housing tenants have unmet safety/security needs, 16% have unmet privacy needs, and 19% of tenants have unmet fencing and yard space needs. This is why the Greens are also announcing an initiative specifically to address safety in public housing. A national standard is imperative for improvements to be made in private and public rental housing.

5. Better protection for vulnerable groups

Those most vulnerable to homelessness often have the least rights of all. People in boarding and lodgers houses, crisis accommodation, caravan parks and even student housing for example are not covered by residential tenancies legislation in some states, leaving them vulnerable to evictions or rent increases with no or little notice, and no means to resolve disputes or get repairs done. Care for these tenants across Australia is irregular and a priority for reform.

One of the first jobs of the National Standard would be to investigate and determine a way that renters in marginal housing are better protected.

> A STRONGER VOICE FOR TENANTS

The Greens Rental Health Survey found there is strong need and support for tenant's advocacy services;

- 53% of respondents have needed to contact a tenant's advocacy service for issues with their rental property in the past
- 73% would like to see more funding for services that provide information on their legal rights and improving tenants' conditions more broadly
- 85% think renters need better representation in Australia
- 92% support a nationally consistent model of consumer protection for renters that includes legal advice, dispute resolution and advocacy

Yet tenants' services that provide assistance and advice to tenants are under attack in many states.

The Greens will provide an additional \$3 million per year to existing Tenants advocacy services to help them provide a stronger voice for tenants and a new national model of 'consumer protection' for renters. This would include better funding for legal advice, dispute resolution, and advocacy for tenants.

The Greens' Access to Justice Initiative also includes doubling the funding to Community Legal Centres, worth \$120.8million over forward estimates^{xx}.

A strong tenant advice and advocacy service is a crucial part of a national approach to preventing homelessness.

The Greens package would also provide more funding for specialist Indigenous tenants advice services or Indigenous advocates. With more than 60% of Indigenous households in the rental market it is a priority to provide more support for Indigenous tenants through a specialist Indigenous tenants'



advice service, which would include advocacy and community education for tenants and housing providers.

> AN INTERNATIONAL COMPARISON

The VCOSS report *A Future Focussed Housing Standard*^{xxi} identifies that preferred models of housing standards are those where basic standards for decent living conditions are clear and enforceable, for example:

- The UK has a *Housing Health and Safety* rating system and a *Decent Homes Standard* which sets out minimum standards and ensures housing is warm, weatherproof and has modern facilities. The UK government also provides financial incentives for landlords to upgrade rental properties of vulnerable households
- US states of Oregon and Vermont include enforceable maintenance of premises and in California tenants can undertake repairs and deduct the costs from rent (or withhold rent where repairs are a serious threat to health or safety) if the landlord has been advised and not acted.
- Canada's provinces of Alberta and Ontario have Residential Tenancies Acts which require properties to have minimum structural or repair standards covering weatherproofing, heating and comfort, and are enforced by local council property inspections.

Tenancy laws in France, Sweden, Denmark, Spain and Luxembourg also provide very strong protections for tenants.

In Denmark landlords seeking to increase rent must make a written application three months in advance, stating the reasons for increase and reminding the tenant that he/she may raise an objection to the notice^{xxii}. Tenancy agreements can also be for a limited or unlimited period, and unlimited tenancy contracts can be terminated by the tenant at three months' notice, whereas the landlord can only give notice under very strict conditions outlined in the Private Housing Act.

Tenants in the Netherlands also have strong protections. In the Netherlands a lease can only be terminated by the tenant - not by the landlord (except in circumstances such as failure to pay the rent). Leases do not automatically end after the expiry date, and a temporary contract is only allowed in very rare and specific situations. The landlord cannot simply charge what they like for an apartment, either. Instead every apartment has a maximum rent, which is calculated using a points system. Tenants in Amsterdam for example can also ask for an independent assessor to visit the apartment and perform the calculation at no cost. If a tenant is found to be paying more than the maximum rent according to this points system, they are entitled to have their rent reduced.

In France, the Greens are introducing a package of new laws dubbed the *Loi Duflot* to improve settings for landlords and renters. Renters will benefit from a capping of agents' fees, and rent capping in high demand areas such as inner Paris. Landlords charging more than 20 per cent above the neighbourhood's median rent will be assessed annually by a "local rent observatory" and rental contracts above the limit will be brought down when they are renewed.

Landlords will benefit from a cap on the tax they pay on rental earnings if their property is in an area of shortage, and significantly, both tenants and landlords will pay into a government run insurance fund against unpaid rent. If a tenant defaults, landlords will no longer have to chase them through the courts, but simply apply to the fund for reimbursement. This fund will pay the landlord upfront, then investigate the claim themselves. The crucial change is that a potential burden is taken off landlords' shoulders, and in turn this may encourage them to consider lower income tenants less of a risk and take more of them on.

ⁱ ABS Housing Occupancy and Costs 2009-10 Catalogue 4130.0 p13 – most recent data at April 2013.

ⁱⁱ <http://www.standards.org.au/Documents/0668-projects-by-standard-31-July-2013.pdf>

ⁱⁱⁱ VCOSS 2009

<http://www.vcss.org.au/documents/VCOSS%20docs/Housing/VCOSS%20minimum%20housing%20standards%20Oct%2009.pdf>

^{iv} VCOSS 2009

<http://www.vcss.org.au/documents/VCOSS%20docs/Housing/VCOSS%20minimum%20housing%20standards%20Oct%2009.pdf>

^v <http://www.shelter.org.au/archive/rpt1004betterleaseonlife.pdf>

^{vi} Note that provisions already exist that allow landlords to terminate tenancies "with grounds", such as the case of negligence or non-payment of rent

^{vii} AHURI, 2005

^{viii} Beer and Faulkner, 2008

^{ix} REIA figures at July 2013 for quarterly median rents 2 bed apartment since 2000 (for the March quarter, 2013)

^x 'Tax deal boosts NW Real Estate' West Australian Friday 16 July 2010 p12

^{xi} National Housing Supply Council (2012) Housing Supply and Affordability – Key Indicators, 2012. Table 5.6

^{xii} <http://www.shelter.org.au/archive/rpt1004betterleaseonlife.pdf>

^{xiii}

http://www.reia.com.au/userfiles/MEDIARELEASE_1322692033.pdf?phpMyAdmin=0c70cb215c2690207f494b39453571e7

^{xiv} AHURI, 2005

^{xv} Source: ABS *Environmental Issues: Energy Use and Conservation, Mar 2011* (cat. no. 4602.0.55.001)

^{xvi} Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS), *Housing characteristics and decisions: a comparative study of Sydney, Melbourne, Adelaide and Canberra 1991*, Canberra, 1992.

^{xvii} Just Change Evaluation Report Energy Efficiency for Low-income Renters in Victoria at <http://www.cuac.org.au/database-files/view-file/4066/>

<http://www.vcss.org.au/documents/VCOSS%20docs/Housing/VCOSS%20minimum%20housing%20standards%20Oct%2009.pdf>

^{xix} The NSW Residential Tenancies Act 2010 will require rented premises to be water efficient if tenants of separately metered premises are to pay for water. The standards for water efficiency will be determined when the regulations are made later this year.

http://www.fairtrading.nsw.gov.au/About_us/Legislation/Changes_to_legislation/Residential_Tenancies_Act_2010.html

^{xx} <http://www.theaustralian.com.au/business/legal-affairs/greens-pledge-842-million-in-aid/story-e6frg97x-1226698062826>

^{xxi}

<http://www.vcss.org.au/documents/VCOSS%20docs/Housing/VCOSS%20minimum%20housing%20standards%20Oct%2009.pdf>

^{xxii} <http://www.globalpropertyguide.com/Europe/Germany/landlord-tenant-law>



EXPERT, INDEPENDENT, TRANSPARENT A NATIONAL BIOSECURITY AUTHORITY

The Greens' plan for keeping Australia free of new pests and diseases

Australia needs an independent, expertise-based Biosecurity Authority to meet the challenges of protecting us from pests and diseases in a world facing climate change.

As an island nation, Australia is incredibly fortunate to be free of many pests and diseases that cause untold damage to human health, agriculture and the environment in other countries.

Now, climate change and the large increase in the movement of people and goods around the world are creating serious challenges for our biosecurity.

At the same time we are facing a looming shortage of highly qualified plant and animal pest and disease professionals.

It is time to prepare Australia for the increasing challenges to our biosecurity this century.

> PUTTING SCIENCE & INDEPENDENCE FRONT AND CENTRE FOR BIOSECURITY

The Australian Greens will:

- **Create a National Biosecurity Commission**, a decision-making panel of eminent biosecurity experts charged with making the key decisions to best protect Australia from new pests and diseases.
- **Create a National Biosecurity Authority**, a statutory, independent and expertise-based organisation tasked with the day to day management of Australia's national biosecurity system and advising the Biosecurity Commission.
- **Provide the resources necessary** to ensure that the new Biosecurity Authority has the technical capability it will require to perform its functions and support the Biosecurity Commission. We estimate an additional \$5-10m a year on top of redirecting resources from the Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry that are currently being utilised for biosecurity outcomes.

> WHY WE NEED A NEW BIOSECURITY AUTHORITY

Australia's natural biosecurity advantage has helped protect our community from many diseases and pests that cause illness and death overseas.

It means our farmers can access export markets with their clean produce, and use less chemicals to control pests and diseases, benefiting us all.

Stopping the incursion of exotic pests and diseases is critical to conserving our unique environment and wildlife.

Generally Australia has had a strong biosecurity system, but it has become more vulnerable because of the significant increase in the movement of people and goods around the world.

Climate change adds a new dimension to the problem.

The impacts of a warming world include a rise in threats from new pests and diseases, as changed conditions allow them to spread further and adapt to live in places that previously they have not been able to survive.

For these reasons, it has long been recognised that Australia's biosecurity system needs to be overhauled to meet the challenges of the 21st century.

Two comprehensive reviews of Australia's biosecurity arrangements have been undertaken in the last 15 years. Both recommended that biosecurity decision-making, oversight and technical capability should be independent of government¹. This recommendation has wide cross-sectoral support.

¹ http://daff.gov.au/_data/assets/pdf_file/0010/931609/report-single.pdf



The most recent and highly regarded Beale Review recommended the creation of a Biosecurity Commission and National Biosecurity Authority, and this proposal is widely supported. The Greens will implement this key recommendation.

> BUILDING OUR EXPERTISE AND PREPAREDNESS

We must do everything we can to keep every pest and disease that threatens Australia from coming here. We must increase our capability, and importantly, ensure we have the scientific expertise to maintain a world-class biosecurity system.

One of the reasons Australia has had such a good biosecurity system for so many years is that we made sure we had the scientists and other experts to guide us. Now, we are facing a major loss of such expertise as many professionals reach retirement.

At the same time Australia's overall investment in biosecurity expertise across state and federal governments has not addressed this looming shortfall.

To have the best biosecurity system we can, we need to attract, train and retain new experts, including providing career paths.

That means creating a world class expertise-based statutory authority – the Biosecurity equivalent of the Bureau of Meteorology.

> THE ROLE OF THE NATIONAL BIOSECURITY COMMISSION

The National Biosecurity Commission will comprise seven members who will be selected on the basis of their proven expertise in natural sciences related to risks of pests and diseases in plants, animals and humans; risk assessment and management; ecology; agricultural and food production; and economic assessments.

With direction on the Appropriate Level of Protection (ALOP) from the Minister, the Commission will be responsible for undertaking Biosecurity Import Risk Analyses, with technical assistance from the Biosecurity Authority.

The Commission will also provide expert advice to the National Biosecurity Authority on biosecurity policy generally.

> THE ROLE OF THE NATIONAL BIOSECURITY AUTHORITY

As recommended by the Beale Review, the Authority will incorporate the Australian Quarantine and Inspection Service (AQIS), and the other key divisions of the Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry currently engaged in biosecurity matters (they include Biosecurity Australia, and parts of the Product Integrity, Animal and Plant Health such as the Chief Veterinary Officer and the Chief Plant Protection Officer).

Additionally it will receive increased resourcing to ensure that it can recruit the necessary expertise to boost national capacity across the board, but particularly in relation to environmental biosecurity matters, which are currently critically under-resourced.

The National Biosecurity Authority's core function will be to administer Australia's biosecurity legislation. This includes:

- Imports permit decisions and assessments, and pre- and post- border entry of goods entering Australia
- Certifying Australian exports
- Management of quarantine facilities
- Coordination of monitoring and surveillance of national priority exotic pests and diseases.
- National emergency response coordination to incursions of pests and diseases.
- Supporting the work of the National Biosecurity Commission.

> OTHER PARTIES

The Labor and Liberal parties have ignored the long-standing advice that Australia needs independent and expertise-led oversight and administration of our biosecurity system.

In fact, the Labor Government's current new biosecurity legislation makes the current system worse. For example, Labor would leave as optional standard procedures such as consultation with industry and the use of expertise for import risk assessments. The Liberal party has not supported the Beale review recommendations, leaving their Nationals colleagues at the mercy of an aggressive trade agenda rather than a system protecting the interests of Australia's primary producers.

The Katter Australia Party has no clear position on biosecurity, only saying it will impose greater restrictions on imports. If this is not done with credible scientific assessments, Australia's exports will be threatened by countries taking reprisal action against us through the World Trade Organisation.



CARING FOR PEOPLE ADDRESSING POVERTY IN AUSTRALIA

The Greens' plan for increasing Newstart and reversing single parent cuts

The Greens have the guts to be the voice of Australia's poorest families. Our plan for a caring Australia puts the needs of people in poverty ahead of billionaire mining companies.

> OUR PLAN: CARING FOR PEOPLE

A caring society protects people and their families from falling into poverty. The Greens plan to raise Newstart and effectively reverse the impact of the cuts to Parenting Payment will reduce the pressure on our most vulnerable families. Our fully costed plan includes:

- **A \$50 per week increase to the single rate of Newstart and the Youth Allowance single living away from home rate;**
- **Better indexation of all allowance payments** that reflects the changes to the cost of living for these households;
- **Additional \$40 per week supplement for all single parents on Newstart**, which together with the \$50 increase to Newstart reverses the impact of the parenting payment cuts and will immediately help lift single parents out of poverty;
- **A higher income free threshold for single parents** that allows them to earn the same as they did on Parenting Payment Single; and
- **Better job services for everyone that help people into suitable, secure work and an enforceable right to ask for flexible working conditions, for single parents and carers.**

> A FULLY COSTED SOLUTION: READY TO BE IMPLEMENTED

The Parliamentary Budget Office has costed our plan at \$9.2b over the forward estimates. Increasing Newstart and Youth Allowance and providing fairer indexation will cost \$8.2 billion; helping single parents out of poverty an extra \$1 billion.

A fairer mining tax would more than pay for these measures.

Our plan would improve the lives of our most vulnerable families. We have two Private Senators Bills ready to make this vision of a more caring Australia a reality.

> \$17 A DAY ISN'T ENOUGH TO LIVE ON

Newstart recipients are trying to survive on a base rate of less than \$250 a week. This is more than \$130 below the poverty line. After rent, most Newstart recipients have less than \$17 a day to pay for everything else in their life – which almost certainly guarantees they'll end up in poverty.

When people are forced into poverty, they find it impossible to maintain the basics. They are less likely to find work when they can't afford to pay their rent and buy food, and when things like a car or a mobile phone are an unaffordable luxury.

> STANDING UP FOR VULNERABLE FAMILIES UNDER PRESSURE

Since 2006, when John Howard first began cutting single parent payments, life has just become harder for people who are looking for work or caring for their children by themselves.

Under Labor, the situation has worsened, with the Labor government dumping single parents that had been protected from John Howard's cuts onto a significantly lower payment on 1 January 2013. They tried to justify the policy as being about getting single parents into work – despite that fact that half of the single parents affected were already working.

The Labor party has so far taken more money from single parents by cutting their payments than from taxing billionaire mining companies. If they cared about poverty, they would help people into secure work rather than leaving them on such inadequate payments. Tony Abbott won't make life any easier either. In fact he'll make payments harder to access.

Both parties have now turned their backs on people. We could protect people from poverty by standing up against greed instead of punishing vulnerable families.



OUR WILDLIFE IS TOO PRECIOUS TO LOSE CARING FOR OUR NATIVE ANIMALS

The Greens' plan to help protect Australia's sick and injured wildlife

Across Australia, every year thousands of volunteers help come to the rescue of sick and injured wildlife. The Australian Greens believe our wildlife carers deserve more recognition and support for their invaluable work.

Every year hundreds of thousands of Australian native animals become orphaned, injured or displaced due to habitat loss, poisoning, car strikes, entanglement in rubbish or barbed wire, or attacks by cats, dogs or other feral animals.

Too many of our native animals die slow tortured deaths as a result of these incidents. Others are lucky to be rescued by one of the thousands of committed, caring volunteers who work across Australia to give our wildlife a better chance.

> WILDLIFE CARERS ARE HEROES

Across Australia, every year thousands of volunteers come to the rescue of sick and injured native wildlife, including birds, reptiles, koalas, possums, wallabies and kangaroos. Where possible, they rehabilitate these creatures for release back into the wild.

Many wildlife carers travel great distances to respond to calls for help for injured wildlife, give countless hours, and often incur significant personal expense to carefully rehabilitate animals in their care. Caring for orphaned joeys or birds, for example, often involves around the clock monitoring and feeding.

These volunteers and their organisations also support the wider community in caring for our wildlife through their community education programs, wildlife training and all-important 24 hour wildlife hotlines to provide emergency wildlife care advice.

In New South Wales alone, WIRES reports that their 2200 volunteers help rescue and care for 56,000 animals every year, and respond to over 100,000 calls for advice on sick and injured wildlife. With the mounting threats of encroaching human activities and increasing feral predators, it is expected that the demand for these organisations' work will only increase in years to come.

Further, recent cuts by numerous state governments to parks, wildlife and environment agencies have reduced the capacity of these agencies to respond when members of the public alert them to wildlife emergencies. As a result a number of wildlife carer organisations are facing increased demand for their voluntary services. Yet most of our wildlife care organisations receive little if any state or federal government support for their invaluable work.

> THE GREENS' PLAN TO SUPPORT WILDLIFE CARERS

With our wildlife under more pressure than ever before, the Australian Greens believe our wildlife carers deserve more recognition and support for their invaluable work.

The Greens' plan proposes a national grants program of \$5 million per annum to:

- Help subsidise **food and medical expenses for sick and injured wildlife;**
- Assist with purchase of **wildlife care equipment;**
- Support **training programs** for our wildlife carers;
- **Increase our knowledge** about successful wildlife care and rehabilitation; and
- Supporting other activities such as 24 wildlife care advice hotlines and community education.

These grants, available from 1 July 2014, will help wildlife carers and their networks continue their invaluable work, in the face of growing demand and cuts to state government services. These grants will be open to wildlife carers and wildlife carer organisations, and will be administered by the federal Environment Department.



> THE GREENS' TRACK RECORD ON STANDING UP FOR OUR WILDLIFE

The Australian Greens have a long track record of fighting to protect Australia's unique and precious wildlife.

As part of the Clean Energy package, we secured the \$946 million Biodiversity Fund, to protect habitat and increase carbon stores in the landscape – we are now fighting to restore the \$470 million cut to this critical fund by the Labor Government.

The Greens initiated a Senate Inquiry into koalas which resulted in threatened species listing for this national icon. We also initiated a Senate Inquiry into the effectiveness of threatened species and ecological communities' protection in Australia. Over 170 submissions have been made by scientists, community groups and individuals across Australia. Hearings have been held in Canberra, Sydney, Perth and Melbourne which provided a critical opportunity for our national leaders to hear the significant concerns that our scientists and the wider community hold for the future of our threatened species and ecosystems and what more urgently needs to be done.

The Greens have proposed legislation for emergency listing of threatened species, and ensuring federal responsibilities for regulating Australia's most environmentally damaging projects cannot be handed to state governments – which both the old parties failed to support.

We have also announced our plan to secure the future of Australia's threatened species. This plan will invest \$120 million over three years into mapping and protecting important habitats and increasing funding for listing and protection of threatened species.

The Greens will also ensure Australia's national parks are protected under our national environment laws.

> OTHER PARTIES

Neither the Coalition nor the Government have announced any support for our invaluable wildlife carer networks.

Rather than committing to the critical steps we need to take to turn around our biodiversity decline, the Coalition's environment policy is to hand off key federal environment protection powers to state governments – a step that experts and the community agree will be disastrous for environmental protection in Australia.

Coalition state governments have overseen opening up of national parks - home to much of our native wildlife - to recreational shooting and the opening up of native forests for logging. Handing these states federal environment responsibilities is a recipe for disaster for our native wildlife.

Despite having the opportunity to support Greens' actions in the parliament, Labor refused every time to ensure federal environmental protection powers remain with the federal government.

The Labor Government has slashed critical funding to the Biodiversity Fund, and despite having the power to stop environmentally damaging projects has consistently favoured short term profits of big business over long term protection of our unique flora and fauna.



DOLLAR BETS FOR POKIES

REDUCING PROBLEM GAMBLING

The Greens plan for poker machine reform

Australians lose billions each year on the pokies. Many of these losses come from problem gamblers who cannot afford it. Placing bet limits on high-intensity machines will help curb these losses without impacting on recreational gamblers.

There is an abundance of evidence that gambling - and pokies in particular - causes enormous harm in the community. Genuine gambling reform is an issue governments cannot shy away from any longer.

Because of the potential for harm caused by the high loss rate of Australian machines, the Greens will limit bet rates on all pokies to bring losses under control.

> LIMITING LOSSES, LIMITING HARMS

Under the Greens' policy, all Australian poker machines will have the following limitations:

- **A maximum bet limit of \$1 per spin.** Given that 88% of recreational gamblers already spend less than \$1 per spin when playing pokies, this policy will not affect the average punter playing the pokies for an hour or two on a night out.ⁱ
- **A load up limit of \$20.** Limiting the amount of money that can be loaded into a machine at any one time will not affect recreational gamblers but will slow problem gamblers down.ⁱⁱ
- **Jackpots of no more than \$500.** Limiting jackpots reduces the volatility of the machines and therefore their addictiveness.ⁱⁱⁱ
- **A staged introduction to 2017.** To give the industry time to adjust, all new machines must support bet and jackpot limits by 2015, with the limits enforced by 2017.^{iv}

By ensuring that all poker machines are limited to "low-intensity" losses of around \$100 per hour, the need for mandatory pre-commitment technology is removed and the costs of implementation become negligible. Limiting machines to lower intensity is a simple reform that won't affect most players, but will help problem gamblers limit their losses.

This common-sense change will bring the cost of playing poker machines back into line with other forms of recreational activity, and will do so over a timeframe that is realistic, affordable and fair to industry.

> THE PROBLEM OF POKIES

Australians are the world's most prolific gamblers. We spend an impressive \$1200 per capita every year on bets.^v Of the \$19 billion gambled by Australians every year, 60% (or \$12 billion) goes into poker machines.^{vi}

About 4% of the adult population, or 600,000 people, play pokies at least weekly. Up to 15% of the people who gamble weekly are considered "problem gamblers" who have difficulty controlling their play and expenditure. These problem gamblers account for about 40% of all pokies losses.^{vii} This means that those who can least afford it are losing the most.

The cost to the community of problem gambling is high. It takes an enormous toll on families, drives people to crime, and imposes social costs of \$4.7 billion on the nation every year.

Australia's "casino style" poker machines are infamous. They have been carefully engineered by the industry to be highly addictive, to disguise losses as wins, and to efficiently empty the pockets of their customers. Some of these machines can churn through thousands of dollars in a single hour. Yet they can be found in high numbers in nearly every Australian community.

> HIGH INTENSITY LEADS TO HARM

Reform of poker machine regulation has been extensively examined by the Productivity Commission. The Commission found that action should be taken to curb the harms of problem gambling and recommended several steps to curb the harm of the "high intensity" poker machines that are found across the country.



Australia's poker machines are unusual by world standards. At the present time in Australia, there are no low-intensity machines where bets are restricted to ranges consistent with normal, recreational play. This contrasts with other jurisdictions around the world such as New Zealand and the United Kingdom, where certain venues are restricted to machines with low limits on the maximum stake and maximum prize. In the United States, high-intensity machines are generally limited to casinos.

It is possible to quickly lose large sums of money on the typical Australian poker machine. In states where a \$10 maximum bet applies and the spin rate is unregulated, a gambler could expect to lose \$1200 per hour - with possible losses significantly higher.

Because of the risks high-intensity machines pose, the Productivity Commission made several recommendations for reform in the area of electronic gaming machines.

- That low intensity machines be offered (loss rates of about \$120/hour), with \$1 bet limits and a \$20 load-up maximum.
- No change to note acceptors on machines based on the above.
- More research into the effect of jackpots.
- Mandatory pre-commitment for high-intensity machines whereby users specify a loss limit before gambling on poker machines and have that limit enforced via technological measures.

> REAL CHANGE NEEDS REAL REFORM

Instead of following these recommendations, the Labor Government legislated to make machines “mandatory pre-commitment ready”, without any change to how problem gamblers play or how much they can bet and lose.

While negotiating with the government on gambling reform in 2012, the Greens secured the establishment of the Australian Gambling Research Centre, because more research is needed on the complexities of problem gambling. But the evidence already shows that taking action on bet limits is likely to make a real impact on how much problem gamblers lose.

Achieving reform is not easy with powerful lobbies like Clubs Australia determined to block any reform that limits the flow of cash through Australia's 200,000 poker machines. But a reform that that could prevent crime, keep families together, and even stop suicides – all known consequences of unrestricted gambling – is one the Greens are proud to fight for. We have the courage to stand up to the Pokies lobby for a more caring society.

> PREVENTING HARM SAVES MONEY

High-intensity poker machines are designed to be addictive and maximise losses. Gambling is no longer a bit of harmless fun, but has become a huge industry whose sole purpose is to extract as much money from punters as quickly as possible.

Costs to industry will be negligible. By phasing in the limits over 5 years – the average lifespan of a poker machine – changing the software will not place an undue burden on local clubs.^{viii}

Poker machines that can churn through thousands of dollars an hour have no place in a typical night out. Limiting bet limits will slow the losses of problem gamblers and limit the billions in harms to society these losses cause.

ⁱ Productivity Commission, *Gambling*, vol. 1, Commonwealth of Australia 2010 p. 11.12.

ⁱⁱ Productivity Commission p. 11.2; p. 56.

ⁱⁱⁱ Productivity Commission., p 11.23.

^{iv} Productivity Commission., pp. 11.29 – 11.30.

^v €902 (\$1208.75) per year according to *The Economist*, reported in <http://www.smh.com.au/national/its-a-sure-thing-australians-are-far-ahead-in-the-gambling-world-20110520-1ewls.html>

^{vi} Productivity Commission, p. 2.

^{vii} Productivity Commission., p. 48.

^{viii} The Australia Institute, *Rubbery Figures: An examination of the claimed and likely costs of poker machine reform in Australia 2012*.



INVESTING IN THE FUTURE FAIR, HIGH QUALITY EDUCATION

The Greens' plan for a well-funded and accessible university sector

Australia's universities are under increasing pressure from decades of underfunding by both Labor and the Coalition. Student debt has risen and class sizes have blown out. University staff and courses have faced cuts. A society that cares for its future invests in education, rather than imposing budget cuts on universities.

Australia's reputation as a hub of quality higher education, for teaching, learning and research, is at stake. We need a visionary approach to the university sector that emphasises the importance of education in society and for a globally competitive economy.

Over the past two decades, funding for Australian universities has decreased in real terms. Our universities need increased funding to protect the quality of Australia's higher education system – to stop the course and staff cuts, to aim for lower student-to-staff ratios, and to boost our research capacity.

To deliver a world-class higher education system, the Australian Greens will:

- **Increase by 10 per cent the per student base funding for universities as recommended by the Bradley Review into Higher Education; and**
- **Reverse Labor's \$2.3 billion higher education budget cuts.**

> 10 PER CENT INCREASE TO BASE FUNDING PER STUDENT

The Greens' proposed 10 per cent increase in funding would be phased in from 2014 to 2017, applied at a rate of 2.5 per cent per calendar year from 1 January 2014.

The Parliamentary Budget Office has costed the proposal at a total additional cost of \$1.474 billion over the forward estimates.¹

The funding increase applies to the base funding prior to the higher education budget cuts announced in the 2013-14 budget.

> CHRONIC UNDERFUNDING – THE ELEPHANT IN THE ROOM

The government cannot afford to continue to underfund universities. Without more funds, any policy changes the government contemplates will not address the fundamental problems which have been caused by chronic underfunding.

The government's Bradley Review proposed a 10 per cent increase as a way to ensure standards would be maintained. That was back in 2008. It identified a real risk that if funding levels weren't increased then universities, students and staff would suffer a decline in quality.

Unfortunately that fear has become a reality with school and faculty closures occurring at universities across Australia, courses have been slashed, hundreds of academic and general staff have lost their jobs and student-to-staff ratios have soared.

As a nation we must do better. We should be aiming high and following the lead of other developed countries.

A good first step is to increase base funding per student by 10 per cent to reverse the downward trend and protect the future quality of higher education.

> WHY WE NEED AN IMMEDIATE BASE FUNDING INCREASE

The government has commissioned two major reports into university funding, the Bradley Review of Higher Education (2008) and the Lomax-Smith Review of Base Funding (2011). Both reports showed that our universities are chronically underfunded, and recommended an immediate increase to per



student base funding in order to maintain existing standards of teaching and learning.

This is in line with calls from sector groups such as Universities Australia, the National Tertiary Education Union (NTEU) and the National Union of Students (NUS).

The Bradley Review specifically proposed a 10 per cent increase to maintain standards at their current level. It found that Australia was the only OECD country where the public contribution to higher education remained at the same level in 2005 as it had been in 1995.ⁱⁱ

The modest \$1.474 billion boost to university base funding that the Greens propose over the next four years would place Australia in the average of OECD countries when it comes to public spending on higher education.

It's what unions, universities and student groups have called for to protect our reputation as a country with a high quality education sector.

> INTERNATIONAL COMPARISON

It is economically responsible to invest in our universities. Universities Australia in its 2013-14 Pre-Budget submission reported that Australian investment in universities lags behind most other advanced economies:

“The OECD countries on average grew their real public investments in tertiary education by 62 per cent over the 1995 to 2009 period. By contrast, Australia only grew its investment in tertiary education by 17 per cent.

These figures translate to an average real growth rate of 3.3 per cent pa across OECD countries, compared to a growth rate in Australia of only 1.1 per cent pa. So other countries have grown their public investment in university education by over 200 per cent more than Australia from 1995 to 2009.”ⁱⁱⁱ

Further, according to Universities Australia, following the recent budget cuts there will have been by 2015 a 2 per cent decline in base funding in real terms since 1995.^{iv} They estimate this will put base funding 15 per cent below the levels recommended by the government's own Bradley Review.

The OECD average for public investment in universities is 1.1 per cent of GDP. For Australia, this equals \$28.3 billion. We would need to invest an additional \$10.3 billion per year to reach the OECD average.

A \$1.474 billion investment over four years to increase base funding, coupled with reversing the \$2.3 billion budget cuts, measures up as modest and necessary spending to boost university funding.

> OTHER PARTIES

Labor has demonstrated its lack of commitment to the role of universities in our economic future by cutting \$2.3 billion from the sector in the 2013-14 budget and by failing to invest the additional funding necessary according to the advice from their own expert reports.

Tony Abbott and the Coalition cannot be trusted to invest in higher education and in particular to ensure universities are accessible to students from all socio-economic backgrounds.

In 1990 the Government contributed 68.4% of university funding. By 1999 that had fallen to 49.1%.^v This drop in public funding coincided with an increase in HECS contributions. The sector also relied heavily on revenue from overseas students, which has fallen in recent years

Considering the growth experienced in the university sector, universities are not much better off than they were in 1996 when John Howard came to office. Neither major party has maintained adequate levels of funding to sustain quality in the higher education system.^{vi}

ⁱ PBO costing for The Greens: Increasing funding to universities, 7 June 2013.

ⁱⁱ Bradley Review of Higher Education, page XV, 147.

ⁱⁱⁱ <http://www.universitiesaustralia.edu.au/resources/4/1523>

^{iv} <http://www.theaustralian.com.au/higher-education/universities-australia-tests-craig-emersons-figures-on-funding/story-e6frgcix-1226632522957>

^v Laming, “Seven Key Turning Points in Australian Higher Education Policy 1943 – 1999, Post-Script Volume 2,2, <http://www.voced.edu.au/content/ngv43949>

^{vi} “University Funding 1996-2010” Group of Eight, May 2012 <http://www.go8.edu.au>



SMARTER, SAFER, STRONGER JUSTICE REINVESTMENT FOR AUSTRALIA

The Greens' plan for a more effective approach to criminal justice

If we want safer communities, it is time for new thinking in Australia. Justice reinvestment is a smarter approach to criminal justice: reducing crime by re-directing money away from prisons into stronger, more caring communities.

Since 1984, the number of Australians in jail has tripled.ⁱ Prison budgets in the States and Territories are spiralling and yet we don't feel safer.

The Australian Greens know it is a social and economic imperative we find ways to reverse escalating imprisonment rates.

> TIME TO END OUR LOCK-UP CULTURE

Justice reinvestment reflects the idea prevention is better than cure. Prisons are only a temporary solution to criminal behaviour.

Statistics show that 44% of prisoners will be back in prison within two years.ⁱⁱ This revolving door is counter-productive and expensive. Imprisonment as we practise it in Australia represents a social and financial policy failure.

It's time to embrace evidence-based solutions that will really reduce crime. Investing in disadvantaged communities, where most offenders come from, strengthens those communities, reduces crime and makes us all safer.

The Australian Greens' plan includes:

- **Investing \$10 million over four years** in establishing a National Centre for Justice Reinvestment
- **Funding a Justice Reinvestment Grants Program** worth \$50 million over four years.



> THE COST OF INCARCERATION

The *real* price of growing incarceration rates is not just the cost to taxpayers of building and running more prisons, but the long-term impact imprisonment has on each prisoner, their family and their community.

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Australians are shamefully over-represented in our jails. They make up 2.5% of our population but more than a quarter of those in prison.ⁱⁱⁱ

The situation for young Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples is even worse. They are 31 times more likely to be in criminal detention than their non-Indigenous peers.^{iv}

While we will always need jails for the most serious offenders, there are many people who do not need to be there. For example, jails should not be storing houses for people with mental ill-health or people with minor traffic infringements.

There are more effective ways of managing these issues. Imprisonment for every offender does not make economic sense.

> A SMARTER APPROACH

Justice reinvestment reduces the number of people in jail and the number of people returning to jail, generating savings which can be re-directed towards disadvantaged communities where most offenders are concentrated.

Investing in carefully developed programs and services in those communities reduces crime. Less crime means less people in jail, fewer victims and safer, more caring communities.

Justice Reinvestment is a smarter, more cost-effective approach to criminal justice which has been successful internationally and will pave the way for safer, stronger Australian communities.



> AN INDEPENDENT NATIONAL CENTRE FOR JUSTICE REINVESTMENT

The Greens know that Australia urgently needs a new, ambitious approach to criminal justice.

The “tough on crime” mantra is actually weak, ineffective and financially unsustainable. We need a long-term commitment to reduce crime by addressing disadvantage and building stronger communities.

Research shows a large number of offenders come from, and return to, a small number of disadvantaged neighbourhoods. Justice reinvestment targets those communities.

It requires scrupulous data collection, analysis, consultation and evaluation. Independent advisory bodies have been critical to the success of justice reinvestment overseas.

As recommended by a recent Senate inquiry,^v the Australian Greens will invest \$10 million from 1 July 2014 in an independent National Centre for Justice Reinvestment to provide high-quality information and research.

The Centre would help identify ‘high stakes’ communities and assist and advise States and Territories who are willing to try a smarter approach.

> FUNDING AN ANNUAL JUSTICE REINVESTMENT GRANT PROGRAM

The rising number of people in prisons is putting pressure on government budgets.

Australia spends more than \$3 billion dollars a year just running our jails. The cost of building a new jail can be in the vicinity of half a billion dollars. Locking up someone costs an average of \$305 per prisoner per day, or more than \$110,000 a year.^{vi}

Prisons just don’t make economic sense. This money can be more effectively spent addressing the causes of crime and making our communities safer.

Overseas experience has shown that targeting disadvantaged communities where offenders are concentrated, with locally-owned programs like supporting new mothers, early childhood education, and intensive housing and employment support, will reduce crime.

That’s why we’re proposing an annual Justice Reinvestment Grant Program worth \$50 million over the forward estimates to support state, territory and local governments and community organisations to initiate local justice reinvestment pilot programs across Australia. The Australian Greens know that we need to be smarter on crime and we need to start now.

^v Australian Bureau of Statistics, *Australian Crime Facts and Figures* (2011) <<http://www.aic.gov.au/documents/0/B/6/%7B0B619F44-B18B-47B4-9B59-F87BA643CBAA%7Dfacts11.pdf>> (117)

ⁱⁱ Australian Bureau of Statistics, *Australian Crime Facts and Figures* (2011) <<http://www.aic.gov.au/documents/0/B/6/%7B0B619F44-B18B-47B4-9B59-F87BA643CBAA%7Dfacts11.pdf>> (123)

ⁱⁱⁱ Australian Bureau of Statistics, *Prisoners in Australia* (2012) <<http://www.abs.gov.au/ausstats/abs@.nsf/Products/A91DA889C3E80BA4CA257B3C000DCCC1>>.

^{iv} Australian Institute of Health and Welfare, *Juvenile detention population in Australia* (2012) <<http://www.aihw.gov.au/WorkArea/DownloadAsset.aspx?id=60129542551>> (vii).

^v Legal and Constitutional Affairs References Committee, *Value of a justice reinvestment approach to criminal justice in Australia* (2013),

<http://www.aph.gov.au/parliamentary_business/committees/senate_committees?url=legcon_ctte/completed_inquiries/2010-13/justice_reinvestment/report/report.pdf> (11, 12)

^{vi} Productivity Commission, *Report on Government Services*, (2013) <http://www.pc.gov.au/data/assets/pdf_file/0008/121769/11-government-services-2013-chapter8.pdf> (8.24, 8.4)



PROTECTING QUEENSLAND'S UNIQUE ECOSYSTEMS LETTING OUR WILD RIVERS RUN FREE

The Greens' plan to protect some of the world's last free-flowing rivers

Free-flowing wild rivers support a diversity of iconic landscapes - from the lush rainforests and expansive tropical wetlands of Cape York to our rugged Channel Country. For Indigenous communities, many of the rivers have important cultural value.

> WILD RIVERS UNDER THREAT

In 2005, the Queensland Government created the Wild Rivers Act to protect 13 pristine Queensland rivers from damaging activities, such as mines, dams, weirs and large scale irrigation.

Today, many of our wild rivers are under threat from bauxite mining, major irrigation projects and unconventional gas projects across Queensland. But in the face of these threats, the Queensland Government is winding back protection.

Queensland Premier Campbell Newman is ripping up wild rivers protection.

The Newman Government has announced it will repeal wild river protection for Cape York rivers. Instead, the Newman Government is developing a regional plan for Cape York. The regional plan threatens to tolerate, mining, damming and irrigation. The Wild Rives Act protected river catchments from these damaging activities.

Despite broad support from traditional owners, graziers and all other local stakeholders, the Newman Government is also replacing wild river protection for Channel Country (western) rivers with a new strategy that may not so strongly preclude coal seam gas and other damaging activities.

The Newman Government is also allowing large-scale vegetation clearing in wild river areas, risking more sediment flowing into these rivers, which for Cape York rivers will be flushed out to the Great Barrier Reef.

> THE GREENS' PLAN

The Australian Greens want to give all Australian wild rivers protection under national environment law, the *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act* (1999).

Under our plan, all new developments that will significantly impact the natural and/or cultural heritage values for which each river has been listed will require assessment and approval under our national environment laws. Like the original *Wild Rivers Act 2005*, national heritage listing of Queensland's wild rivers will not stop all development within wild river catchments, but will mean that any damaging projects will need examination and tick off by the federal Environment Minister.

The Australian Greens will:

- **assess each river that has been declared a wild river under the Queensland *Wild Rivers Act (2005)* for inclusion on the national heritage list;**
- **give immediate protection to any wild river subject to imminent threat with an emergency national heritage listing;**
- **assess all of Australia's pristine rivers to identify those worthy of national heritage protection, and advise the Environment Minister on any needing emergency listing;**
- **provide \$10 million per annum to the Environment Department to support the national heritage assessment and listing of wild rivers across Australia, and to support ongoing protection and management of our wild rivers.**
- **Ensure wild river management is supported by indigenous wild river rangers.**



> OUR WORK IN THE PARLIAMENT

The Greens have:

- written to the federal Environment Minister calling for Labor to urgently protect Queensland's wild rivers through national heritage listing (March 2012) and followed up this request with a question in the Senate
- welcomed Traditional Owners from Cape York to Parliament House in Canberra and put a motion to the Senate to protect the Cape's rivers from mining.

Our plan is vital to securing the future of these relatively untouched rivers and the rich cultural and natural values they support. With Campbell Newman winding back Wild Rivers protection and Tony Abbott encouraging mining, damming and irrigation in these areas, our wild rivers are under pressure like never before.

Where Labor has done little to save wild rivers from these threats, the Greens have been a strong voice in Parliament on behalf of Traditional Owners and all Australians who care about the environment.

> SUPPORTING INDIGENOUS COMMUNITIES

Many Traditional Owners across Queensland supported the Wild Rivers Act for the protection it gave their country, and for the indigenous ranger jobs it created in river management.

The Greens plan for national protection of wild rivers would include wild river management, and crucially, it will be supported by indigenous wild river rangers.

> ABBOTT THREATENS WILD RIVERS

Tony Abbott's Coalition has announced plans to expand agriculture and mining in northern Australia and potential funding for dams, threatening the free-flowing nature of wild rivers and the iconic landscapes they support.

> QUEENSLAND'S WILD RIVERS

Thirteen pristine or near-pristine rivers were protected under the Act in four areas:

- 1) Cape York: Wenlock Basin, Archer Basin, Stewart Basin and Lockhart Basin Wild River Area
- 2) The Gulf Region: Gregory, Morning Inlet, Settlement and Staaten Rivers
- 3) The Channel Country: Cooper Creek, Georgina and Diamantina Rivers
- 4) Inland rivers: Fraser and Hinchinbrook rivers



CREATIVE REGIONS

RESTORING REGIONAL & REMOTE ARTS

The Greens' plan for the arts to flourish in our regions

The arts inject meaning, thoughtfulness and reflection into our increasingly pressured daily lives. Just when it is most needed, regional arts missed out in the national funding package. The Greens will restore regional arts funding to its peak, create jobs and build community participation in the arts.

The Greens want our regional communities, who are rightly proud of their unique identities, to be able to express their talents, their values and their stories. Yet this tradition is at threat with declining government funding to support our Creative Regions. The Greens will turn all this around through our regional arts policy.

> PROMOTING ART, JOBS AND COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT

The Regional Arts Fund is the central pool of money used to cultivate community projects and support regional artists. This money was cut in 2008 and has never regained its previous funding levels. The Greens are committed to restoring the fund, in real dollars to its 2004 peak and further expand its scope and funding. We will invest an additional \$10m in regional arts.

The Greens will expand the Regional Arts Fund so that:

- **Australia's 408 regional and remote local governments can apply for funding to establish cultural policy officers to drive local, tailored community art projects.**
- **Regional artists will have greater ability to develop artistic projects that directly involve their communities and use art as a vehicle to build social enterprises.**
- **There will be more money to go around, reaching more regions and more people through more touring.**
- **The accounting and allocation of grant money will be simplified so that individuals in remote areas are able to spend more time involved in their art projects and less time navigating complex management requirements.**

> MORE MONEY, MORE ART

Each dollar goes further when invested in regional areas because every project leverages a greater participation from the community, generates a higher circulation of income and brings local communities closer together.

The Regional Arts Fund distributes its money over four year cycles and in the peak of its popularity in 2008, was cut back by the Labor government. To bring the fund back to its 2004 funding levels in today's dollars requires an additional investment of \$6 million for the remainder of the current 2012-16 cycle.

The Greens will commit a further \$4 million for regional and remote local governments to establish ongoing employment positions whose job will be dedicated solely to developing and attracting artistic projects into their community, or taking their projects on the road.

Experience shows that when local governments have a dedicated cultural policy officer, that community sees an explosion in performances, exhibitions and tourism. Not only will these jobs help establish and manage projects, but these cultural officers will be able to dedicate quality time to attract public and philanthropic money to flow into their regions.

> LESS COMPLEXITY, MORE ART

While the Office of the Arts has struggled to do its job with staff cut-backs, it has retained its complex management requirements for grant recipients. The Greens are committed to simplify the grant allocation, distribution and accounting systems so that regional artists can spend more time devoted to their projects.



These changes in administrative requirements will particularly assist remote Indigenous artists and those individuals who are currently required to have an auspice manage even the smallest of grants on their behalf. We will consult with artists and administrators on the best ways to achieve these improvements.

> THE VALUE OF REGIONAL ARTS

Regional Arts Funding ensures that Australian culture in our regions is showcased not only locally but for the whole of Australia to enjoy. Local stories inspire and inform our nation. Here are just two of the many projects that speak a local story and influence our nation.



Smashed by Big hART

Not your regular short-film competition, *Smashed* was a project that offered high school students in the North-West of Tasmania the opportunity to make short films exploring the problems of youth binge drinking.

The project started off as a workshop for a peer-led discussion around the social attitudes and effects of binge drinking. As they developed their thoughts about the complex relationships between young people and alcohol, they could transform their ideas through the creative medium of film.

Just as these school students were trained with skills in screen production, they also shared their own stories and their own perspectives with their community. These young leaders could now set a different agenda for an open, honest and stripped back discussion of binge drinking with their friends, family and community as their audience.

Since 1992, Big hART have worked with over 6,500 people from 32 disadvantaged communities across Australia. They use a diverse range of artforms to develop community engagement, build resilience and share important stories.



Photo: Sarah Simmons

Murray Darlings by Lara van Raay and Sarah Simmons

This project mapped the lives of remarkable and inspirational women living along the remote stretches of the mighty Murray and Darling Rivers. Their histories, character and personal stories are delivered to the audience in a multimedia platform using photography and film and placed on the internet to be viewed by people from all corners of the country and around the world.

The tales of rugged, rural Australia have traditionally been told by, or about the pioneer men who made the most of the bush. But they would never have survived without the women and children whose voices are so rarely publicised.

Without a project like *Murray Darlings*, these stories of proud rural women might otherwise never be heard.

The producers of this project are keen for women along the Rivers to keep telling their stories and we are too. But with limited government funding available, they are now turning for support from local businesses.

To learn about the strength, integrity and humour of these women, visit:

<http://www.murraydarlings.com.au>

> OTHER PARTIES

Labor all but ignored regional arts in its recently released National Cultural Policy and the Coalition have yet to release any policies to support the arts in the 2013 election.



SAFER ADVERTISING TO CHILDREN

PROTECTING FUTURE HEALTH

The Greens' plan to combat harmful advertising to children

Constant exposure to ads for harmful products including junk food, gambling and alcohol is impacting impressionable children. The Greens care about keeping kids healthy now and in the future, and will introduce new rules to keep kids' viewing times free of harmful ads.

Australian parents are sick of the bombardment of harmful ads their children face every time they watch TV. The Greens will introduce measures to protect Australia's children from unhealthy food, gambling and alcohol advertising and promotion. Current industry codes of self-regulation continue to fail our nation's children. With this policy we are seeking to curb the country's burgeoning health crisis of childhood obesity, combat harmful drinking and restore the family-friendly nature of Australian sport.

> PUTTING THE BRAKES ON HARMFUL ADVERTISING

The Greens will tackle the issue of targeted advertising of harmful products to children by introducing legislation that will:

- Set enforceable, national standard times for child-friendly TV ads that would ban junk food, gambling and alcohol ads on commercial TV between 6am and 9am, and 4pm and 9pm on weekdays; and between 6am and 9pm on weekends and during school holidays.
- Subscription television channels dedicated to children's programming would be banned from showing junk food, gambling and alcohol advertisements.
- Companies using emails and smartphones to target underage customers would be prevented from sending material promoting unhealthy foods, gambling and alcohol products.

This legislation is about ensuring the well-being of our community and future generations. A comprehensive ban on the targeted advertising of harmful products to children during peak viewing periods and on websites geared toward young people would help to reinforce and normalise healthy lifestyle choices and ensure young people's wellbeing for the future.

> THE POWER OF TARGETED ADVERTISING

Television advertising has significant reach, and has been shown to independently influence children's thoughts, feelings, preferences and purchasing requests. Australian children's exposure to television advertising is amongst the highest in the world, with children on average watching 20 hours or more of television per week being twice as likely to be overweight or obese.ⁱ

Codes governing advertising to children contain serious loopholes. Restrictions on the advertising of harmful products such as alcohol and gambling to children contain loopholes allowing these ads at any time of the day during sports broadcasts – the same shows that are amongst the most popular shows for children.ⁱⁱ Codes that govern junk food advertising are weak and toothless, allowing no meaningful penalties against repeat offenders.ⁱⁱⁱ

The Greens will close these loopholes by legislating to curb three of the most harmful aspects.



> HARMFUL PRODUCTS- THE EVIDENCE

Industry studies highlight the targeted marketing of unhealthy food to children is contributing to a childhood obesity crisis in this country that will cause diabetes and heart disease to skyrocket in the coming decades. Something must be done to curb the influence of unhealthy food promotion on Australia's children. Experts agree that self-regulation in Australia has clearly failed, allowing the bombardment of junk food ads to continue.^{iv}

A similar story applies to the proliferation of binge drinking and associated marketing of alcoholic beverages targeted at young people.

- 68% of Australians believe alcohol advertising and promotion influence the drinking habits of people under the age of 18^v. Research undertaken by The Foundation for Alcohol Research and Education has demonstrated significant relationships between children's exposure to alcohol advertising, and drinking intentions and behaviors^{vi}. Exposure to alcohol advertising has been found to shape young people's beliefs, attitudes and drinking behaviors with advertising messages concentrating on young people's goals of good times and social acceptance. Concerningly advertisers increasingly target broadcasts during sporting and cultural events which appeal to younger audiences as major outlets for alcohol promotion.

The Greens believe the increasing presence of gambling advertising in sport, and especially the inclusion of bookmaking figures in commentary teams, runs the risk of creating a whole new generation of problem gamblers.

- The issue of problem gambling amongst young people continues to rise with a large Victorian study showing that 41% of Year 8 students had gambled in some form over the past year^{vii}. Research shows that children who watch sport can typically name several sports betting companies at a young age^{viii}. Other studies have found substantial associations between underage gambling and engagement in antisocial and risk-taking behaviors, family breakdown and social isolation.

> A STEP FURTHER

The Greens have developed policies specifically for restricting the advertising of unhealthy food and gambling in media targeted at children. **Our Children's Ad Package would go a step further to restrict the hours that gambling, alcohol and unhealthy food advertisements can be screened on subscription and free-to-air television.**

ⁱ Department of Health and Ageing, Preventative Health Taskforce, Technical Paper 1, Obesity in Australia: a need for urgent action

ⁱⁱ Commercial Television Industry Code of Practice July 2013

ⁱⁱⁱ Obesity Policy Coalition: A comprehensive approach to protecting children from unhealthy food advertising and promotion

^{iv} Obesity Policy Coalition, *Media Release*, 'Health groups release detailed investigation into failure of junk food marketing codes', Monday 12th November 2012,

<http://www.opc.org.au/latestnews/mediareleases/pages/mr20121112.aspx> (accessed May 2013)

^v Foundation for Alcohol Research and Education, *Alcohol Advertising*, 26th April 2012, <http://www.fare.org.au/research-development/community-polling/annual-alcohol-poll-2012/alcohol-advertising/> (accessed May 2013)

^{vi} Foundation for Alcohol Research and Education, *A summary of the evidence behind our approach*, <http://www.fare.org.au/policy-advocacy/alcohol-marketing-and-promotions/a-summary-of-the-evidence-behind-our-approach/>, (accessed May 2013)

^{vii} State of Victoria, *Problem gambling: a guide for Victorian schools*, 2007, pg 9,

[www.gamblinghelp.nsw.gov.au/.../Guide to problem gambling TAFE](http://www.gamblinghelp.nsw.gov.au/.../Guide%20to%20problem%20gambling%20TAFE) (accessed May 2013)

^{viii} Parliamentary Joint Select Committee on Gambling Reform: *The advertising and promotion of gambling services in sport report 2013*



21ST CENTURY INFRASTRUCTURE BUILDING HIGH-SPEED RAIL

The Greens' plan to begin Australia's fast train network.

High speed rail's time has come, but Australia needs courage and vision to get it moving. The old parties, stuck in the short-term political cycle, lack the will to really embrace this nation building project. Only the Greens have a vision and a plan to build a clean, efficient, transport future.

High-Speed Rail's time has come. Just when we need to improve the affordability and connectedness between our South-Eastern cities, boost the opportunities of our regional centres, support manufacturing jobs and reduce our transport emissions, the promises of High Speed are here. The Greens stand ready to deliver them.

As part of the agreement to support the minority Labor government, the Australian Greens secured a \$20 million feasibility study into high speed rail. That feasibility study demonstrated that it will cut pollution, enhance business and passenger transport and generate positive economic returns.

> TRANSFORMING A VISION INTO REALITY

Every continent except Antarctica and Australia is operating or developing High Speed Rail. It is a standard mode of travel for those living in Europe, Japan and China. The United States of America is set to join them as they begin construction in September on their 1,300km San Francisco-Los Angeles line. The Greens are the only party with the long-term vision to start work on the proposed routes along Eastern Australia now:

Line 1: Sydney to Melbourne (2 hours 44 mins) comprising of Canberra to Sydney (1 hour) and Melbourne to Canberra (2 ½ hours).

Line 2: Sydney to Brisbane (2 hours 37 mins) comprising of Sydney to Newcastle (40 mins); and Newcastle to the Gold Coast and Gold Coast to Brisbane.

Once complete, the High Speed Rail will stretch 1,750km linking 11 major cities and regions all the way from Melbourne to Brisbane. It would pass through the regional centres of Coffs Harbour, Wagga Wagga, Albury-Wodonga and Central Coast.¹

The commissioned *phase two* report laid down a plan for rolling out the High Speed Rail Project in several stages. The Greens will implement the accelerated timetable envisaged in the report. The preliminary requirements are preparing an investment plan, mapping the most appropriate routes, securing those rail corridors through agreement with the states and submitting a suite of comprehensive environmental assessments.

To begin this nation-transforming project, the Greens are committing to fast track high speed rail. We will:

- **Fast-track intergovernmental agreements and legislation to get high speed rail moving.**
- **Establish a dedicated High Speed Rail Authority (HSRA) to develop and manage the project. The Authority would be responsible for:**
 - **Preparing a detailed financing and investment plan for the project.**
 - **Surveying the best rail corridors with the relevant state and local governments**
 - **Secure ownership of those routes and confirm the development and operation plan of the project through an inter-governmental agreement.**
- **Commence a comprehensive environmental impact assessment.**

Once all these preliminary requirements have been achieved, construction will be ready to commence. This proposal has been costed by the Parliamentary Budget Office at \$664 million over the forward estimates period, plus the costs of the Environmental Impact statement (EIS). The EIS has been costed at \$570 million. The Greens have budgeted for the full cost of



the EIS but note it may not be completed over the forward estimate period. 100% of this cost will be funded by the Commonwealth government without any assistance or cost sharing with state governments or private enterprise.

> CREATING JOBS

In addition to all the social and environmental benefits, constructing the High Speed Rail will create a boom for manufacturing and construction jobs in South-East Australia with an estimated 12,000 jobs per year.

High speed rail projects overseas have produced many skilled workers. Spain's HSR line from Madrid to Valencia (at 430 kilometres comparable to Sydney-Canberra) created over 100,000 jobs during its construction. In California they expect construction of their high speed rail project to create up to 66,000 jobs annually for fifteen years.ⁱⁱ

A general rule of thumb is that around 20,000 jobs are created from each \$1 billion of investment.ⁱⁱⁱ Over the entire life of the project around \$114 billion will be invested, meaning the equivalent of 228,000 people will find work through the project in manufacturing, construction, engineering and planning.

Photo: Bombardier



> THE BUSINESS CASE

For every dollar put into the project, we get \$2.30 back as a public benefit for passengers, businesses and avoided transport emissions. Compare this with Melbourne's proposed road tunnel which when first proposed saw only 50c back for every dollar invested,^{iv} meaning it would not make a return for the public or private investors. Even with inflated traffic figures, the highest estimate the public would see from the road tunnel is a wobbly \$1.40 return.^v

The rail lines would annually reduce our greenhouse gas emissions by 1.3 million tonnes a year, the equivalent of 365,000 cars taken off the road.^{vi} Airport and traffic noise could be reduced and could alleviate the need for a second Sydney airport.

Once complete, the network would make enough money from fare revenue to sustain itself as a permanent feature of our national transportation infrastructure.^{vii}

The Greens commitment to begin this crucial project by creating the High Speed Rail Authority and starting the preliminary stages will be funded out of federal government revenue (see figures below).

However, the bulk of the funding needed to begin construction would be delivered on the basis of the most efficient financing mechanisms recommended by the Authority. With our AAA rating, low debt to GDP and bond yields near record lows, it is the most opportune time to borrow money to invest in nationally critical infrastructure to be enjoyed by the generations that follow.

	2013	2014	2015	2016
	-14	-15	-16	-17
\$(m)	\$135	\$149	\$157	\$223

> THE OTHER PARTIES' SHORT-TERM VISION

While the Labor government originally adopted the Greens vision for this project, it is quite clear their hearts are just not in it. Since the reports were released, they have not committed any more money to move this project along and have simply called for a 'discussion' about the project.^{viii}

Meanwhile Tony Abbott's overblown and paralysing fear of debt means that no productivity enhancing, nation-changing infrastructure would ever be built under his conservative government. His commitment is to roads. He doesn't want any federal funding to be spent on public transport – full stop.

Only the Greens have a vision of a clean, productive, innovative and caring Australia thriving throughout the 21st century. High Speed Rail is a central part of that vision.

ⁱ High Speed Rail Study Phase 2 Report page 8.

ⁱⁱ California High-Speed Rail Authority, 'Creating jobs through high-speed rail', January 2013.

ⁱⁱⁱ American HSR Alliance.

^{iv} Sophie Sturup and Nicholas Low "East-West Tunnel plan looms as a road to ruin" *The Age* 15 May 2013.

^v Linking Melbourne Authority East West Link Stage One. June 2013 page 7.

^{vi} Naomi Edwards *High Speed Rail: Benefits that add up*. Page 14.

^{vii} *High Speed Rail Study Phase 2 Report*. Page 2.

^{viii} Emma Griffiths "Albanese calls for debate on high speed rail link" *ABC Online* 11 April 2013.



AUSTRALIA'S VISION FOR THE FUTURE

CARING FOR PEOPLE AT RISK OF BLINDNESS

The Greens' plan for eliminating unnecessary vision loss

Seventy-five percent of vision impairment in Australia is preventable or treatable. Despite this, approximately 500,000 Australians are unnecessarily blind or vision impaired. Without urgent action, this number is expected to double in the coming decade.

We can easily eliminate avoidable blindness and reduce the impact of vision loss in Australia. By making prevention and early detection of eye disease a priority, we can improve the lives of many thousands of Australians, their families and loved ones.

> OUR PLAN FOR ELIMINATING AVOIDABLE BLINDNESS

Although often overlooked, eye problems are one of the most common long-term health problems experienced by Australians, affecting around half of our populationⁱ. That's why the Australian Greens are announcing our plan to eliminate avoidable blindness and reduce vision loss through:

- A \$10 million targeted **awareness-raising campaign** to encourage people to have an eye examination every two years as well as recognizing the health risk factors, such as a family history of vision loss or diabetes.
- Investing \$12 million in the development of a comprehensive 10 year **national eye health and vision strategy**
- Strengthened national eye health and vision care **monitoring and research for \$13 million**

In 2009 the total financial cost of vision loss was estimated at \$16.6 billion, and this figure is rising at an alarming rateⁱⁱ. With an investment of \$35 million over four years, from 1 July 2013, we can have a significant impact on reducing the incidence of blindness and the impact of vision loss.

The costs associated with the plan are small compared to the outcomes.

Preventing and reducing the incidence of blindness and vision impairment in Australia will reduce pressure on our health system and community services, and increase productivity.

> EARLY DETECTION IS VITAL TO PREVENTING BLINDNESS

Once sight is lost, for the most part it cannot be restored but seventy-five per cent of blindness and vision loss is preventable or treatable if problems are detected early.

An eye test can detect the main causes of vision loss such as glaucoma, macular degeneration, diabetic retinopathy and cataracts. Many of these diseases are hereditary and can cause blindness in babies, teenagers and adults as well as the elderly.

Eye tests every two years are the most effective way to identify problems before they cause permanent vision loss. Yet, many people, including those who are at high risk of blindness do not get their eyes tested regularly.

For example, people living with diabetes are in a high risk group for eye disease, yet a survey by the Royal Australian and New Zealand College of Ophthalmologists showed that 40% of the one million Australians living with diabetes do not have regular eye exams. Over 98% of vision loss in people with diabetes can be prevented with optimal management and treatment, yet one in three people diagnosed with diabetes admitting to never having had their eyes tested at allⁱⁱⁱ.

So, as well as making eye checks inexpensive and widely available, people also need to know why it is important to have their eyes checked, and understand the risks that, left unchecked, will lead to blindness.

Social marketing campaigns have been demonstrated to deliver a long term cost-saving and return on investment. A targeted \$10 million awareness raising campaign will spread the message that many people can avoid vision loss and blindness by having their eyes checked regularly.



> AN EYE HEALTH STRATEGY FOR AUSTRALIA

We also need a clear roadmap for the future to make sure the important issue of preventable vision loss can be addressed. Our plan is to develop a comprehensive 10 year **national eye health and vision strategy**. We will allocate \$12 million over four years to develop the strategy.

The strategy will provide a clear national plan to address the underlying issues common to the prevention and treatment of eye disease and vision loss. The strategy will not focus on any one specific eye condition, but will include specific attention to the needs of high risk populations including Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities and older Australians. The strategy will provide a comprehensive plan including early detection, access to care, and research and monitoring.

> MONITORING AND DATA COLLECTION FOR IMPROVED SERVICES

Due to limitations in the availability and completeness of eye health data, it is not currently possible to measure Australia's progress towards eliminating preventable and avoidable blindness^{iv}. A 10 year national eye health and vision strategy needs to be underpinned by comprehensive up to date information about the state of eye health in Australia's population.

We also need to integrate eye health and vision care data in broader national health indicators including the *Healthy Australia 2020 Goals* and Australian Institute of Health and Welfare reports.

The Greens will commit \$13 million over four years to research, monitoring and evaluation. This will enable us to track the effectiveness of the national eye health and vision strategy; to make sure our efforts are well targeted; and to raise the profile of eye health within the general health arena.

> INNOVATIVE RESEARCH AND TECHNOLOGY

The Greens also have an R&D initiative which would lift public and private investment in Research and Development to 3% of GDP by 2020.

This would benefit researchers in the eye health sector to better understand and address eye disease and foster new projects like the bionic eye. Bionic Vision Australia are a world-leading national consortium of researchers working together to develop a bionic eye, is currently using advanced manufacturing techniques to make in Australia prototypes that right now are being tested in patients. They needed a mere \$8m a year for the next 3 years to keep the project going in Australia, but were left out of Labour's most recent federal budget.

> CLOSING THE GAP IN EYE HEALTH

Our plan will be targeted towards specific at risk populations including Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities. Blindness in these communities is six times the average Australian rate. Over 94 per cent of vision loss and blindness in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander populations is preventable if caught early enough, yet 35 per cent of adults have never had an eye examination^v.

Australia is the **only** developed country in the world to have endemic blinding trachoma, one of the leading causes of blindness and vision loss in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities^{vi}. The elimination of this disease can be achieved with adequate planning, prioritisation and investment.

> ADDRESSING THE NEEDS OF OLDER AUSTRALIANS

We all deserve to live healthy, happy and productive lives as we age. With the risk of eye disease increasing three-fold with every decade after forty, eye health is a critical issue for Australia's ageing population.

With a rapidly increasing ageing population, the costs of delivering eye care for older Australians can be minimised through this investment in early detection and prevention.

ⁱ Australian Institute of Health and Welfare, *A guide to Australian eye health data*. 2007.

ⁱⁱ Vision 2020 Australia, *Clear Focus: The Economic Impact of Vision Loss in Australia in 2009*, prepared by Access Economics. 2010.

ⁱⁱⁱ Newspan commissioned by the RANZCO Eye Foundation as part of its annual 'JulEYE' campaign, May 2013.

^{iv} Vision 2020 Australia, *Eliminating avoidable blindness*, June 2010.

^v Vision 2020 Australia, *Response to the National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Plan*, Dec 2012.

^{vi} Australian Institute of Health and Welfare, *Australia's Health*. 2012.



INVESTING IN MEDICARE LOWERING OUT-OF-POCKET COSTS

The Greens' plan for funding Medicare to keep bulk-billing rates high

Our universal health care system is under pressure as rising out-of-pocket costs become a barrier to patients. This could leave Australia with a two-tier health system that separates rich and poor. The Greens will invest an extra \$660m in Medicare to keep costs down and ensure everyone can get the health care they need.

There is nothing more important than our health and the Australian Greens are committed to maintaining Australia's healthcare system. While the old parties are willing to make cuts to essential services like Medicare, the Greens are committing to increased spending on health.

> FUNDING MEDICARE PROPERLY

The Greens will invest **\$664m in extra funding for Medicare** over the forward estimates. This money is a sorely-needed top-up to the health system that reverses cuts to Medicare made by Labor in the last budget and supported by the Coalition.

Our position is supported by the medical community including the Australian Medical Association. AMA President Steve Hambleton warned that "Families will have to pay more each time they visit their family doctor. The value of the Medicare rebate is dropping, making it harder for doctors to provide care and essentially hitting the hip pocket of patients."ⁱ

The Greens will shore up funding for Medicare so that doctors are adequately compensated and don't have to ask patients for a contribution.

> RISING OUT-OF-POCKET COSTS

Medicare was designed as a universal, publicly funded system. That means everybody should have access to medical treatment no matter their means or situation.

A central pillar of Medicare is "bulk billing", where doctors treat patients in exchange for the rebate provided by the Government under Medicare, without charging extra to patients. For bulk billing to remain widely available to the

Australian public, Medicare must be funded at a level that allows doctors to operate their practices without extra income. Labor's cuts could push many doctors over the edge and lead them to start charging their patients a co-payment.

Health care costs are already rising in Australia and we have an obligation to keep our public health system accessible. According to the Australian Institute of Health and Welfare, 19.3% of healthcare costs are now coming straight from the hip pocket of consumers.ⁱⁱ This is an average of \$1075 per person.ⁱⁱⁱ

We know that cost deters people from seeking medical treatment.^{iv} We need to invest in Medicare before this problem gets any worse.

> MAKING HEALTH A PRIORITY

There is nothing more important than our health. The Greens' election platform, *Standing Up for What Matters*, lays out the Greens vision for a caring and prosperous Australia. A caring society means a greater investment in our health system.

The Greens' election platform will be fully costed by the independent Parliamentary Budget Office, and all spending will be balanced by revenue measures.

ⁱ <https://ama.com.au/media/ama-calls-proper-indexation-medicare-patient-rebates>

ⁱⁱ AIHW Health Expenditure 2010-2011

ⁱⁱⁱ AIHW

^{iv} ABS figures, cited by COAG Reform Council, 2012



SMARTER, CLEANER, CHEAPER LOWERING ON-FARM ENERGY BILLS

The Greens plan to help farmers be more energy self-sufficient & save money

Caring for our farmers means helping them to keep our food fresh and to maximise water savings. Grants for energy efficiency and renewable energy can help.

Some forms of farming and food storage on-farm necessarily involve using a lot of energy, and we rely on them to do so because the energy is used to maximise food freshness and safety, and to maximise water use efficiency.

But that necessary high energy use comes at a cost to farmers, who operate in a tough competitive environment against the rise of cheap imports.

If we want to ensure Australia is always able to produce enough fresh food to feed itself, it makes sense to build resilience through our whole food supply system by encouraging increased energy efficiency and switching to renewable energy.

Helping energy intensive farmers increase their energy self-sufficiency will lower their costs, strengthen the food supply chain, lower our greenhouse gas emissions and build the clean green reputation of Australian agriculture.

> ENERGY EFFICIENCY & RENEWABLE ENERGY TO LOWER FARM BILLS

The Australian Greens will fund \$100 million worth of grants to energy-intensive farms to help them upgrade their equipment for maximum energy efficiency, and to install renewable energy to run intensive operations.

These grants for farmers will be an extension of the Clean Technology Food and Foundry Grants Program, which has offered similar grants to food manufacturers, but did not include farmers with high energy use.

The grants will fund:

- **Upgrading of capital equipment** to improve energy efficiency (for example, cold stores, irrigation pumps)
- **Installation of on-farm renewable energy systems** to provide the energy for high energy intensity activities such as irrigation systems, packaging and processing equipment, water heating and sterilization.

> WHO WOULD BE ELIGIBLE?

These grants will be open to agricultural producers who can demonstrate:

- Reliance on high energy intensity from the use of facilities and equipment to ensure food hygiene and freshness such as cold stores, produce heating and cooling, packing and processing and sterilization processes. Good examples would be many producers in the horticulture sector and dairies.
- High reliance on best practice management irrigation systems (generally utilizing high pressure to maximize water efficiency). Given the importance of pressurized irrigation systems in regions reliant on groundwater resources, irrigators in such areas would get priority, however surface water irrigators would also be eligible.
- Eligibility against other relevant criteria already identified through the Clean Technology Grants Program for Food and Foundries.

> HOW WILL ENERGY INTENSITY BE MEASURED?

While the National Greenhouse Gas Inventory doesn't allow for the breakdown of greenhouse gas emissions per agricultural sector (as a corollary of energy intensiveness), there is sufficient information from industry studies to identify those sectors that are particularly energy intensive.

Horticulture and dairy are commonly accepted as the most energy intensive agricultural sub-sectors.



> BUILDING RESILIENCE IN OUR FOOD SYSTEM

As part of the Clean Energy Future package, the Clean Technology Food and Foundry Grant scheme was introduced. These grants recognise that Australia's manufacturing sector including food manufacture has both high energy use and significant exposure to import competition – therefore government financial incentives to increase energy efficiency had the dual benefit for reducing greenhouse gas emissions and improving the competitiveness and resilience of a major Australian employer.

However, these grants to food manufacturers were not extended to the agricultural sector that in large part produces the food our local food manufacturers rely on, despite the fact that many agricultural producers also have high energy use and similar exposure to import competition. In fact Australia has been a net importer of food since 2004, and the deficit is growing particularly for horticultural products – increasing by 27% for example in the last financial year.

In terms of emissions, the National Greenhouse Gas Inventory for the latest year (2011) allows the comparison of stationary energy emissions between the agricultural, forestry and fisheries sector, and the food, beverage and tobacco processing sector. Taking into account that these two categories are broad, they nevertheless indicate that emissions from stationary energy use in the agricultural sector are double those of food manufacturing.

A third key argument for extending the grants to energy intense agriculture is the nexus of water and energy efficiency on farm. In general, implementation of best practice irrigation systems can have an unintended consequence of increasing greenhouse gas emissions because they require more energy to run; however increasing water efficiency in Australia particularly for irrigated agriculture is highly desirable, given expected increasing water scarcity impacts in key agricultural regions due to climate change.

With Australia's agricultural sector expected to be one of the hardest hit by climate change impacts, government assistance to increase the resilience of the sector and Australia's food security by improving overall sustainability by targeting improved energy efficiency, water use efficiency and increased deployment of renewable energy is in the public interest.

Switching to renewable energy and increasing energy efficiency also builds Australia's reputation for clean, green and high quality food.

> OTHER PARTIES

The Labor and Liberal Parties have consistently ignored the potential for renewable energy and energy efficiency to help farmers lower their costs and increase their business sustainability.

Neither party has recognised the needs of farmers in tackling greater energy and water efficiency together, nor the public benefit.

No other parties have offered funds or grants to assist energy intensive farmers.



HIGHER, FASTER, STRONGER REFORMING SPORTS SCIENCE

Our plan to protect athletes' health and ethics in sport

A win-at-all-costs mentality now threatens the sports we love. Unregulated advisors pushing untested supplements have tarnished Australian sport and put athlete health at risk. The Greens plan to regulate sports science will bring in new ethical standards for sports science professionals.

From the doping scandals that have rocked world cycling to the unapproved supplement trials in the NRL and AFL, Australian sport has never suffered from such a crisis of credibility. Unqualified and unethical individuals are working at elite sports clubs, risking the health of the athletes we respect and damaging the integrity of the sporting codes we love.

There is widespread community support for moves towards the accreditation of sports scientists and only the Greens can deliver leadership where the old parties have grown weak at the knees.

> CLEANING UP SPORTS SCIENCE

Australian sports, including sports scientists, have a history of innovation. However, a win-at-all-costs attitude has led many clubs into murky areas at the fringes of sports science. Regulation and oversight have not kept up with the fast pace of elite sport.

Sports scientists currently operate in a largely unregulated environment, and while many are highly qualified professionals, many others are not.

The Greens plan for cleaning up sports science will:

- **an accreditation framework for sports scientists**, that will be national, independent, allow for specialization and include ethical training and standards.
- **ensure medical oversight of all sports science decisions**, by instituting standards that require a registered medical practitioner to approve any decision relating to athlete health and welfare including the use of supplements.
- **limit supplement experiments** by encouraging the use of only those listed as Group A by the Australian Institute of Sport

supplement system. These are safe, legal supplements that produce a useful or timely source of energy or nutrients or have been shown in specific trials to benefit performance.

- **encourage major sporting codes to maintain a register** of supplements used that is made public in order to end the pharmacological arms race.
- **A service for athletes and sporting clubs** to provide up-to-date, confidential and independent advice on the safety and legality of supplements. (See initiative document "Information for Athletes: Independent and Accurate".)

> ACCREDITATION FOR SPORTS SCIENTISTS

The recent Senate inquiry into the practise of sports science in Australia heard broad support from key sporting and professional bodies for proper accreditation of sports scientists.ⁱ These reforms are necessary to ensure that any individuals working in high-performance sports science meet acceptable professional standards of competency and care.

The Greens will work with Exercise and Sports Science Australia (ESSA) to develop a national, independent accreditation program that has broad industry up take and support. The accreditation program will set basic minimum standards of appropriate education and relevant experience in a credible sports science role, and will provide a measure of professional assurance to the field. In particular, maintaining these credentials would require adherence to strict ethical standards that would protect the athletes in their care as well as protecting the integrity of their employer.

The Greens anticipate the framework will be tiered, allowing for different levels of qualification and experience to be recognised



in the accreditation. We also anticipate a phase in period and grandfather clause to allow the many already qualified and highly experienced sports scientists currently operating in Australia to transition with the changes.

The accreditation process will be national, consistent and widely adopted. The Greens will work with the sports community, particularly the Australian Sports Commission (ASC), to deliver a standardised accreditation system which requires that sport scientists hold accreditation before being offered employment, and will prevent code-hopping by individuals found to be negligent in previous roles.

Through this professional accreditation program, the Greens will work with Australian sporting bodies to help restore credibility to the games we love. Athletes, managers and sports fans will have the assurance that only qualified, accredited sports scientists are practising at their club.

> QUALIFIED MEDICAL OVERSIGHT

Australian sports are currently undergoing a period of painful self-reflection. In light of recent revelations around sports supplements, many sporting bodies are now grappling with questions of management and oversight. Reporting lines, complaints processes, and board responsibility are all being examined as ways to protect the interests of athletes.

In addition to the many challenges already facing boards and management, there are the added complexities of sports science, an ill-defined and largely unregulated field. In the face of ineffective governance practices, the Australian Sports Commission recently instituted safeguards requiring proper investigation, supervision and reporting practices in relation to the sports science practices inside national sporting organisations.

While the Greens welcome these moves towards appropriate oversight of sports science, we feel the protection of athlete health and welfare requires more specific measures. The Greens will work with the ASC to establish a clear framework of accountability and authority in which the club doctor would be expected to be the signing authority for all medicines, supplements, diagnostic tests and therapeutic treatments.

Club doctors or medical professionals will have to be consulted where a decision affects an athlete's health and welfare, and board CEOs will have to inform themselves of what is occurring in their clubs.

> ONLY SAFE AND EFFECTIVE SUPPLEMENTS

Sports supplements are a large and growing industry but there is often very little credible science behind their claims. The Senate Committee heard from Dr Peter Larkins, a sports doctor with decades of experience, who said that "there is an enormous amount of herbs and spices that go into sports teams

just because people think they are going to help". There is not currently the evidence base that supplements actually improve performance or that the performance improvements are worthwhile.

Recent revelations related to the ASADA investigations of supplement use in the AFL and NRL paint a clear picture of the dangers of athletes becoming locked in a pharmacological arms race.

The Australian Institute of Sport (AIS) has developed a supplements program designed to deliver world's best practice in the research, education and provision of sports foods and supplements for athletes and coaches. The program allows athletes to focus on sound use of supplements and special sports foods as part of their nutrition plans, and ensures that supplements and sports foods are used correctly and appropriately to deliver maximum benefits.

The Greens propose that where that where supplements are used within national sporting organisations, those organisations consider adopting a policy allowing only the use of supplements classified as Group A in the AIS Sports Supplement Program.

> INVESTING IN SPORTS INTEGRITY

For a small investment we can achieve large and positive changes for Australian sport. Funding of \$6 million for the sports supplement information serviceⁱⁱ and \$925,000 for ESSA to further develop and roll out its accreditation program will be allocated over the forward estimates from July 2014. Changes to Australian Sports Commission guidelines can be made with the ASC's existing resources.

ⁱ Senate Rural and Regional Affairs and Transport Committee, "Practice of sports science in Australia" 2013

ⁱⁱ See Greens initiative document "Information for Athletes: Independent and Accurate".



STOPPING OUR BIODIVERSITY CRISIS

Our species are too precious to lose

The Greens' plan to secure the future of Australia's threatened species

Many of Australia's precious plants and animals are under threat like never before, from climate change, habitat destruction, pollution, invasive species and disease, as well as a rapidly expanding resources sector. We need to make big changes urgently if they are to survive.

> OUR BIODIVERSITY IN CRISIS

Australia is recognised globally as "mega-diverse" - over 80% of our mammals, reptiles and flowering plants exist *only* in Australia. But Australia's wildlife is facing an extinction crisis. Many of our famous and important animals and plants are classified as in danger of becoming extinct.

The latest State of the Environment Report (2011) reported declines in many of our mammal species in all states, with the situation continuing to deteriorate. 27 Australian mammals are listed as extinct, and over 20% of our remaining 386 mammal species are threatened with extinction. Many of our bird, reptile and plant species are also at serious risk.

Our threatened species don't just include obscure critters - Australia's iconic species like the koala and Tasmanian devil are in serious decline.

Remarkably, for all too many of our threatened species their critical habitats are not even properly mapped, let alone protected. And for many species we are on track to lose them before we even know they exist - so much more research is needed to understand our native species and what they need to survive.

> THE GREENS' PLAN TO SAVE OUR NATIVE SPECIES

The Greens will chart the road to recovery for Australia's threatened species and ecosystems by strengthening protection for our threatened species across Australia's landscapes.

The Greens plan will identify and protect important habitat, and increase funding for threatened species management and research. Our 3 year, \$120 million plan will:

- **Provide \$30 million per annum to:**
 - Fund comprehensive studies to identify and map important habitat nationally (including protected ecological communities, areas of critical habitat for threatened species and important wildlife corridors);
 - Protect that habitat through bioregional plans that guide development and establish clear no-go zones for different activities within each region across Australia. These bioregional plans would be developed in partnership with state and local governments where possible, and rolled out progressively with priority on high risk biodiversity areas;
- **Provide \$10 million per annum to:**
 - Support the rapid listing of all species and ecological communities which belong on the threatened list;
 - Develop and resource the implementation of recovery plans and threat abatement plans for listed species and ecological communities;
 - Fund additional research required to help turn around Australia's biodiversity decline;

We will also:

- **Restore Labor's \$470 million cuts to the Biodiversity Fund,** which the Greens helped establish as part of the Clean Energy Package, to promote habitat restoration; and
- **Make sure federal veto powers over Australia's most environmentally damaging projects remain with the federal government and are not given away to the states.**



> THE GREENS STAND UP FOR OUR PRECIOUS NATIVE SPECIES

The Greens have a long track record of fighting for better protection for Australia's wildlife and precious places. In this term of parliament, we secured the \$1 billion Biodiversity Fund, a grants fund supporting local and regional groups to rehabilitate degraded habitat and restore wildlife corridors and ecosystem health. In the 2013 budget, the Labor Government slashed \$257 million from this Fund, and then a further \$213 million in July 2013. This is critical funding for biodiversity that the Greens will restore.

We instigated a Senate Inquiry into the plight of our koalas in Queensland, New South Wales and the ACT, where populations of this world famous Australian icon have dropped dramatically. This inquiry led to koalas in these states receiving extra protection under our national environment laws by being added to our national threatened species list.

The Australian Greens initiated a Senate Inquiry into the effectiveness of threatened species and ecological communities' protection in Australia. Over 170 submissions were made by scientists, community groups and individuals across Australia, conveying significant concerns for the future of our threatened species and ecosystems and what needs to be done. The Greens will work to secure strong recommendations from this inquiry, and pursue rapid implementation by Government.

The Greens have also introduced legislation to set up a process to fast track ("emergency list") protection for threatened species, and to ensure our national government cannot hand its responsibilities for regulating Australia's most environmentally damaging projects to state governments. On both these issues the Government and the Coalition refused to stand with us to put our wildlife before corporate profits, once again demonstrating that only the Greens can be trusted to stand up for our environment.

We also successfully spearheaded, with independents, the push for better protection for Australia's water resources from damaging coal and coal seam gas projects. This will help improve protection of all our ecosystems that rely on healthy waterways for their survival.

> LABOR AND THE COALITION ARE FAILING OUR WILDLIFE

In six years of government Labor has failed to deliver for our threatened species. They has approved every coal and coal seam gas project that has been applied for, they failed to properly protect the ancient Tarkine rainforests, and they failed to press pause on huge industrial port developments in the Reef despite the World Heritage Committee's significant concerns.

Labor signed up to the agenda of big business to have the final say on Australia's most environmentally destructive projects given away by from the national government to state governments, only to be howled down by experts and the community alike. While they then put the proposal on ice, Labor refused to work with the Greens to Abbott-proof our national environment laws by outlawing any hand off of approval powers to state governments. These Greens amendments, motions and legislation would have ensured that responsibility for protecting our most vulnerable species and wild places from the most damaging developments remained with the federal environment minister. The big parties voted against our moves.

The Coalition is now promising to deliver big business' destructive agenda of having state governments in total control of our nationally important environmental assets. While they claim it is to remove delay and duplication, there is no empirical evidence of any federal excessive regulatory burden or duplication or delay – the Coalition's real intention is just to significantly weaken environmental protection.

Only the Greens can be trusted to stand up for our environment and to protect the places and the species that are too precious to lose.



INVESTING IN AGRICULTURE CARING FOR OUR FOOD FUTURE

The Greens' plan for increased investment in agricultural R & D

For the last twenty years public investment in agricultural research, development and agricultural support has been declining. We must reverse this trend to prepare our farmers for climate change and secure a sustainable and healthy future food supply.

With agriculture in Australia under increasing pressure, particularly in the face of climate change, now is the time to invest in the knowledge and innovation we need to boost and sustain agricultural productivity, and ensure that our rural and regional communities are connected to the knowledge they need for resilience and sustainability.

The old parties have under-funded Australia's public agricultural research and development (R&D) causing a persistent decline in real investment.

Long-term public investment in agricultural R&D is more essential than ever to ensure we can address the complex and cross-disciplinary challenges facing us.

The Australian Greens will:

- **Increase Commonwealth funding for agricultural research and development by 7% per year, an extra \$300 million over the forward estimates.**
- **Create a new Centre for Sustainable Agriculture** as part of the new funding, tasked with investigating solutions to the complex pressures facing our food system.
- **Fund a national network of 180 agricultural extension officers at a cost of \$76.5 million** over the forward estimates. These officers provide a direct link between innovative research and farmers on the ground.
- **Re-prioritise Commonwealth funding so it benefits all agricultural sectors and rural communities.**

Our policy will be implemented from 1 July 2014. The independent Parliamentary Budget Office has costed our plan.¹

> INVESTING IN FUTURE AGRICULTURAL PRODUCTIVITY & RESILIENCE

With the impacts of climate change upon us, agricultural R&D and its implementation is critical to identify adaptation responses to the best and worst case climate change scenarios, reduce land and water degradation and ensure sustainable productivity and farming resilience.

We must broaden our research capacity to encompass social and economic considerations, such as linking health and nutrition policy to farming practices, helping farmers transition to new practices without losing profitability, and ensuring our food security needs are embedded in land use planning.

We also know that historic strong investment in agricultural R&D from around 1950 to 1980 contributed significantly to the productivity gains achieved by our farmers. But there is a time lag of up to a decade between the timing of investment in research and development and seeing results on the ground for agriculture. With the real decline in agricultural R&D over many years, we need to invest urgently to address the gap.

The Greens will utilise the increased agricultural R&D funding to fill critical national data gaps. These include:

- **Mapping prime agricultural land** (which includes not just soil and water considerations but also available infrastructure and proximity to markets) and provide this as an essential data layer scaled to inform local planning schemes. This mapping will take into account current food production needs and the implications of future climate change scenarios with regard to the availability and value of agricultural land.
- **National climate change risk mapping**, mitigation and adaptation information for agriculture at appropriate



geographic and temporal scales to allow farmers and communities to practically respond.

- **Identifying and addressing gaps in existing knowledge** with regard to appropriate sustainable and productive farming practices for Australia, including identification of future crops and land use changes to respond to climate change scenarios.
- **Identification of appropriate mechanisms for paying farmers for the restoration and maintenance of ecosystem services** based on identified bioregional environmental stewardship standards.
- **Producing an Australian version of the USA's Food Environment Atlas**, including developing and monitoring national measures on the cost and accessibility of healthy and unhealthy food, food insecurity, and community nutrition characteristicsⁱⁱ
- **Adapting agricultural practices and transport needs for transitioning off fossil fuels** and reducing reliance on other finite input limitations (e.g. phosphorous).
- **Identifying and developing potential native crops and foods** in collaboration with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, including essential work to protect cultural intellectual property.
- **Instigating long term, bioregional scale monitoring of landscape health** based on the work of the National Land and Water Resources Audit.

We will replace the axed Land and Water Australia with a new Centre for Sustainable Agriculture to oversee the cross-disciplinary and cross-sectoral research required to assist rural and regional Australia that cannot be done by the commodity-based Rural Development Corporations (RDCs).

The Rural Industries Research and Development Corporation will continue with a complementary role to the new Centre for Sustainable Agriculture, with its additional extra funding directed towards assisting emerging rural industries, increasing value-adding in the food supply chain and rebuilding local and regional food systems.

In accordance with the recommendations of the Productivity Commission regarding public funding for agricultural research, we will re-prioritise public funding to research that benefits all agricultural sectors and rural communities. Commonwealth funding to the single commodity-based Research and Development Corporations will be halved over 10 years.

In the meantime RDCs will continue to benefit from the overall 7% funding increase and will be eligible for uncapped contributions from the Commonwealth of 20c in each dollar committed in private funding from levies.ⁱⁱⁱ

> CONNECTING FARMERS AND RESEARCHERS WITH AGRICULTURAL EXTENSION

Over the last 20 years public agricultural extension services have been cut alongside public investment in research and development. It is now essential to reverse that trend.

Public agriculture extension has several essential benefits. It connects researchers and farmers directly, which is critical to ensuring that local knowledge is harnessed, and the results are practical and specific to on-ground realities that vary across landscapes and regions.

Extension also increases the rate of adoption of sustainable and profitable farming methods. Given the pressing task of addressing land degradation and preparing for climate change, it has never been more vital to facilitate a faster and more systemic adoption of sustainable agricultural methods.

The network of 180 agricultural extension officers will be based in the Natural Resource Management (NRM) regions with numbers per region determined by the scale of the region.

Their work will be determined by a regional steering committee with representatives from the NRM region, local agriculture groups, the community sector and research institutions.

> OTHER PARTIES

The decline in agricultural R&D over two decades or more demonstrated that neither Labor nor the Coalition walks the talk on supporting rural and regional Australia, and investing in a prosperous and sustainable future.

The 2009 axing of Land and Water Australia is regarded as one of the most short-sighted recent decisions by government as it cost us a dedicated research body focussed on building agricultural sustainability.

No other party has announced the creation of a new research centre dedicated to securing the future of Australian agriculture and reversing the significant decline in research, development and extension services.

ⁱ The PBO costing are on the basis of the 2013 Budget.

ⁱⁱ USDA, *Food environment atlas* - <http://tinyurl.com/ln2o2s4>

ⁱⁱⁱ Productivity Commission 2011, *Rural research development corporations* - <http://tinyurl.com/k8r3haj>



EFFECTIVE COMPETITION POLICY TACKLING THE SUPERMARKET DUOPOLY

The Greens' plan for fairer competition for small business and farmers.

As the market share of Coles and Woolworths continues to grow they are squeezing the margins of their suppliers, putting pressures on farmers and local manufacturers. Small local shops are struggling to compete and consumers' favourite brands are disappearing from the shelves.

Consumers, local businesses, farmers and food manufacturers are all under increasing pressure from the domination of Coles and Woolworths in the market place.

The old parties won't stand up to big business and tackle the supermarket duopoly to ensure fairer competition. Labor have had 6 years to fix the problem and failed while the Coalition has so far only promised an inquiry if they win government.

> AN EFFECTIVE COMPETITION POLICY

There is growing community concern about the lack of competition in certain markets, including the grocery market. The Australian grocery market is dominated by two major supermarkets, Coles and Woolworths.¹

There is also growing evidence about the tactics the major supermarkets are taking in negotiating agreements with suppliers and processors in the food industry. Successive inquiries have heard evidence of these concerns, yet there has been no effective action.

The Australian Greens will reform competition policy so it serves the interests of the community, not just big business, by:

- **Placing a temporary ban on expansion by Coles and Woolworths, while the Australian Competition and Consumer Commission (ACCC) carries out an ex-post assessment into their decisions relating to the grocery market.**
- **Preventing the supermarket duopoly from purchasing agricultural land, to ensure they aren't able to completely control the whole supply chain.**

- **Strengthening competition law to ensure companies are unable to abuse their market power, including giving the ACCC broad divestiture powers.**

- **Extending the Australian Consumer Law framework dealing with unfair contract terms to business-to-business agreements involving small business and farmers.**

- **Increasing the resources and effectiveness of Australia's competition watchdog ACCC.**

Our plan tackles the supermarket duopoly and ensures fair competition for farmers and small business. It also ensures choice for consumers in both where they shop and the products available for purchase.

> TACKLING THE SUPERMARKET DUOPOLY

Over a number of years, concerns have been raised about the concentration and market power of big businesses across different markets. The major supermarkets manage or own a large amount of the supply chain. They maintain retail premises, warehousing and logistics and sell products using their branding. In the liquor sector they own wine processing and brewing companies.

The Greens will place a temporary ban on any expansion by Coles and Woolworths while the ACCC carries out a comprehensive ex-post assessment on their decisions relating to the grocery market over the past decade. Such an assessment will require the ACCC to go back and review their decisions relating to the grocery market with hindsight and appreciation of the current realities of the market.



Ex-post assessments are carried out by competition agencies overseas, including in Canada, the European Union, the United Kingdom and the United States, but the ACCC hasn't yet employed this tool to examine if we have the balance right.ⁱⁱ

The Greens will provide the ACCC with \$2.8 million over the next three years to conduct the ex-post assessment of the grocery industry.

Media reports earlier in the year stated that Woolworths was considering purchasing vineyards which would have meant that Woolworths would have owned the entire supply chain, ensuring complete vertical integration. In anticipation of moves into agricultural land **under our policy the duopoly would be prevented from purchasing agricultural land.**

> INCREASING THE POWER OF ACCC

A key failing in the current competition law that has led to increased concentration in areas such as supermarkets is the inability of the ACCC to adequately deal with 'creeping acquisitions'. Currently the ACCC has no power to break up large companies that dominate a market to the detriment of consumers and suppliers.

Market power is being concentrated in certain industries and smaller producers, suppliers and retailers are under pressure. In the grocery market there are allegations that the major supermarkets are using their dominant positions to temporarily drive prices down especially through the sale of generic products which force grocery processors to compete with their own product.

The Greens competition policy strengthens the *Competition and Consumer Act* to grant the ACCC divestiture powers to split up companies who have too much market power, bringing Australia in line with the United Kingdom and the United States.

> STANDING UP FOR SMALL BUSINESS

Small businesses are important contributors to Australia's economy. They employ approximately 5 million Australians and make up around 96% of the actively trading businesses in Australia.

Small businesses are feeling the pressure and struggling to compete with the market power of companies such as the large supermarkets. Small businesses have also made it clear that they find it difficult to protect themselves in retail tenancy agreements when they are up against the might of large companies who wield considerable market power.

The Greens care for the people behind small business and recognise the pressure they are under. We will continue to advocate for the strengthening of the *Competition and Consumer Act*. In particular, **we will amend the *Competition***

and *Consumer Act* to include a clause outlawing price discrimination. Currently, the law allows big supermarkets to use their power in the market to force down prices from suppliers, leading some suppliers to change more to other customers to make up their margins. The Greens will change the law so small businesses are able to purchase goods from suppliers at a similar cost as big businesses unless the ACCC deems there are reasonable grounds for price differences.

The Greens will also amend section 46 of the *Competition and Consumer Act* to ensure anti-competitive actions are instead judged on their effect even if an intention of anti-competitive behaviour cannot be proved. The current law requires proof of intent to reduce competition which is very difficult to establish and we believe this has been to the detriment of small businesses and wider market competition.

The Greens will also expand the Australian Consumer Law framework dealing with unfair contract terms to business-to-business agreements. This will ensure small businesses are protected from unfair contract terms from larger businesses and will help small businesses who struggle in ensuring appropriate retail tenancy arrangements with their landlords.

Small businesses such as the local butcher, baker, green grocer, café and retail store are an important part of their local community. The Greens believe businesses such as these should run alongside a competitive supermarket industry with a number of participants. Our competition policy puts a check on the supermarket duopoly and helps small businesses compete in the marketplace.

> SUPPORTING FARMERS

Australian farmers play a crucial role in providing agricultural products and food to Australians. In recent years there has been growing concern about the relationship Coles and Woolworths have with their suppliers including farmers. Issues such as the \$1 dollar milk wars are representative of the changing situation for Australian farmers.

The Greens believe that our competition policy will level the playing field for farmers as suppliers to the major supermarkets. The supermarket duopoly is in a position to abuse their power in the marketplace to demand lower prices from farmers and other suppliers.

These demands are threatening the viability of many farms. However because of the duopoly's dominance there are few other options for farmers to sell their produce.

The Greens competition policy will ensure farmers are protected from unfair contract arrangements through extending the Australian Consumer Law framework dealing with unfair contract terms to business-to-business agreements.



The Greens have initiated and been a part of a number of Senate inquiries including investigating competition in the dairy industry and the dairy industry's relationship with the supermarkets to help find solutions.ⁱⁱⁱ

According to the ACCC many farmers and small business people who supply the supermarkets have been cautious about speaking out publicly on their experience as suppliers for fear of any repercussions. The ACCC have now indicated that they have an ongoing investigation into issues brought to their attention by these anonymous parties and are providing confidential means of gathering information.^{iv}

By strengthening the *Competition and Consumer Act* not only will the Greens support small business but we will make sure farmers are better protected from predatory market behaviour. Better resourcing the ACCC will also ensure they are able to carry out and follow up on more investigations.

> ENSURING CONSUMER CHOICE

Consumers are noting the brands they know and trust are no longer on the shelves when they go shopping at Coles and Woolworths. The predominance of supermarket "own" brands is growing. Consumers are also recognising that local shops are unable to compete with the major supermarkets and some are closing down. Local shops are small businesses and they are under increasing pressure.

The Greens competition policy aims to ensure the continued viability of well known and loved brands as well as allowing small businesses to continue to operate. We recognise that you care about your local community and want the choice to shop locally where you can.

> ENSURING AN EFFECTIVE COMPETITION WATCHDOG

As well as providing the ACCC with greater powers, the Greens believe the ACCC should be better resourced to ensure they can effectively undertake their responsibilities.

Appropriate levels of competition are fundamental to the functioning of an efficient market. A crucial role of the ACCC is protecting the competitive balance within the market. This is often achieved through the instigation of legal action. The ACCC often brings these cases against large companies with deep pockets and we don't want the ACCC to back away from important cases because of the cost implications.

The Greens are committed to ensuring the ACCC are properly resourced to pursue important legal cases. **The Greens will provide an extra \$100 million dollars to the ACCC over the forward estimates. This is an increase of 50% over their current legal expense budget.**

The ACCC also has an important role to play in assisting consumers through investigating complaints particularly involving claims of misleading advertising. The petrol retail industry is of particular concern to many Australians at the moment. The relationship between the supermarkets and petrol companies risks a lessening of competition to the detriment of consumers in the long run. Additional resourcing of the ACCC is essential in allowing them to continue to monitor and act if necessary to halt anti-competitive behaviour.

> LOWERING BARRIERS TO ENTRY IN THE GROCERY SECTOR

Coles and Woolworths are in a unique position worldwide. Estimates are that they control between 55% to 80% of the Australian grocery market.^v In 2008 the ACCC carried out a comprehensive review of the grocery sector and they identified barriers to entry for new entrants into the market as the biggest issue for competition in the sector. More specifically access to sites was a critical problem. The inquiry heard evidence that Coles and Woolworths engage in deliberate strategies designed to ensure they maintain exclusive access to prime sites.

This is why the Greens believe a temporary ban on expansion of the duopoly while an ex-post assessment is carried out by the ACCC on the grocery market with particular regard for site selection and land banking issues would ensure the ACCC is able, with the benefit of hindsight, to review the decisions that have brought us to this point.

Encouragingly the ACCC recently blocked a supermarket development in NSW citing competition issues around site availability.^{vi}

As well as being a competition issue this is also a planning issue and that's why the Greens are calling for the establishment of a joint ACCC and planning ministers' roundtable to be established under the auspices of the Council of Australian Governments. This roundtable should present recommendations to ensure barriers to entry are lowered to allow for a fairer Australia for small businesses, producers, and consumers.

> WHY A COMPETITIVE GROCERY SECTOR IS IMPORTANT

The Greens competition policy will ensure an ongoing competitive grocery sector by ensuring the power of the supermarket duopoly is curtailed in their relationships with small businesses and suppliers. It will increase the resources and effectiveness of the competition regulator, the ACCC.

It will allow small businesses to continue to operate in their local communities and ensure farmers receive a fair price for their produce and products.



Greater competition also means more choice and variety for the consumer in both where they shop and the brands that are available.

In the long term it will ensure a highly concentrated grocery market is less concentrated and more competitive ensuring consumers, small business and farmers are all able to benefit.

ⁱ Emily Witham, 'Supermarkets and Grocery Stores in Australia,' IBISWorld Industry Report, June 2013.

ⁱⁱ Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development, Working Party No.2 on Competition and Regulation. 'Evaluation of Competition Enforcement and Advocacy Activities: The Results of an OECD survey,' 20 February 2013.

ⁱⁱⁱ Economics References Committee, 'Milking it for all its worth – competition and pricing in the Australian dairy industry,' May 2010. Economics References Committee, 'The impact of supermarket price decisions on the dairy industry,' November 2011

^{iv} Rod Sims, Opening Statement to Economics Legislation Committee, Additional Budget Estimates 2012-13 (13-14 February 2013)

^v Stephen King, 'FactCheck: do Coles and Woolies control 80% of the market', The Conversation, 7 July 2013.

^{vi} Greg Roberts, 'ACCC blocks new Woolies store', The Australian, 6 June 2013.

2013 Initiative
No Longer Current



A CUTTING-EDGE ECONOMY BOOSTING RESEARCH & DEVELOPMENT

The Greens' plan to secure our future prosperity

Our economy is facing serious challenges as the world moves beyond simply consuming our resources. Trailblazing innovation will be critical to our future prosperity. Caring for workers requires government to invest in the jobs of the future today.

Labor has been stealing from our future by cutting funding from research & development programs and our universities. Meanwhile Tony Abbott doesn't want anything to change. He sees coal and mining as the future, regardless of the fact that our trading partners are moving in the other direction.

The Greens refuse to risk our country's future. We recognise that a diverse, creative and resilient economy is the guarantee we need for a prosperous society beyond the resources boom.

The Greens will secure this future by:

- **Lifting investment, public and private, in Research and Development to 3% of GDP by 2020;**
- **Encouraging greater uptake of private investment in R&D; and**
- **Restoring funding to the Sustainable Research Excellence program.**

The Greens have a track record defending research and development. In this Parliament, we successfully campaigned to lift the government's freeze on the National Health and Medical Research Council's funding and our motion in the Parliament to stop any more cuts to science and research funding passed with the support of independents and the Coalition. The Greens also negotiated changes to the R&D tax system to assist small research businesses with their cash-flow problems.

> A PATH FOR A CLEVER COUNTRY

Australians are famous for being early adopters - we love technology and innovation. Not only does it bring us personal benefits but research and development is critical to sustaining our economy, health and environment. Whether it is in the way we grow our food, how we travel, what medicines we rely on or the way we use energy for our homes and businesses, we need innovation. If we are standing still, we are going backwards.

Innovation also holds the key to generating new jobs; it is responsible for leaps and bounds in productivity. Technological breakthroughs in the way that we do things are essential to lifting our shared standards of living and ensuring our economy is sustainable for future generations to enjoy.

As governor of the Reserve Bank, Glenn Stevens recently remarked, "most of the time the answer to the question 'where will the growth come from' is that only part of it will come from the old traditional areas, and a fair bit of it will come from new things, often things of which we are only dimly aware."¹

If we are not busily working away to crack open every opportunity, the increasingly integrated and competitive global economy will leave us behind. We need to support those creative minds who challenge the standard way of doing things and discover new ways to do things better.

> RESEARCH & DEVELOPMENT TARGET

The government is responsible for our nation's research and development levels, either through funding or through creating the incentives for private investment. At the moment Australia is below the OECD average for research and development investment at 2.2% of GDP. We are well behind nations such as Japan, Korea, Sweden, Israel and Finland who all invest more than 3% of GDP.

To ensure we are not left behind, the Greens are committed to a Research and Development target of 3% of GDP by 2020. This target is backed by the Australian Academy of Science and Universities Australia and will enable us to lead the world in discovering transformational breakthroughs.

To reach that goal, and lift us into the top of the OECD, the Parliamentary Budget Office has estimated the federal government's contribution to R&D will need to increase by an additional \$2.55 billion over the forward estimates.



In 2009 President Obama recognised the importance of research and development investment, pledging the United States will devote more than 3% of GDP to research and development. He noted that while there were "those who say we cannot afford to invest in science. The support for research is somehow a luxury at moments that are defined by necessities. I fundamentally disagree. Science is more essential for our prosperity, our security, our health, our environment and our quality of life than it has ever been before."ⁱⁱ

We must reverse the trend of the previous decade which saw government research funding decline while the economy grew. The proportion of the government's direct contribution to our country's research effort has fallen dramatically from 23% of the total in 2000 to 9% in 2010.

Establishing a national target for 2020 and committing funding to meet that objective will ensure we stay on track to realise our aspirations as a clever and diverse economy in the 21st century.

> RESPECTING UNIVERSITY RESEARCH

Funding research in universities makes good business sense. As the Productivity Commission observed, the return on government investment in R&D conducted by universities is high – 'due to their orientation to public benefit research and their role in the development of high quality human capital for the Australian economy.'ⁱⁱⁱ

International students are also attracted to high-ranking universities. Rankings are largely derived from the amount of quality research they produce. Investment in university research will also increase our potential educational export earnings.

In spite of the evidence, research work in universities has been under constant assault from the Labor government. First, instead of fostering the next generation of scientists and mathematicians, the government increased their HECS fees by close to double. Then they took \$30 million from the Cooperative Research Program which will make universities even more dependent on corporate priorities.

Then they cut the Sustainable Research Excellence program which helps get research grant applications off the ground. We want to reverse this trend so that our research institutions are back to where they should be.

To build on that, the Greens will provide greater opportunities for medical researchers by implementing key recommendations from the McKeon Review in to Health and Medical research.

Finally, to ensure the foundations of learning and research, we will increase base funding by 2.5% a year until it reaches 10% in 2017, as recommended by the Bradley Review commissioned by the Rudd government, but not acted upon. Only the Greens are prepared to invest the \$1.47 billion necessary to reap the future benefits that the researchers in our universities will provide.

> RECENT SUCCESS STORIES

Studies into R&D have consistently found the rate of return on public investment is extremely high - in the range of 20 to 50 per cent.^{iv} Our agriculture industry alone pulls an average 43% return from its innovation.^v

Alongside the industry-wide successes are individual Australian stories that have changed our lives, from the bionic ear and Gardasil to solar panels than can be made on an A3 printer.

Similarly, CSIRO scientist John O'Sullivan experimenting in radioastronomy led to the invention of WiFi. This is a perfect example of how blue sky research can lead to commercial breakthroughs. The patent is expected to bring in upwards of \$1 billion into the CSIRO who will feed these profits back into further research and development.

Then there are the amazing international collaborations to advance our scientific understanding. Australian scientists with public funding worked with global colleagues to discover Higgs Boson. Then there was the giant radio telescope project, the *Square Kilometre Array* sited in Australia, South Africa and New Zealand. In this increasingly interconnected world, global collaboration is the future to scientific success stories.

> OTHER PARTIES

Research and development, whether publicly or privately funded, has been one of the major areas the Labor government has exploited in its quest to make up for its mining tax giveaways. Billions of dollars have been removed, blunting the potential of our smart economy

Tony Abbott is yet to outline any vision for how he would assist the future workforce of Australia. To prop-up the miners, bankers and big polluters of Australia, he will have to find lots of money in savings.

Unfortunately, both parties see research and development as an easy target. But the Greens will stand up against them and their vested interests to fight for the innovators who are the key to our prosperous future.

ⁱ Address to the Economic Society Business Luncheon 3 July 2013.

ⁱⁱ Address to National Academy of Sciences, 27 April 2009.

ⁱⁱⁱ Productivity Commission *Public Support for Science and Innovation* 9 March 2007 at 103

^{iv} Universities Australia *Pre-Budget Submission 2013-14*.

^v Productivity Commission Inquiry Report no. 52 *Rural Research and Development Corporations* February 2011 at xvi.



EDUCATION IS OPPORTUNITY

More funding sooner for our schools

The Greens' plan for securing a brighter future for Australian kids

Right now, our government schools are chronically underfunded putting pressure on teachers, students and parents. The Greens know that education is opportunity and believe that every Australian child deserves a world-class education.

A caring society ensures every child has a right to receive a high quality education – regardless of where they go to school or how much money their family has. The Gonski Review of Funding for Schooling found that Australia's educational performance has declined by international standards over the past decade. It found that years of underinvestment in public education has led to deep inequalities in Australia's school systems.

The Greens have a vision for the future – one where every child has a chance at success. Whether it's going to university or TAFE, or taking on a trade – we need an education system that gives every child this opportunity. That's why the Greens support the new needs-based school funding system.

> QUALITY EDUCATION FOR EVERYONE

We know that without proper investment in education, the gap between rich and poor will keep getting wider. The Greens are committed to a fairer school funding model that makes high quality education a reality for all Australian kids – regardless of where they live, their family's income or the school they attend.

While Labor is underinvesting and the Coalition wants to cut education funding, the Greens are standing up for all Australian children to secure a world class education. We will:

- Properly fund schools, over and above what the current government is prepared to commit. In each of the 2013-14 and 2014-15 financial years the government is committing less than \$500 million to implement its funding reforms. Australian students and public schools need more, faster.
- Commit an extra \$2 billion over the forward estimates on top of the government's \$3 billion to help bring public schools up to the Schooling Resource Standard sooner. This would double the funding from the government in the next two years.
- Direct the additional funding to where it is needed most, including better assistance for kids with a disability.

When it comes to education, money does matter. The Gonski Review recommended that we spend at least \$6.5 billion more on education each year. Currently, Australia is lagging far behind nations like Finland, Canada and Korea whose students receive a world class education.

Our education system is in desperate need of a funding boost if we are serious about investing in young Australians.

> A VISION FOR AUSTRALIA'S FUTURE

The Greens know that excellent schooling fosters the development of creative, informed and resilient citizens who are able to participate fully in a dynamic and globalised world. High quality education also has broader social benefits, including higher levels of employment and earnings, better health, longevity, tolerance and social cohesion.

The Greens will continue to advocate passionately for public schools. We know that two thirds of Australia's students attend government schools – including a high proportion of students who require extra support, like students with disabilities and special needs, Indigenous students and those from low income families. More money for schools means more teachers and support staff, better technology, equipment and facilities.

> STANDING UP FOR WHAT MATTERS

The Greens are not afraid to stand up to the wealthy mining companies and fix the mining tax in order to raise revenue to properly fund fairer needs-based school funding reforms.

The government's funding reforms so far have disappointed parents of children with a disability. At the moment, assistance for disabilities varies across Australia. Harmonising and increasing students' eligibility for disability assistance is crucial. The Greens' extra funding for education reform would provide a boost towards fixing disability support and for disability loadings to be consistently applied, according to need, regardless of where students live.



PREPARING FOR DISASTERS SAVES LIVES, SAVES MONEY

The Greens' plan for adapting to climate change and more extreme weather

Natural disasters hurt people and the economy. One dollar spent on reducing the risks, can save at least two in recovery costs. A caring society will invest in preparing our communities for more intense extreme weather events like floods and bush fires.

> EXTREME WEATHER HURTS

Natural disasters resulting from extreme weather hurt.

They hurt people. More than 200 people died over the last four years in disasters such as the Black Saturday bushfires in Victoria, Cyclone Yasi in Queensland and major floods in several states. Hundreds of thousands more were affected.ⁱ

And they hurt the economy. According to the Productivity Commission, over the past six years, Australian Government funding for disaster recovery was around \$6.7 billionⁱⁱ, and this figure does not include expenditure by local and state governments or households and businesses. For example, just adding insurance losses and Queensland Government recovery expenditure for Cyclone Yasi and the 2010–11 Queensland floods increases the total to in excess of \$10 billion.

The insurance industry predicts, even before factoring in the impact of climate change, that the current cost of natural disasters will double by 2030.ⁱ The main reasons for the increasing cost of extreme weather events, according to the Insurance Council of Australia (ICA), are the growing number of properties, increasing building costs and risk of inappropriate construction – the failure to construct the built environment with due regard to the likely local extreme weather hazards.ⁱⁱⁱ

To better prepare the community, the Australian Greens will:

- **Expand the existing National Disaster Resilience Program by increasing funding to over \$350 million per year;**
- **Maintain the National Climate Change Adaptation Facility with \$10 million per year for a second 5 years funding round; and**
- **Place a levy of \$2 a tonne on thermal coal exports to raise the money to protect the community**

> EXTREME WEATHER AND CLIMATE CHANGE

The situation is being exacerbated by climate change. The Climate Commission recently reported that climate change is already increasing the intensity and frequency of many extreme weather events, adversely affecting Australians.^{iv}

Extreme events occur naturally and weather records are broken from time to time. However, climate change is influencing these events and record-breaking weather is becoming more common around the world.

The Climate Commission reports there is a high risk that extreme weather events like heatwaves, heavy rainfall, bushfires and cyclones will become even more intense and frequent in Australia over the coming decades.

Current spending on mitigation initiatives represents around only 3 per cent of spending on post-disaster recovery

> THE GOVERNMENT IS FAILING TO INVEST IN RISK MITIGATION

According to the Insurance Australia Group, the emergency management community generally accepts that one dollar spent on risk mitigation can save at least two dollars in recovery costs. But Australian Government spending on mitigation



initiatives represents around only 3 per cent of what it spends on post-disaster recovery and reconstruction.^v

The Productivity Commission recently reached a similar conclusion, noting that effective emergency management requires striking the right balance between preventing and preparing for disasters on the one hand, and responding to and recovering from them on the other. The Commission highlighted that compared to the \$6.7 billion spent on disaster recovery over the last 6 years, only \$0.18 billion has been spent on disaster mitigation.

The Australian Business Roundtable for Disaster Resilience and Safer Communities has called for an annual program of Australian Government expenditure on pre-disaster resilience of \$250 million.

According to the insurance industry we need to increase investment in disaster mitigation and resilience strategies. The \$27 million per annum allocated for mitigation works under the National Partnership Agreement on Natural Disaster Resilience (NPA) is inadequate (see Box). Additional funding is needed to allow additional protective works including barrages for unusual tides, levee banks, properly maintained fire breaks and access trails, improved flood drainage and dams.^v

The allocation of risk mitigation funding also needs to be far better targeted. The current NPA is a partnership with states and territories where jurisdictions provide direct administration of the funding and submit an annual implementation plan to the Attorney General. For the most part funding is then allocated by each jurisdiction via competitive grants programs. This means there is very little, if any, capacity for this funding to be directed toward larger scale disaster mitigation infrastructure projects of state or national significance. Further this arrangement encourages a piece-meal approach to disaster mitigation rather than one that focuses on long-term, strategic priorities.

Exacerbating the poor targeting of risk mitigation investment is the fact that Australia lacks a standardised national approach to the collection and publication of hazard data. The Productivity Commission review noted that the government has recently committed to establishing a flood risk information portal to provide a single access point to flood mapping data. The Commission recommended, however, that the initiative should “be expanded over time to encompass other natural hazards” and that “Guidelines to improve the quality and consistency of risk information should also be regularly updated and take climate change into account where feasible”.

The government has recently recognised the need for greater funding of risk mitigation activities and announced that it will invest \$100 million over two years to reduce flood risks, but the money is short term and woefully inadequate.

Most recently the Australian Business Roundtable for Disaster Resilience and Safer Communities has called for an annual program of Australian Government expenditure on pre-disaster resilience of \$250 million. The Roundtable calculated that at the national level this level of expenditure has the potential to generate budget savings of \$12.2 billion for all levels of government (including \$9.8 billion for the Australian Government) and would reduce natural disaster costs by more than 50% by 2050.

The Roundtable makes three key recommendations each of which the Greens strongly endorse:

- 1) Improve co-ordination of pre-disaster resilience by appointing a National Resilience Advisor and establishing a Business and Community Advisory Group.
- 2) Commit to long term annual consolidated funding for pre-disaster resilience.
- 3) Identify and prioritise pre-disaster investment activities that deliver a positive net impact on future budget outlays.

The Greens also recognise that frequently when infrastructure is repaired or rebuilt it needs to be done to a higher standard. This is an issue that has been frequently raised by local governments.

The National Disaster Resilience Program

The National Partnership Agreement on Natural Disaster Resilience commenced in 2009 and provides an inadequate \$27 million per year to states and territories to enhance the resilience of communities against the impact of natural disasters.

According to the Insurance Council of Australia, risk mitigation projects supported by the program include:

- natural disaster risk management studies;
- disaster mitigation strategies;
- investment in disaster resilient public infrastructure;
- structural works to protect against damage (eg. disaster proofing of existing buildings at risk);
- levees, retarding basins and channel improvements, permanent fire breaks, other engineered works that offer protection from natural disasters);
- disaster warning systems;
- community awareness and readiness measures;
- audits of levees and warning systems;
- development of nationally consistent data collection and analysis and nationally consistent post-disaster evaluation; and
- land and building purchase schemes in high-risk areas.



> THE NATIONAL CLIMATE CHANGE ADAPTATION RESEARCH FACILITY

The role of the National Climate Change Adaptation Research Facility (NCCARF) has been to lead the national research community in generating the information needed by decision-makers in government and in vulnerable sectors and communities to manage the risks of climate change impacts.

NCCARF started in 2008 and received \$46.9 million in Australian Government funding over the five-year period from 2008-09. Of this total, \$28.3 million has gone to funding projects under the Adaptation Research Grants Program, \$10.2 million to fund Adaptation Research Networks and \$8.4 million to fund operational activities including outreach and communications.ⁱⁱ

There have been 144 research projects involving several hundred researchers around the nation. Outputs from these studies are now feeding into decision-making in the public and private spheres. For example, the NCCARF assists local communities in interpreting the results of complex climate models, to help them make effective, science based decision about land-use planning.

The Government, in the most recent budget, ended funding in 2013. This is short-sighted and will cost more than it saves.

Numerous witnesses to the recent Senate Inquiry into recent trends in and preparedness for extreme weather events have made it clear that NCCARF has been a very effective institution that is central to climate change adaptation policy and planning and that it should be retained.

> THE SOLUTIONS

The Greens will:

- a) **Expand the existing National Disaster Resilience Program by:**
 - Substantially increasing funding from around \$50 million to over \$350 million per year.
 - Ensuring projects are appropriately prioritised and targeted by appointing a National Resilience Advisor and establishing a National Resilience Advisory Group.
 - Removing the existing limitation that the Commonwealth will contribute up to only 50% of the cost of a project, in recognition of the fact that some state and local governments will be unable to match the Commonwealth's spending power.
- b) **Maintain the National Climate Change Adaptation Facility with \$50 million over 5 years.**

> RAISING THE REVENUE – AN EXPORT LEVY ON COAL

It is appropriate that the export coal industry contributes to the cost of adapting to climate change impacts because it is responsible for several hundred million tonnes of greenhouse gas emissions globally.^{vi}

The Greens will raise the funds to protect the community from extreme weather by imposing a deductible \$2/tonne levy on thermal coal exports.^{vii} According to the Parliamentary Budget Office this would raise the amounts set out below.

	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17
Levy Revenue (\$m)	-	234	347	387

Australia's black coal export industry is projected to grow at an annual rate of 2.1 per cent for 2013-18. The current price of thermal coal is around \$US90 per tonne and for the industry on average profit makes up around 26 per cent of total revenue.^{viii} A \$2/tonne levy is clearly affordable for the industry, even if none of the levy could be passed on to consumers – it would be approximately equivalent to a 2 cent fluctuation in the exchange rate, which frequently occurs daily.

All funds raised, with the exception of \$10 million per annum for the National Climate Change Adaptation Facility, will be used for expanding the National Disaster Resilience Program as described above.

ⁱ Deloitte Access Economics. *Building our Nation's Resilience to Natural Disasters: Australian Business Roundtable for Disaster Resilience and Safer Communities*. June 2013.

ⁱⁱ Productivity Commission, 2012, *Barriers to Effective Climate Change Adaptation*, Report No. 59, Final Inquiry Report, Canberra.

ⁱⁱⁱ Insurance Council of Australia submission to the Senate Standing Committees on Environment and Communications inquiry into Recent trends in and preparedness for extreme weather events.

^{iv} Climate Commission Report - *The Critical Decade: Extreme Weather*. <http://climatecommission.gov.au/report/extreme-weather/>

^v Insurance Australia Group submission to the Senate Standing Committees on Environment and Communications inquiry into Recent trends in and preparedness for extreme weather events.

^{vi} In 2013 coal exports are projected to be 187 million tonnes and this would emit approximately 446 million tonnes of carbon dioxide when burnt.

^{vii} Thermal coal is used for electricity production, as opposed to metallurgical coal which is used for steel production. Unlike thermal coal, there are no readily available substitutes for metallurgical coal.

^{viii} Black Coal Mining in Australia, IBISWorld Industry Report B0601, June 2013.



STANDING UP FOR SMALL BUSINESS LOWER TAX AND A STRONGER VOICE

The Greens' plan to ease the pressure on small business

People in small businesses are the heart of the economy and local communities but disadvantaged compared with big business. The Greens will give them a fairer go by lowering and simplifying taxes and strengthening the Small Business Commissioner.

The Australian Greens understand the pressure that small businesses are feeling. We also recognise that a healthy small business sector means a strong Australian economy. The almost 2 million small businesses in Australia play a vital role in the economy, providing jobs to almost half the workforce. Small businesses are also part of the community in a way big business can never be.

The old parties take the small business sector for granted, while their policies invariably promote the interests of big business and their lobbyists.

The Greens recognise the people behind small business deserve more support. We will:

- Reduce the company tax rate for small business by 2%;
- Help small business cash-flow by increasing the instant asset write-off threshold from \$6 500 to \$10 000; and
- Legislate for a stronger, more powerful federal Small Business Commissioner.

> RECOGNISING THE PEOPLE BEHIND SMALL BUSINESS

Small business owners are people. The Greens recognise the burden and risk that many small business people take on when they establish a business. That is why we are committed to caring for people who run small businesses and their families by giving them a fairer go.

> LOWER AND SIMPLER TAXES

The Greens will cut the tax rate for small business to promote the vitality of the sector and to encourage more Australians to enter into small businesses.

The Greens propose cutting the **company tax rate** from 30 per cent to 28 per cent for companies with turnover of under \$2 million from July 2014. Of the 788 000 companies in Australia, 600 000 small business companies will benefit from our policy.ⁱ The Parliamentary Budget Office estimates it would cost \$1.75 billion over the forward estimates based on the 2013 budget figures.

When the Government proposed a cut to the company tax rate in 2010, the Greens, unlike the Liberals, supported it for small business but the Government chose not to proceed.

Our small business tax cut will:

- free up extra income for investment, innovation and business expansion.
- Relieve the pressure on small business.
- Acknowledge the administrative costs for small business.
- Encourage growth in the small business sector.

A lower rate for small business is perfectly feasible. Small businesses face a lower company tax rate than big business in Belgium, Canada, France, Japan, the Netherlands, South Korea, Spain, the United Kingdom and the United States.ⁱⁱ The Government had recently planned a temporarily lower rate for small business and the Coalition propose an effective two-tier rate through Mr Abbott's parental leave levy.

The Greens will also raise the instant asset write off threshold from its current \$6,500 to \$10,000, as recommended by the *Henry Tax Review*.ⁱⁱⁱ Unlike the people who run large corporations small business people invest their own hard earned money in to their businesses. By raising the instant write off threshold the Greens are acknowledging to a small extent the risk they take on by allowing them to write off their asset purchases.



Raising the threshold will allow 2 million small businesses around Australian to benefit straightaway and will encourage small businesses to purchase productive assets to help grow their businesses.

It would also mean that the people behind small business can get on with running their businesses and spend less time on complicated paperwork to keep track of depreciation on equipment they purchase. It will improve cash flow for small business by bringing forward the tax deduction. The concession would apply to small businesses regardless of whether they are structured as companies, partnerships or sole traders.

The Parliamentary Budget Office estimates that raising the threshold would cost \$600 million over the three years from 2014-15 to 2016-17, based on the 2013 Budget.

Abbott and the Coalition oppose increasing the instant asset write-off. They would prefer to give big business a corporate tax cut than help the millions of small businesses with their cash-flow.

Unlike the Coalition, the Greens also supported the **loss carry back** provisions to allow small businesses to 'carry back' losses and be refunded tax paid on past profits, the same way losses can be offset against future profits. For eligible companies the tax benefit could be as high as \$300,000. The Liberals opposed this concession in order to fund tax reductions for large mining companies.

> SMALL BUSINESS COMMISSIONER

The Greens support the national Small Business Commissioner and want to strengthen its ability to act as an effective advocate for small business, especially in their dealings with federal departments and agencies.

A Small Business Commissioner properly resourced and backed by legislation will:

- **Ensure the Commissioner has the power to be an effective representative.**
- **Provide an effective broker between small and big business.**
- **Support research into Australian small business trends to help policy makers better understand the sector.**
- **Make it more difficult for the position to be abolished.**

The Commissioner should be assured of ongoing adequate funding to ensure it is properly staffed and has the resourcing to mediate disputes, carry out research into the sector and advise the federal government to ensure the small business perspective is taken into account in policy decisions

The Greens will give the Small Business Commissioner power to bring businesses and government departments to the table to facilitate conflict resolution. Court proceedings are often drawn out and expensive, and so not a realistic option for small businesses. Our plan gives the Small Business Commissioner power to call businesses together and provide relevant documents as required or risk financial penalties.

Dealing with large federal government departments and agencies can be difficult. There is great complexity in winning and delivering government contracts. The Greens bill defines one of the functions of the Small Business Commissioner is to be a point of contact for small businesses struggling in their dealings with the federal government. This will allow small businesses to get on with growing and developing their businesses, while the Small Business Commissioner follows up their conflicts and complaints directly with the federal government

The Greens want legislative backing for the Commissioner to make it more difficult for an incoming government to abolish the post, as happened in Queensland when the Newman Liberal National Party Government came to power.

The Greens introduced a bill into Parliament that would have provided appropriate legislation to ensure the Small Business Commissioner had the power to advocate effectively for small businesses. The two old parties opposed the legislation.

We would invest \$10 million a year in establishing the Commonwealth Small Business Commissioner as a statutory authority with a Commissioner and 15 staff to undertake the dispute resolution and research functions of the Commissioner.

> GROWING THE SMALL BUSINESS SECTOR

Small businesses are an important part of the economy; they employ almost 5 million people. Small business people take risks by investing their own money and time into their business. Most small business owners work long hours. If successful they create jobs and investment that benefits the wider Australian community.

The small business sector also tends to be more innovative than larger firms as people see an opportunity to start new types of businesses. This is particularly evident in the digital technology sector. Small businesses account for about a third of research in high-tech industries and are more agile in innovating and improving efficiency.^{iv} The Greens believe innovation is central to the development of the economy and we recognise the work that small businesses do in this regard. Therefore growing the small business sector helps the wider economy innovate and develop.



Small businesses, particularly in tourism, are the losers from the 'two speed economy' whereby the booming mining industry has led to a higher exchange rate and higher interest rates. Small businesses cannot match the high wages offered by mining companies and so are losing good staff.

Small businesses lack the market power of big businesses in dealing with suppliers and landlords and also lack the lobbying power with governments. Economies of scale mean that big business, with specialised HR and accounting departments, can meet the cost of complying with regulations more easily than can small business.

The Greens appreciate the work done by small business in collecting taxes on behalf of the government and helping administer programmes such as superannuation. When negotiating the response to climate change the Greens were mindful of not increasing the compliance burden on small business and so only large polluters are required to purchase permits. By contrast the Liberals introduced the GST and choice of superannuation fund, increasing the paperwork burden on small business.

For all these reasons the Greens believe that measures should be taken to relieve the pressure on small business and level the playing field so that small business can compete on fair terms.

> COMPETITION POLICY

The Greens recognise that small businesses do not operate on a level playing field with big business and that stronger competition laws are needed to give small business a fair go. We believe the competition laws need to be strengthened to prevent big business using their market power to gain unfair advantages over small business. See our "Effective Competition Policy" - <http://www.greens.org.au/tackling-supermarket-duopoly> .

> RESOURCING SMALL BUSINESS

The Greens have a fully costed plan for supporting small business including being up-front about how we will pay for our policies. We are prepared to stand up to big business and raise the revenue to support the people behind small businesses by taxing the mostly overseas owned mining corporations and record profit-making big banks.

ⁱ ATO, Taxation Statistics 2010-11, page 32

ⁱⁱ OECD Tax Database, May 2013.

ⁱⁱⁱ Australia's Future Tax System, December 2009, Recommendations 29 and 30, p 173.

^{iv} Ellis Connelly, David Norman and Tim West, 'Small business: an economic overview', Reserve Bank of Australia, 2012, pp 3-4.



100% CLEAN ENERGY ROADMAP

CONNECTING CLEAN ENERGY

Linking clean energy hotspots to our cities

Australia can harness our sun, wind and wave power to replace polluting coal and avoid dangerous global warming. We need a nation-building plan to connect our cities to clean energy hotspots like Port Augusta, where community support and world-beating solar resources meet.

We need a major rethink of how we plan our electricity grid. We need to know where our best clean energy resources are, involve local communities in planning their energy future, and help connect these hotspots to a genuinely national electricity grid.

> CLEAN ENERGY HOTSPOTS

Australia is rich in clean energy hotspots: regions where our solar, wind, geothermal, biomass and wave resources are among the best in the world. Communities like Port Augusta have already identified their clean energy potential and are mobilising to make it a reality.

We need to empower the regions where clean energy resources and community support meet, and if needed, help connect them to our cities to power Australia with 100% renewable energy. Our Connecting Clean Energy plan would do just that.

> OUR PLAN

We would allocate \$2 billion to a new Connecting Clean Energy Task Group in the Department of Energy.

The Connecting Clean Energy Task Group would:

- **map Australia's clean energy resources** with the latest information;
- **involve local communities in planning their energy future from the start**, with all levels of government, the Australian Energy Market Operator (AEMO) and clean energy developers;
- where our world-beating clean energy resources and genuine community support align, **set up Renewable Energy Development Zones** with quicker approval processes for clean energy projects;
- run a competitive tender to **link clean energy hotspots to the national energy grid** and contribute financial support where necessary.

> REGIONAL CLEAN ENERGY JOBS

The Greens' Connecting Clean Energy plan would offer many benefits to Australia, including more clean energy investment, cleaner air and cuts to the pollution that's driving global warming.

Because many of Australia's best clean energy resources are in rural and regional areas, our plan would bring investment and thousands of rewarding jobs to our regions, many of which are struggling with the decline in the number of people employed in agriculture.

> CONNECTING THE NATION

The Greens' Connecting Clean Energy plan would also create a genuinely national clean electricity grid, and end the current system dominated by state borders and fossil fuel generators.

We would make AEMO the national grid planner, to make it easier to get clean energy from distant wind farms in South Australia and Tasmania, or from massive solar or geothermal farms in New South Wales or Queensland, to the bigger population centres.

We would make pollution cuts part of the National Electricity Objective, to avoid repeating previous mistakes that are holding back clean energy development.

The Greens strongly support communities like Port Augusta that have identified their clean energy potential and are mobilising to make it a reality.



> THE PROBLEM

Australia can be a renewable energy powerhouse.

We can harness our tremendous resources of sun, wind and wave power to replace polluting coal with 100% renewable energy within the very short timeframe we have to avoid catastrophic global warming.

But we will need a nation-building exercise to make it happen, including detailed planning, community consultation and appropriate funding to connect our cities to our renewable energy hot spots.

That is how our existing energy grid was built. It was designed around coal-producing regions such as the Hunter and La Trobe Valleys and subsidised by the taxpayer. High voltage lines were built to carry power from coal regions to major centres.

With global warming already hurting and threatening far worse, we have to turn that around quickly, connecting our cities to the extraordinary renewable resources located in remote areas beyond the grid or where inadequate power lines need augmentation.

While coal companies still benefit from a grid that was built by governments, electricity market rules now require renewable energy developers to pay for network extensions. This can be prohibitively expensive for individual renewable energy projects, and there is no mechanism for sharing costs with other developers.

Consequently, renewable energy projects focus on areas near the grid rather than areas with the best resources. There is a “first-mover” disincentive as project developers wait for others to invest, and network extensions that do occur are often inefficiently under-sized.

This is affecting our ability to increase renewable energy production, and increasing the cost to consumers of grid management.

In addition, state and territory government approval for renewable electricity development is expensive, time consuming and a major barrier to investment.

Unlike several other countries, Australia does not proactively plan the utilisation of its renewable energy resources.

> THE SOLUTION

Australia needs a nation-building plan. We need to know where our best renewable energy resources are; we need streamlined consultation and approvals processes that bring communities together instead of dividing them; and we need jobs and infrastructure in the right place at the right time.

The Greens have announced very strong policies to support renewable energy, including:

- **increasing the Renewable Energy Target to 90% by 2030**
- **boosting the funding of the Clean Energy Finance Corporation to \$30 billion over ten years**
- creating an Energy Savings Agency which would, among other things, **ensure the owners of renewable energy generators (including the 1 million households with solar photovoltaic panels) receive fair payments for the electricity they produce.**

More detail about these policies is available on [our website](#).

The Connecting Clean Energy plan builds on these announcements by creating Renewable Energy Development Zones. The plan involves:

- allocating \$2 billion to a new Connecting Clean Energy Task Group within the Department of Energy to:
 - map the renewable energy resource areas of Australia and identify development priorities in collaboration with AEMO
 - manage a thorough consultation process involving local communities, all levels of government, the Australian Renewable Energy Agency, and renewable energy developers
 - create Renewable Energy Development Zones with streamlined development approval processes, based on mapped areas and community consultation
 - operate a competitive tender to extend high-voltage transmission to regional areas with high-quality renewable energy resources and, where required, contribute financial support, potentially in collaboration with the Clean Energy Finance Corporation
- inserting a greenhouse emissions reduction objective into the National Electricity Objective
- directing the Standing Council on Energy and Resources to establish AEMO as the national transmission planner for a high-voltage network that can maintain system security while moving high volumes of renewable energy between regions and states.



> KEY STEPS FOR THE TASK GROUP

1. Mapping the renewable energy resource areas of Australia.

There has already been significant effort put into mapping Australia's renewable energy resources, including by Geoscience Australia, the CSIRO and some state governments. The Task Group's first job will be to collate this knowledge and present it in a user-friendly way.

Australia's four best renewable electricity sources, all with significant untapped potential, are solar, wind, hot rock geothermal and biomass. Ocean energy also has great potential but is not yet ready for large-scale use. Large hydro has been fully exploited in Australia.

Existing renewable energy resource maps suggest:

- there is significant overlap of prime solar and wind areas in southern Western Australia, South Australia and throughout many parts of the Northern Territory and Queensland
- the best hot rock geothermal areas are mostly located in the north-east of South Australia, south-west of Queensland and the north of the Northern Territory.

Regions where prime solar, wind and geothermal resources overlap may have such great promise for large-scale renewable energy development that they would warrant significant public investment in grid infrastructure. Just as railways opened many parts of the world to agriculture in the 19th and 20th centuries, grid infrastructure will open many parts of Australia to electricity production.

Australia has a large number of potentially significant ocean energy sites around its coastline. These may coincide with coastal wind resources, but they need to be located in areas where siting and connection to coastal grids is cost-effective and supported by local communities.

Biomass energy has potential for growth and may provide a major financial boost to farming communities across the country. Biomass energy, however, must be generated from sustainable sources, and native forest sources must be excluded.

The mapping exercise should also include identifying existing and emerging electricity grid constraints. For example, the transmission interconnector between South Australia and Victoria frequently reaches its maximum capacity, limiting further renewable energy development in South Australia.

Once the resource mapping is complete, the Task Group should collaborate with AEMO in identifying development priorities. AEMO is well placed to assist because it recently completed a study into 100% renewable energy in Australia. This study will provide the Task Group with insight about the need to develop a range of complementary renewable energy technologies in a range of regions to maintain electricity supply security. The

Task Group's objective will be to prioritise development opportunities that exploit prime renewable energy resources and, where necessary, provide dispatchable electricity supply.

2. Bringing together all levels of government, local communities and renewable energy developers in consultation and streamlining of the approval process.

The second job for the Task Group will be to manage a thorough consultation process so as to enable streamlined planning permission for areas identified as prime renewable energy zones.

State and territory government approval for renewable electricity development is expensive, time consuming and a major barrier to renewable energy investment. Unlike several European countries, Australia does not proactively plan the utilisation of its renewable energy resources. This is despite the fact that, unlike Europe, Australia has enough renewable energy to be able to generate its current national electricity demand hundreds of times over.

The Task Group will facilitate communication and consultation links between all levels of government, local communities, experts such as the Australian Renewable Energy Agency, and renewable energy developers in order to establish the Renewable Energy Development Zones.

The Task Group must invite and respond to local views on proposed development in the renewable energy zones.

This type of planning approach is already used in Denmark and Germany, and is being increasingly adopted in other European countries. Grassroots consultation will be essential to ensuring a high level of community agreement.

3. Planning and funding of the connection of Renewable Energy Development Zones to the electricity grid.

The third major job of the Task Group is the planning and funding of the connection of zones to the electricity grid.

Australia's electricity transmission network is elongated and sparse – it is the least dense transmission network of any developed country, and it fails to reach into many areas with significant renewable energy generation potential. It also has weak links between most state grids, does not include the Northern Territory and Western Australia, and is owned and operated by monopoly public and private owners who will only extend the transmission grid if users pay for the extensions. The country's locally based distribution grids are also of varying quality.

All these factors create often insurmountable barriers for renewable electricity generation.



RENEWABLE ENERGY ZONES CAN BENEFIT REGIONAL AUSTRALIA

The number of farmers in Australia has been declining for many decades as small farmers sell up to large-scale farming operations, and fewer young people take over family farms. Over the 30 years to 2011 the number of farmers declined by an average of 294 farmers every month and there were 19,700 fewer farmers in Australia in 2011 than in 2006, a fall of 11% over five years.¹

Renewable energy is another crop in the rotation. It provides a new source of income for farmers struggling with low farm-gate prices, and the vagaries of the weather.

Many studies have shown that renewable energy technologies create more jobs per unit energy than coal and natural gas². As well, developing renewable energy zones in regional areas will ensure many jobs will be created where the need for secure employment is high.

A study published in 2009 by the Climate Institute which estimated how many jobs would be created in the renewable energy sector by carbon pricing, the 20% renewable energy target and other existing industry development measures, concluded that around 26,200 new jobs would be created.³ This included almost 2500 new permanent positions, over 15,000 construction jobs and more than 8600 indirect jobs in supporting sectors. The study also concluded that most of the permanent operation and maintenance jobs will be created in regional areas, with the bulk occurring in South Australia, New South Wales and Victoria.

Since then, support for renewable energy has been significantly boosted by the \$10 billion Clean Energy Finance Corporation. The Greens' policies of significantly increasing both the Renewable Energy Target and support for the Corporation would obviously boost regional job creation even further.

¹ Australian Bureau of Statistics 4102.0 - Australian Social Trends, Dec 2012.

² Wei, M., Patadia, S. & Kammen, D.M. "Putting Renewables and energy efficiency to work: How many jobs can the Clean Energy industry generate in the US?" Energy Policy 38 (2010): 919-931.

³ [Clean Energy Jobs and Investment in Regional Australia](#), The Climate Institute.

The new grid connection and planning function of the Task Group draws upon overseas examples. Jurisdictions in the UK, Denmark and Texas, facing the same issue, have implemented a coordinated response to facilitate investment in network extensions.

For example, the Public Utility Commission of Texas has designated regions with high-quality renewable energy resources as Competitive Renewable Energy Zones. These zones required transmission lines to be built with the cost shared across the community. Similarly, the Connecting Clean Energy Task Group will designate key transmission corridors needed to connect the renewable energy development zones to the grid and will expedite the planning and financing of the transmission extensions.

Based on the Texan approach, the Connecting Clean Energy Task Group, in partnership with AEMO and Australian Energy Regulator, would operate competitive tenders open to network and non-network bidders to build high-voltage transmission assets to regional areas with prime renewable energy resources. Where required, the Task Group, potentially in collaboration with the Clean Energy Finance Corporation, could enter into partnership agreements and contribute financial support.

The Task Group's funding of \$2 billion, assuming it leveraged private sector funding in a ratio of 1:2, would facilitate a \$6 billion investment in transmission infrastructure connecting the renewable energy zones – a significant portion of the total cost. AEMO's draft 100% renewable energy study projected costs of \$17–\$22 billion to achieve 100% renewable energy by 2030.

The Clean Energy Finance Corporation, a Greens initiative, can also provide concessional finance for grid augmentations, is in close contact with large-scale renewable energy developers and would be well placed to work in partnership with the Task Group. This could make a difference to individual projects. Public funding is also required to build the spine of a new transmission network to remote areas with renewable energy resources at a scale that will support future projects efficiently in the long-term interests of consumers.

4. Reforming the National Energy Market.

Too often, the current National Electricity Market rules create a barrier to sensible planning for renewable energy. A simple reform could turn that around.

The Ministerial Council on Energy recently directed the Australian Energy Market Commission to change a rule to enable appropriately sized transmission lines to be built in order to accommodate future clusters of renewable energy generators in remote areas. In an extraordinary breach of common sense, the AEMC refused to do so because it found it contradicted the National Electricity Objective.



Including an objective to reduce greenhouse emissions in the National Electricity Objective would make sure that did not happen again. It would allow the AEMO and Australian Energy Regulator to exercise regulatory oversight on publicly funded grid extensions to remote renewable energy zones.

In addition, the Greens would create a truly national electricity grid. Currently, the national market is, in practice a group of inter-linked state markets. As AEMO, the AEMC and the Productivity Commission have noted, this creates a potential bias against inter-connection between regions.

A national transmission system which can support high energy-flows between states will be crucial to maintaining a secure electricity supply; for example, to transfer surplus power from lower electricity demand states such as South Australia and Tasmania when the wind is blowing or south from solar power stations in Queensland and NSW on hot days.

The Standing Council on Energy and Resources should direct the AEMC to examine rule changes and other reforms required to establish AEMO as a single, independent planning agency to administer a national transmission planning and reliability framework.

> THE POSITION OF THE OTHER PARTIES

The ALP promised to implement a \$1 billion Connecting Renewable Energy program at the 2010 election but it appears not a dollar was spent by the time this funding was rolled into the newly established Australian Renewable Energy Agency in 2011.

The Coalition has no policy on expanding the electricity grid to facilitate renewable energy development.

Neither of the old parties wants to build the infrastructure to facilitate higher penetrations of renewable energy.

The Australian Greens are the only party you can trust to drive the rollout of 100% renewable energy in Australia – the only party with the political will to drive and develop the policy frameworks to make it happen.

2013 Initiative Current



CREATING A CARING SOCIETY MORE REVENUE, FEWER CUTS

The Greens' plan to raise more revenue from those who can afford to pay

With many people feeling under increasing pressure, our government needs more money to fund the services and support we all need. Australia's mining industry and big banks are making enormous profits and should contribute more to creating a caring society.

The recent federal budget was a clear demonstration of the contrast between the old parties, which are obsessed with balancing budgets by cutting funding to vital services, and the Greens, which have a vision for a fairer, more caring society.

While both Labor and the Coalition are going down the path of service cuts, the Greens offer an alternative. We recognise revenue must be raised and we want it to come from those who can afford it.

> A CARING SOCIETY REQUIRES MORE REVENUE

As a nation we should be investing in higher education, not cutting funding to universities and putting students under even greater pressure. We should be increasing Newstart, not condemning people to poverty, and we should be caring for single parents, not making their lives even more difficult.

We can do all these things and more, like bringing dental care into Medicare for everyone, by standing up to the big mining companies and big banks and demanding a fairer contribution to the whole community.

The Australian Greens will raise an extra \$42.7 billion of revenue to be invested in our future by:

- **Fixing the mining tax**, so the multi-national mining corporations pay their fair share for mining our natural resources. An improved mining tax will raise \$21.8 billion over the three years from 1 July 2014.
- **Abolishing tax breaks for the fossil fuel industry and assistance to carbon capture and storage programmes.** This will raise an additional \$12 billion over the forward estimates.

- **Introducing a Public Support Levy on the big banks.** A 20 basis point levy on bank assets over \$100 billion will raise \$8.4 billion over the three years from 1 July 2014.
- **Increasing the effective marginal tax rate on incomes over \$1 million.** Increasing the effective rate to 50 per cent from 1 July 2014 will raise \$500 million over the forward estimates.

The independent Parliamentary Budget Office has costed these proposals.

> FIXING THE MINING TAX

The Minerals Resource Rent Tax introduced by the government is a flawed tax. It was negotiated with three of the world's biggest mining companies – BHP, Rio Tinto and Xstrata – by a government which failed to stand up for the interests of all Australians.

It was supposed to be a tax that "spread the benefits of the boom" and yet it will raise only \$200 million in its first year. This is nothing less than an embarrassment for Labor.

It doesn't have to be this way. Australia is experiencing a mining boom with production from our mines continuing to increase and a well-designed mining tax will ensure the whole community benefits from the mining of our natural resources, not just multi-national mining corporations.

The Australian Greens will fix the mining tax by:

- increasing the rate to 40% from 22.5%; 40% is the rate already applied to oil and gas
- only rebating royalties in place at July 2011. Currently, if a state government raises royalties this will effectively be paid by federal taxpayers, not the mining companies
- only allow depreciation on the book value of the amounts actually spent on mining infrastructure. Currently, mining companies have the option of depreciating the market value



of the mine, which can be much higher than what they have actually spent. This is a key flaw and explains why the mining tax has raised such a small amount of revenue.

- extend coverage to all minerals, not just iron ore and coal.

The proposal has been costed by the independent Parliamentary Budget Office which found that that these changes combined would raise an additional \$21.8 billion over three years.

> ENDING TAX BREAKS TO BIG MINERS

The government is exacerbating global warming by making it cheaper for big mining corporations to extract more coal, oil and gas via special tax treatment for exploration, depreciation and fuel rebates. If mining companies didn't get so much government assistance, then renewable energy would be more competitive.

The Australian Greens will abolish three key tax breaks to the mining industry:

- **Diesel fuel rebates:** mining companies pay only 6 cents a litre excise on purchases of diesel fuel, compared to ordinary consumers who pay 38 cents. We will keep the rebate intact for other uses, including farming. Making mining companies pay a fair price for their fuel would raise an additional \$7.1 billion over the forward estimates.
- **Favourable depreciation treatment:** instead of the usual practice of depreciating assets such as cars, planes and machinery over their useful life, the mining industry is allowed to claim depreciation over a shorter period. The Greens propose to remove these "accelerated depreciation" provisions for aircraft, the oil and gas industry and vehicles (except those used for agricultural purposes). This would raise an additional \$1.8 billion over the forward estimates.
- **Immediate depreciation on mining exploration:** expenditure on exploration and prospecting by the mining industry is immediately deductible for company tax rather than depreciated over time as is the usual practice for investments. Changing this would raise an additional \$2.7 billion over the forward estimates.

> ABOLISHING ASSISTANCE TO CARBON CAPTURE AND STORAGE

The government is spending taxpayers' money on carbon capture and storage (the so-called clean coal technology) because the coal companies do not think the idea has enough chance of becoming financially viable to invest much of their own money.

The Australian Greens would cease funding the Global Carbon Capture and Storage Institute and abolish the Carbon Capture and Storage Flagships programme and the National Low Emissions Coal Initiative. This would save \$509 million over the forward estimates.

> PUBLIC SUPPORT LEVY ON BANKS

Our big banks are making record profits, around \$24 billion in the past year. This represents over \$1000 for every Australian. In just the six months to December 2012, the Commonwealth Bank made an after-tax profit of \$3.7 billion, while Westpac's after-tax profit for six months to March 2013 was \$3.3 billion. NAB and ANZ lagged slightly behind on \$2.5b and \$2.9b respectively.

These record profits off the back of consumers are underpinned by an implicit "too big to fail" guarantee from the government. If the banks went to the wall taxpayers would bail them out. The big four banks are taking all the profits while taxpayers are wearing all the risk.

The International Monetary Fund has made clear the benefit of this guarantee to banks in accessing cheaper wholesale funding.

It is time the big four banks paid a fair contribution for the public support they receive.

The Greens' proposal for a 20 basis point (0.2%) levy on bank assets in excess of \$100 billion mirrors similar levies in Europe that raise, on average, approximately 0.2% of GDP and are based on International Monetary Fund proposals.

By limiting the levy to those big banks that are truly "too big to fail", the levy won't be passed on to consumers as the big banks will face competition from smaller banks which aren't paying the levy.

As well as raising an additional \$8.4 billion over three years, such a levy would improve bank competition, going some way to equalising the wholesale funding advantage government policy gives systemically important banks over smaller institutions.

> MILLIONAIRES' TAX

The gap between rich and poor in Australia is growing. Those who earn enough to be classified millionaires don't face the same pressures as the rest of the community. An effective tax rate of 50% on income over \$1 million will make our tax system fairer and contribute \$0.5 billion dollars to creating a more caring society.

Fewer than 10,000 individuals – less than 0.1 per cent of taxpayers – have taxable incomes over \$1 million. The top marginal income tax rate paid on very high incomes has fallen from 67 per cent in the 1960s to 45 per cent now.

The proposed higher top marginal tax rate would mean the wealthiest Australians still keep half of any additional dollar they receive, a larger proportion than some struggling Australians who lose benefits as their income rises.



> WHY WE CAN AFFORD THESE MEASURES

Former Treasurer Swan blamed his failure to achieve his political goal of a budget surplus in 2012–13 on weaker commodity prices. The main causes of the deficits, however, are that neither of the old parties will take on big business. Instead, when Treasurer Costello promised permanent tax cuts from a temporary mineral price boom, Labor matched his promises. The Greens' proposals seek to restore the budget to a sustainable position while also raising enough revenue from those who can afford to pay to fund services and support for all Australians.

The additional \$40 billion we can raise will still leave Australia as a low-tax country by international standards. Indeed, the total amount of tax raised from 2014–15 to 2016–17 would be the equivalent of 23.7 per cent of GDP, **less** than the proportion in the latter years of the Howard–Costello government, which reached a high of 24.2 per cent. But more tax will be paid by those who can better afford it, such as the record profit-making banks, millionaires and the foreign shareholders who own around 80 per cent of mining operations in Australia.

> WHY MINING CAN PAY MORE

The government attempts to explain away the failure of its mining tax by pointing to the drop in commodity prices. It is true commodity prices have come off their record highs of late, but they are still at historically high prices. It is also true the resource rent taxes are on profits and the profits of mining companies are also down compared to recent record highs. But what the government cannot explain is how Rio Tinto made \$9 billion from Australian iron ore last year and paid no mining tax.

The reality is that the mining tax has fundamental design flaws as a result of the willingness of the then Prime Minister to cut a political deal with BHP, Rio and Xstrata at the expense of the community.

Since the China boom the Australian mining industry has been making enormous profits: over \$100 billion in 2011–12. In most cases commodity prices are much higher than assumed when mines were developed, so much of these profits represent "windfall gains". About 80 per cent of these profits accrue to foreign shareholders and much of the remainder to wealthy Australians.

The mining lobby tries to argue that increasing taxes on the mining industry would lead to mines closing in Australia and investment being directed to Africa or South America. Such claims are nonsense. Both actual and expected investment in the Australian mining industry has reached new records in recent years, with over \$250 billion of investment being planned in the next few years.

Mineral industry adviser, the Behre Dolbear Group, has released an international comparison concluding that Australia is the best place in the world for mining investment, being particularly attractive for its political and economic stability, freedom, lack of corruption and speed in granting permits (revealing that the rhetoric about too much regulation also has no factual basis).

Contrary to their exaggerated claims, mining only employs two per cent of the labour force, significantly less than manufacturing, agriculture and tourism. In fact, mining jobs have been created at the expense of jobs in these sectors, which have been hurt by the higher dollar, higher interest rates and skill shortages created by the mining boom.

> CREATING A CARING SOCIETY

Revenue from a well constructed mining tax, ending tax breaks to the mining corporations, a millionaires' tax and a public support levy on the big banks should be invested in caring for people and protecting the environment by: increasing Newstart by \$50 a week, bringing dental care into Medicare for everyone, reversing the funding cuts to universities and students and investing in clean energy. These are investments for the future when the mining boom runs its course.

Unlike Labor and the Coalition, the Greens are not afraid to stand up to the big mining corporations and the big banks to care for people and protect the environment.



'SAFE AS HOUSES'

INTRODUCING HOUSING SUPPLY BONDS

The Greens' plan to finance a boost in the supply of social and affordable housing

Australia's social housing system is under increasing pressure from growing demand and chronic underinvestment. The Greens advocate a safe, innovative housing bonds instrument to unlock and channel billions of dollars in new investment into the supply of affordable rental housing.

Australia's chronic undersupply of affordable rental housing is at a crisis point. Years of underinvestment and a housing market that is now one of the most unaffordable in the world mean that more than ever before we need strategic ways to channel and lower the cost of private investment into affordable rental housing¹.

Too many Australians are under increasing housing pressure and as a caring society we should be focusing on creating a greater supply of affordable housing.

The Greens believe it's time to harness the innovative and responsible funding mechanisms available in other countries including the UK, USA, France, Canada, Austria and the Netherlands that provide a stable and cost effective way of funding social housing and growing the affordable housing sector.

The current time presents a great opportunity to consider a new dedicated financial mechanism to boost supply of affordable rental housing and form the basis of a 'growth fund' that would allow the social housing sector to grow at the scale it needs. It would also allow superannuation funds and other investors an entry point to the affordable housing industry.

A number of Australia's eminent researchers and housing economists through the Australian Housing and Urban Research Institute (AHURI) and RMIT and UNSW have put forward a model that suits Australian conditions and is strongly supported by housing experts, peak bodies, and welfare agencies alike.

The Greens' proposal for "Safe as Houses" Affordable Housing Supply Bonds demonstrates that a relatively modest government investment of \$25 million could raise \$2 billion in bonds - enough to finance the construction of 7,200 new homes in a year. The cumulative cost would be \$145 million over the forward estimates.

Based on the proposal developed by the Australian Housing and Urban Research Institute, the bonds scheme would include

- **Zero interest social housing growth bonds** – a long term revolving loan to non-profit housing organisations;
- **Tax smart housing supply bonds** – a long term fixed term fixed interest bond with a tax incentive (indicative 6% tax discount) to appeal to retail investors; and
- **AAA Housing Supply Bonds** – a fixed interest, long term AAA rated (government guaranteed) bond with an indicative 5% return to appeal to institutional investors such as super funds.

An independent financial intermediary, the Australian Affordable Housing Finance Corporation, will be established to further develop the proposal in consultation with all relevant stakeholders, including government, and would have responsibility for issuing the bonds and loans as part of the scheme. We would provide \$40 million over 4 years from 1 July 2014 to establish the intermediary.

The proposal is also based on the continuation of the National Rental Affordability Scheme (NRAS).

¹ Lawson, Milligan and Yates (2012) Towards cost effective private financing of affordable rental housing. Housing Finance International. Summer 2012. p25-31



> AFFORDABLE HOUSING SUPPLY BONDS

Bonds are a straightforward, long term financial instrument. Affordable housing supply bonds are designed to reduce the cost of funding available for community housing providers, which enhances their capacity to increase the supply of affordable rental housing. The bonds would be attractive to retail and institutional investors through a mix of tax incentives and government guarantees.

> WHAT WOULD IT COST?

The independent Parliamentary Budget Office has costed an Affordable Housing Bonds scheme based on the AHURI proposal with the following parameters:

- The capital required to build 7200 new homes per annum to be largely met through private investment
- A total of \$2.035 billion of housing supply bonds to finance the construction of 7,200 homes per annum
- 10 per cent of the scheme's financing to be provided by the social housing growth bond, 20 per cent from the tax smart housing supply bonds and 70 per cent from the AAA housing supply bonds

The Parliamentary Budget Office has indicated the cost to Government to provide the bonds would be \$25 million in the first year and \$145 million over the forward estimates.

Cost type:	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	Total
Administered expense	-20	-30	-50	-100
Revenue (foregone tax revenue)		-10	-20.0	-30
Departmental expense	-5	-5	-5	-15
(\$m)	-25	-45	-75	-145

The costings assume two thirds of the housing will be 'better than six star' conventional dwellings for up to \$350,000 each. One third will be prefabricated or alternative materials, at up to \$150,000 per dwelling.

> SHOWING LEADERSHIP

It is economically and socially responsible to invest in an adequate supply of affordable rental housing. Yet Australia's social housing sector is one of the smallest in the developed world and the chronic undersupply of affordable housing is one of Australia's most persistent problems.

- New supply has not been able to keep up with growing demand, especially for affordable rental housing
- The proportion of social housing has fallen markedly, and there are 225,000 applicants on social housing

waiting lists, many waiting between 2-10 years for a home

- There is increasing pressure on rental markets and clear evidence of market failure
- Cities are becoming more socially polarised
- There are growing and well documented shortages of housing, particularly affordable rental houses².

Business as usual will not fill these gaps or allow the great potential of the non-profit housing sector in Australia to be realised.

National leadership is needed to show a long term commitment to both increase the supply and secure investor interest in affordable rental housing. This could be easily demonstrated by promoting and backing investments in social infrastructure with government acting as an enabler and investment partner. This initiative will also create jobs in the construction sector and drive economic activity³.

Introducing Housing Supply bonds is a strong and strategic action to channel lower cost institutional investment to appropriate and well regulated housing managers, such as not-for-profit community housing providers that meets the housing needs of lower income households.

> WHY BONDS?

Australia currently has an unsophisticated and inadequate approach to funding affordable rental housing.

Core funding has been in decline over the last 15 years, and we spend significantly more on demand subsidies for housing rather than for supply. In terms of 'investment' into rental housing, the government has largely left it to the private and speculative investor market to provide long term affordable tenancies: a paradox in terms. Australia's private rental market is one of the most expensive in the world, and offers the less secure and more costly housing conditions than most OECD countries⁴.

Research demonstrates most private investment is in existing buildings rather than new dwellings, and in higher value rather than affordable housing. Investors compete with first home buyers or less wealthy purchasers. As landlords, investors are

² See for example Lawson, Milligan and Yates (2012) Housing Supply Bonds – a suitable instrument to channel investment towards affordable housing in Australia? Australian Housing and Urban Research Institute (AHURI). AHURI Final Report no. 188

³ The NRAS scheme for example has provided the 'missing link' in the viability of many housing developments and acted as an extra-cyclical stimulus for the construction industry. See Community Housing Federation of Australia (I2013). National Rental Affordability Scheme. Participant Roundtables Nov-Dec 2013. Final Report. February 2013

⁴ Wulff, Reynolds, Dharmalingham, Hulse and Yates (2011) cited in Lawson (2012) Housing supply bonds and attracting institutional investment. *Around the House* no 91. Shelter NSW. December 2012. p9-12



driven to realise their investment and not to provide a long term public service – and ‘churn’ properties in and out of the market which adversely impacts on tenants⁵. Research has shown 25% of tenancies are terminated due to sale in the first year⁶.

Australian banks are also part of the problem. They will not provide finance to affordable housing developments, for dwellings smaller than 50sqm and are only willing to provide limited funds to non-profit housing organisations. Private finance also has a high cost.

There is also a lack of large scale institutional investment in affordable housing in Australia. Yet there is great opportunity to attract investment from Australia’s large institutional investors, including superannuation funds which hold \$1.3 trillion (\$1300 billion) in funds – a sum that will grow to \$3.2 trillion by 2035⁷.

There has been growing interest in developing bond instruments to attract private investment in order to deliver a range of goods and services, and to expand the corporate bond market in Australia⁸. Infrastructure bonds for example were recently proposed by a coalition of 10 peak bodies including the Property Council and the Australian Conservation Fund in the ‘New Deal for Urban Australia’⁹.

More recently the potential for housing supply bonds to attract private investment into non-government not for profit sector has been the subject of a number of reports, inquiries and campaigns¹⁰.

In 2010 the Productivity Commission report on the not for profit sector highlighted that a lack of access to private capital and the absence of financial intermediaries was hindering the sectors’ development. In 2011 the Senate Economics References Committee inquiry examined the barriers and options available to develop a mature capital market for Australia’s social economy.

In a nutshell, housing supply bonds are a new investment asset class that allow both institutional and retail (‘mum and dad’) investors to contribute to affordable housing by buying a simple bond.

Bonds are designed to reduce the cost of finance to the community housing providers, and to attract larger volumes of

appropriate investment, under improved terms and conditions to those that currently exist in order to increase the supply of high quality, secure and affordable rental housing.

> THE BONDS PROPOSAL

The Affordable Housing Supply Bonds proposal is based on the model outlined in two consecutive reports by the Australian Housing and Urban Research Institute (AHURI) which described international measures to channel investment towards affordable housing and how these might apply in the Australian context¹¹. In developing the model AHURI consulted with bond investors including super funds in developing the instruments. In particular they looked at successful practice in Austria, and conducted extensive industry consultation on the design of a suitable bonds instrument for Australia, tailored to local conditions.

A recent report and investigative panel initiated by the Housing Ministers’ Advisory Committee shows institutional investors have considerable interest in the proposal and support the bonds concept. The research also emphasises the importance of certainty of funding for supply of affordable housing, something that has been lacking in the NRAS program for example¹².

Many prominent housing and welfare peak bodies support the model put forward by AHURI and are now calling for the introduction of affordable housing bonds. This includes the Salvation Army¹³, National Shelter¹⁴, the McKell Institute¹⁵ and the prominent ‘Australians for Affordable Housing’ coalition, representing over 60 national housing, welfare and community sector organisations¹⁶. The proposal has attracted considerable interest from key stakeholders, in particular pension funds.¹⁷

¹¹ See Lawson, Gilmour and Milligan for AHURI (2010); and Lawson, Milligan and Yates (2012) Lawson et al (2012), Housing Supply Bonds—a suitable instrument to channel investment towards affordable housing in Australia? AHURI Final Report No.188, Australian Housing and Urban Research Institute, Melbourne, 2012.

¹² Milligan, Yates, Weisel, and Pawson (2013) *Financing rental housing through institutional investment – Volume 1: outcomes of an investigative panel, and Volume 2: supplementary papers*. AHURI Final Report No. 202. Melbourne: Australian Housing and Urban Research Institute. At <http://www.ahuri.edu.au/publications/projects/p71016>

¹³ The Salvation Army (2010) Statements for the Federal Election recommended government consider the concept of affordable housing bonds as a way to provide low-cost housing and related infrastructures development.

¹⁴ The National Shelter Policy Platform (2012) recommends the creation of vehicles such as unit investment trusts (in which investors can invest in the overall, fund instead of in individual properties) and Affordable Housing Bonds for attracting and managing institutional investment in rental Housing.

¹⁵ http://mckellinstitute.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2012/04/Mckell_HomesForAll_A4.pdf

¹⁶ Australians for Affordable Housing (2012) Addressing Housing Affordability in Australia: A 4-point plan for the next five years.

¹⁷ Australia’s largest industry superannuation fund, Australian Super, has backed a proposal for government-guaranteed housing supply bonds which it says could bring billions of dollars into the ailing not-for-profit social housing sector.” reported in Australian Financial Review, 31 May 2012, see http://afr.com/p/business/property/super_funds_could_back_cheap_homes_FHNt4F2w7uHhec8DfjmGN

⁵ Wood and Ong (2010) Factors shaping the design to become a landlord and retain rental investments. Final Report 142. AHURI. Melbourne, cited in Lawson, Milligan and Yates (2012)

⁶ Wood and Ong (2010)

⁷ Lawson, Milligan and Yates (2012)

⁸ Lawson, Milligan and Yates (2012)

⁹

http://www.acfonline.org.au/sites/default/files/resources/ACF_A_New_Deal_for_Urban_Australia_report.pdf

¹⁰ Lawson, Milligan and Yates (2012)



The bonds proposal the Greens advocate draws on AHURI's research and has been refined in collaboration with the researchers to a more modest level that could be scaled up over time¹⁸.

The model put forward is based on a suite of three bonds which include:

1. **'Zero interest' public bond issues**
2. **A tax incentive** on 'retail' investor bonds
3. **Guaranteed (AAA equivalent) bonds** suitable for institutional investors

Each bond type is described below (Table 1).

Bond type	Description	Investor segment
'Zero interest' housing growth bonds	These loans would be allocated on a transparent and competitive basis to registered non-profit community housing organisations for approved development proposals. These are long term revolving public loans to registered non-profit housing organisations. The loans would make up 10% of the financing.	Governments
'Tax smart' housing supply bonds	A fixed term, fixed interest long term bond with a tax incentive (an indicative 6% tax free coupon). The returns generated would be tax free, the bonds are assumed to earn about 6% per year. These bonds are assumed to make up 20% of the financing.	Retail ('mum and dad') investors, highly taxed private investors and private fund managers. (30-48% tax rate).
'AAA' housing supply bonds	A fixed interest, long term government guaranteed bond (an indicative 5% coupon). Providing a government guarantee reduces perceived risk and is attractive to fixed income portfolios of super funds. The bonds provide senior loans in approved co-financed projects. These bonds are assumed to make up 70% of the financing.	Institutional investors such as super funds and insurance funds (15% tax rate).

Table 1: Summary of Affordable Housing Supply Bonds suite
(Adapted from Lawson [2012] and Lawson, Milligan and Yates, [2012])

¹⁸ The model proposed is a scaled down version of a model described by AHURI (2012) in which it was demonstrated, through research and extensive consultation that government investment of \$90 million a year could leverage \$7 billion of private investment into affordable rental housing, enough to fund 20,000 new dwellings. To issue bonds over five years would cost 1.4 billion and leverage \$35 billion worth of investment into the affordable housing sector¹⁸ See Lawson et al (2012); Lawson et al (2010); and Lawson, Milligan and Yates (2012)

> WHAT ARE THE BENEFITS?

The housing supply bonds model could substantially increase the supply of affordable rental housing, promote stability in the residential construction sector and promote innovation in medium density manufacture and design. All these outcomes underpin more sustainable patterns of economic growth, urban development and improve access to affordable housing.

The benefits of housing supply bonds include:

- A tangible and substantial contribution towards housing supply;
- Ensuring that the housing supplied, with the assistance of public enhancements attracting private investment, is both affordable and secure, generating lasting benefits to family functioning, child development, individual health and economic and social participation;
- Promoting economic stability, support skilled labour markets and catalysing innovation in the residential construction industry;
- Consolidating and accelerating efforts to develop a viable non-profit housing sector at scale; and
- Providing a suitable vehicle for investment funds to meet both the yields required by policy makers and their own social, economic and environmental corporate responsibilities.

> OTHER PARTIES

Labor has made some recent efforts on the provision of affordable housing but they have not been at the scale or over the long term needed. The social housing initiative in 2009 funded 19,200 new social housing dwellings but has now ceased. The National Rental Affordability Scheme (NRAS) introduced in 2008 offers tax credits for supply of 50,000 new rental dwellings that are leased at below market rates, and has been a great success, with the last two rounds oversubscribed. It has generated interest from individual investors but is yet to attract large scale institutional investment. This is mostly due to a lack of commitment to a longer term, permanent scheme, and ongoing administration problems and delays in the scheme.

The Coalition have not yet released a housing policy.

The Australian Greens acknowledge the important research conducted by the Australian Housing and Urban Research Institute (AHURI) and in particular the research undertaken by RMIT and UNSW researchers Julie Lawson, Vivienne Milligan and Judith Yates on Housing Supply Bonds.



NUCLEAR VETERANS DESERVE GOLD CARD HEALTH CARE

The Greens' plan to care for veterans affected by British Nuclear Testing

Australians exposed to nuclear tests were done a great wrong. It is time we showed care for our nuclear veterans. These veterans are aging and should not incur further indignity due to an inability to pay medical costs, nor the further expense and delay of pursuing long-overdue justice.

Australian servicemen, often clad only in shorts and t-shirts, were exposed to nuclear tests, while the British scientists in charge looked on wearing protective full body suits.

These veterans have paid a terrible price in terms of radiation induced illness, suffering a 23% greater chance of having cancer than the general population and an 18% greater chance of dying from cancer.ⁱ

The Australian Greens will provide Australian veterans exposed to radiation from British nuclear weapons testing at the Montebello Islands, Maralinga and Emu Fields between 1952 and 1963 with the Gold Card to cover all medical care.

While other veterans over 70 years of age who experienced combat automatically receive the Gold Card, nuclear veterans currently do not because their injuries and illnesses were incurred from the actions of an ally rather than from an enemy or combat situation.

Nuclear veterans are required to prove their health problems are directly linked to radiation exposure from decades ago. Despite being exposed to very high levels of radiation, it is almost impossible to prove concretely that the tests caused an individual's illnesses. Therefore, the Department of Veterans Affairs very seldom accepts their condition as caused by the tests.

> THE NUCLEAR TESTS

The British detonated 12 nuclear weapons in Australia – three on the Montebello Islands in Western Australia (1952-56), seven at Maralinga (1956-7) and two at Emu Fields (1953) in South Australia. Nine tests were conducted over Christmas and Malden Islands (1957-8).

Between 1960 and 1963, an estimated 22 kg of plutonium, uranium and other fission products were dispersed around Taranaki, the most contaminated of the test sites at Maralinga.

Radioactive fallout from the Montebello tests swept across the continent, reaching inland Queensland coastal towns and across to Fiji. Fallout from Maralinga reached Adelaide and Melbourne.

According to the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty Organisation, approximately 16,000 Australian civilians and servicemen were exposed to nuclear fallout.ⁱⁱ

> THE GREENS PLAN

For a small sum – \$85.2 million over the forward estimates – the remaining 1,892 Australian nuclear veterans could be provided the same benefits and entitlements that other veterans are awarded.

The independent Parliamentary Budget Office has estimated providing the Gold Card to all defence personnel participants from 1 July 2014 would cost less than \$30 million per year.

We would provide the Department for Veterans Affairs additional staffing of 2.75 FTE to administer implementation, for a cost of \$0.4 million over the forward estimates.

Given the devastating impact on their lives and their families, this is a small price to pay.

We are running out of time to exercise our duty of care to these Australians. People should need only to prove that they were exposed to high levels of radiation as a result of the weapons testing in order to get the Gold Card.

> GOVERNMENTS MUST FACE UP TO THE NUCLEAR MISTAKES OF THE PAST

According to the Australian Institute of Criminologyⁱⁱⁱ, while the British nuclear tests were announced in the media, most Australians had no knowledge about the secret nuclear program. The fact that tests were conducted far from



population centres meant that the risks were not clear to citizens, but our government knew the dangers of radiation.

The 1984-1985 McClelland Royal Commission into the tests showed that the Menzies Government was also fully aware of the exposure of these servicemen to dangerous levels of radiation, and the exposure of Aboriginal people.

On 26 March 1951 British PM Clement Attlee sought agreement for the British to use the 180 limestone islands that make up the Montebello Islands as a site for nuclear testing. Menzies agreed without formal consultation with Cabinet and the Australian public were not informed until 19 February 1952.

Attlee's letter acknowledged the radiation hazards:

"The effect of exploding an atomic weapon in the Monte Bello Islands will be to contaminate with radioactivity the north-east group and this contamination may spread to others of the islands. The area is not likely to be entirely free from contamination for about three years ..."

The third nuclear test on the Montebello Islands broke an assurance given by UK Prime Minister Eden to Menzies that tests would not exceed 62 kilotons; the truth that a 98 kiloton bomb was exploded only came out in 1984.

The Greens have directly approached the British government to make Act of Grace or ex gratia payments to Australia's nuclear veterans. The point of such payments would be to circumvent the inappropriate burden of proof of causation being imposed on the victims. However, the British Minister for Defence Personnel Welfare and Veterans Mark Francois washed his hands of the deadly legacy his government left in Australia.

The connection between the event and the health effects differ depending on the circumstances. The connection between exposure to asbestos and the contraction of mesothelioma, for example, is relatively simple to establish. Radiation is different; the medical effects of exposure from a neutron shower or fallout from fission products are difficult to definitively link to events of fifty years prior. While the focus has tended to be on cancers and leukaemia, there are a much broader variety of conditions that nuclear veterans suffer, including birth defects and miscarriages, and other disorders such as anaemia and bronchial disease.

> JUSTICE DELAYED AND DENIED

In January 2009, 800 veterans from Britain, New Zealand and Fiji took a case to the UK Department of Defence for compensation.

Mr Justice Foskett of the British High Court of Justice found that the Government of the United Kingdom has a case to answer for

the suffering, injury, disability or death in consequence of exposure to ionising radiation. This paved the way for legal action, however, the Court ultimately ruled that British veterans who participated in nuclear weapons tests in Australia and the South Pacific cannot sue Britain's Defence Ministry because they could not prove their illnesses were caused by exposure to radiation.

The hopes of Australian veterans exposed to nuclear testing were dealt a blow by a UK court ruling against compensation on 10 January 2013, again because they could not prove their ailments were directly linked to radiation from the nuclear tests. Aboriginal people exposed to the tests have been told their legal fight is over for the same reason.

Determined to continue the struggle, 290 nuclear veterans and their families have put forward a claim to the Australian Human Rights Commission (HRC) for long overdue recognition and compensation. Represented by Joshua Dale of Stacks Goudkamp, their submission to the HRC details the numerous health difficulties the veterans and their families have faced since the tests, and the vast emotional and economic tolls the effects of nuclear testing have had on their lives.

They claim that Australians were used as guinea pigs in breach of three articles of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights that Australia signed at the United Nations in 1948. These are: the right to life, liberty and security of person; the right not to be subjected to torture or to cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment; and the right to a standard of living adequate for the health and well-being of himself and of his family, including food, clothing, housing and medical care and necessary social service.

The people exposed to the testing at Maralinga and other sites have been denied adequate compensation on onerous and fastidious technical grounds. Justice has been delayed too long.

> AUSTRALIAN GOVERNMENT EFFORTS

The 2003 Clarke Review of Veterans' Entitlements recommended that the service of Australian Defence Force personnel who participated in the tests be declared 'non-warlike hazardous' and that a more generous "reasonable hypothesis" standard of proof be applied to nuclear veterans seeking compensation and medical assistance under the Veterans Entitlements Act.

In response, the Howard government provided White Card healthcare to support only the treatment of cancer.

During the 2007 election, then opposition Labor spokesman, who became Minister for Veterans' Affairs, Alan Griffin, acknowledged that Australian members of the armed services



were used as guinea pigs in the British nuclear test program and that the strategic ambitions of the UK were given priority over the safety and wellbeing of people that the Australian government should have been protecting.

After he became the Minister for Veterans Affairs, Griffin announced on 9 September 2008 that the Clarke review recommendations that had been rejected by Prime Minister Howard would be reviewed.

In May 2010, the Rudd government allocated \$24 million to provide some health care and access to disability pensions and war widows and widowers pensions for those who suffered as a result of British nuclear tests.

Under 2010 legislation, if veterans become eligible for a disability pension of a rate equal to or greater than 100 per cent of the general rate, they will receive a gold card. Widowers of nuclear test veterans and participants who become eligible for a war widow or widowers pension will receive a Gold Card.

The Greens believe that nuclear veterans have been through enough and they should automatically receive this care.

In the words of Mr Ken Whitby, a nuclear veteran from Western Australia, "More than half a century ago, I was a young man eager to serve his country. As a result I have suffered a lifetime of medical issues that have impacted my enjoyment of life. All I now ask for is fair and just compensation." Mr Whitby's case was taken to the Administrative Appeals Tribunal which found in June 2012 that the Military, Rehabilitation and Compensation Commission is liable to pay compensation and reasonable legal costs, but still his payment has not been finalised.

Mr Albert Martin who served at Maralinga and at Emu Fields has leukaemia and it is recognised as being service related. Mr Martin was sent home sick from Maralinga after 5 months and has since then suffered from leukemia. He is now caring for his wife of 51 years who is suffering from bone and liver cancer, which he believes was caused from the daily washing of his Maralinga work clothes. Yet he does not have the Gold Card, and has been asking for one since 2002. He is now on a 60 per cent disability pension at 72 years of age. If his leukaemia is service related he cannot understand why he does not have the Gold Card.

Mr Geoffrey Gates is one of the 290 veterans that have taken their case to the Human Rights Commission. He has shared his testimony about the consequences his 12 month service at Maralinga; a brain tumor. Mr Gates stresses that he and his fellow nuclear veterans are not seeking millions of dollars of compensation, but rather simply believe that they deserve proper recognition of what they have suffered because of Maralinga, as well as the entitlement to the same benefits that other veterans are awarded.

Mr Gates states that, "to not be recognised by the Government as having participated in non-warlike hazardous activities is an insult. To me, to my family, and to all of the veterans and civilians whose lives have changed forever because we simply weren't told the truth."

Mr Gates sums up the feelings of many veterans when he says that, "government after government makes promise after promise to take care of us, but nothing ever seems to happen...and we're running out of time".

> ABORIGINAL PEOPLE

While this initiative is concerned with the treatment of Australian veterans, the fact is they were not the only guinea pigs.

The Maralinga Tjaruja, a southern Pitjantjatjara groups were exposed to the nuclear tests and their lives, their eyes, their water, their lands were not considered worth protecting.

A total of 29 Aboriginal Australians have received compensation for the injury, blindness and sickness caused by the black rain that fell on Maralinga, but many others were told by British Courts in January 2013 that their legal fight is because they cannot prove the precise cause of a cancer or a chronic illness

The Greens have consistently called for the suffering and illnesses of Aboriginal people exposed to the same toxic tests to be compensated.

ⁱ R T Gun, J Parsons, P Crouch, P Ryan, J E Hiller, 'Mortality and Cancer Incidence in Australian Participants in the British Nuclear Tests in Australia', University of Adelaide, 2006

ⁱⁱ The United Kingdom's Nuclear Testing Programme CTBTO website, <http://www.ctbto.org/nuclear-testing/the-effects-of-nuclear-testing/the-united-kingdoms-nuclear-testing-programme/>

ⁱⁱⁱ [A toxic legacy : British nuclear weapons testing in Australia](http://aic.gov.au/publications/previous%20series/lcj/1-20/wayward/ch16.html) <http://aic.gov.au/publications/previous%20series/lcj/1-20/wayward/ch16.html>



GUN LAWS TO PROTECT ALL AUSTRALIANS PAVING THE WAY FOR A SAFER AUSTRALIA

The Greens' plan for banning semi-automatic handguns

The Greens are working to make sure Australian streets and neighbourhoods are safer for all. We know that banning semi-automatic handguns is an important step in reducing firearm-related deaths and violent crime – for the benefit of Australians everywhere.

There are approximately 10,000 handguns in the illicit firearm market within Australia.ⁱ Data also tells us that ‘criminals at all levels favour handguns.’ⁱⁱ

Australia must take steps to limit the number of guns available to reduce the number of guns falling into the hands of criminals.

Existing gun control laws have reduced firearm deaths in Australia, but there is more to do. The next step is to ban semi-automatic hand guns.. Such a step will increase public safety in the interest of all Australians.

> MAKING OUR STREETS SAFER

The Greens are taking action to make our streets and neighbourhoods safer. Our plan for tighter gun laws in Australia includes:

- **Banning the importation, ownership, possession and use** of semi-automatic handguns with exemptions for government-owned guns
- **Implementing a 12-month amnesty and buy-back** scheme for newly prohibited handguns and an amnesty for already prohibited firearms.
- **Implementing a national public education campaign** in support of the gun buy-back scheme.

The Parliamentary Budget Office has costed our plan at \$361.5 million over the forward estimates. Using data from the highly successful 1996-1997 gun buyback, we have shaped a plan which will dramatically reduce the number of semi-automatic handguns in Australia.

> WHY HANDGUNS?

Despite an overall decrease in the use of firearms in violent crime over the past decade, handguns have emerged as the firearm of choice for crimes in Australia– particularly among those involved in the drugs market or gangs.ⁱⁱⁱ

The Greens are serious about tackling violent crime, and that means banning the importation, ownership, possession and use of semi-automatic handguns in order to make our streets and neighbourhoods safer.

> TAKING ACTION

The gun buy-back enacted in the aftermath of the Port Arthur massacre in April 1996 proved incredibly effective, resulting in more than 700,000 weapons being surrendered.^{iv}

Statistics from the Australian Institute of Criminology show that the proportion of homicide victims killed by offenders using firearms in 2009-2010 is 18% lower than in 1995-1996.^v Data shows that amnesties and buy-back schemes have tangible results.

That’s why we will implement a 12-month amnesty and buy-back scheme for handguns prohibited by our tighter gun control laws. We will also enact a 12-month non-compensated amnesty scheme for already prohibited firearms. In conjunction with these measures, our plan also provides for the rollout a national public education campaign.

Our plan to get semi-automatic handguns off the streets will pave the way for a safer Australia.

In addition, we will continue to advocate for stronger regulation of legal firearms including consistent eligibility requirements based on a genuine need, consistent age requirements and strengthened storage requirements across the nation.

ⁱAustralian Crime Commission, *Illicit Firearms* (2012)

<<http://www.crimecommission.gov.au/publications/crime-profile-series/illicit-firearms>>

ⁱⁱSOCA (2006) cited in Bricknell, *S Criminal use of Handguns in Australia*, Australian Institute of Criminology (2008) <http://www.aic.gov.au/documents/4/C/C/%7b4CCFAEC4-8C95-4326-B00E-F98187713F19%7dtandi361_001.pdf> (1)

ⁱⁱⁱBricknell, *S Criminal use of Handguns in Australia*, Australian Institute of Criminology (2008) <<http://www.aic.gov.au/publications/current%20series/tandi/361-380/tandi361/view%20paper.html>> (1)

^{iv}Library of Congress, *Firearms-Control Legislation and Policy: Australia* (2013) <<http://www.loc.gov/law/help/firearms-control/australia.php>>

^vAustralian Institute of Criminology, *Australian Crime: Facts and Figures* (2011).

<http://www.aic.gov.au/publications/current%20series/facts/1-20/2011/2_profiles.html> (19)



LEAVING NO ONE BEHIND

SOLVING AUSTRALIA'S HOMELESSNESS

The Greens' plan to eliminate homelessness by 2020

For a wealthy nation like ours, there are thousands of people falling through the cracks. Every day hundreds of requests for basic shelter and vital support are left unmet. It is time to fix the housing crisis, starting with those most urgently in need.

On any given night more than 105,000 Australians are homeless. That's 1 in every 200 people.

According to the last census 6813 of these people were sleeping on the streets. Many thousands more were forced to couch surf, live in severely overcrowded housing, or in places like caravan parks and boarding houses that lack personal space and security.

More than a quarter of our homeless population are children under the age of 18. On census night almost 18,000 children under 12 were counted as homeless, 402 were sleeping rough.

The old parties know that these problems exist, but they lack the courage to provide enough funding for housing and services for Australians experiencing homelessness.

> A CUT THROUGH SOLUTION

Homelessness is a complex issue but the solution is simple: match the funding for housing and support services to the scale of need. We need a cut-through solution.

That's why we're announcing our plan to care for people in housing crisis by doubling funding for homelessness services and providing a home for all Australians currently sleeping rough by 2020.

The Homelessness Action Plan has three priorities:

- **To provide an emergency package to build 7000 new homes by 2020** – enough to house every person currently sleeping without adequate shelter.
- **To include a 50% target of fast build, modular or 'prefabricated' housing** which will be significantly faster and more affordable to build; and
- **To double the current funding for specialist homelessness services in Australia.**

The Australian Greens' policy goes straight to the heart of the problem: there are simply not enough services or shelter for those most in need. Our Homelessness Action Plan will fix the lack of accommodation and services by providing the care and support, and bricks and mortar to bring people in from the margins.

Australia's current response to homelessness relies heavily on the provision of emergency services and is a very expensive way of responding to a seemingly intractable problem. But what would happen if we shifted our energy from barely managing the problem to actually trying to end homelessness? The Greens know this can be done, and also that it is the right thing to do.

The Labor party have committed to halving homelessness by 2020 but are not on track to reach this target. The Coalition won't even commit to this target. The Greens commit to doing our best to end homelessness altogether.

> WHAT WOULD IT COST?

Some will say that we cannot afford this, but really, can we afford not to? The current approach costs our community greatly. And research shows a better approach will save money over the long term. There is a better way.

The independent Parliamentary Budget Office has confirmed:

- Providing a new home for every rough sleeper by 2020 would cost approximately **\$233.2 million** per annum
- Doubling federal funding for Specialist Homelessness Services provided under the National Affordable Housing Agreement would cost **\$507 million** per annum
- Signing a new National Partnership on Homelessness and doubling it to 2020 would cost **\$275 million** per annum and would be matched by the states, (based on the original partnership signed in 2009).



> A NEW HOME FOR EVERY AUSTRALIAN SLEEPING ROUGH

Homelessness agencies provided more than 7,000,000 nights of accommodation in 2011-12 - but it wasn't enough¹. In 61% of cases of requests for accommodation, none was available at the time².

The Australian Greens Homelessness Action Plan will go straight to the heart of this problem and build 7000 new homes for those experiencing chronic homelessness, by 2020.

Our priority is to provide secure, long term housing *and* the intensive support and services needed to help people maintain their tenancy and address the complex issues that led to homelessness.

This policy would therefore directly fund an increase in the supply of social housing (public and community housing) for people in high need, including housing that varies across locations, cultures, and regions, and using a the 'Housing Plus' approach, where housing *and* services are provided together. This includes 'Pathways to Housing', Foyers, and Common Ground models.

Most importantly, it's not just the bricks and mortar that solve the problem, but investing in long term care and services to help people once they're in housing to stay in housing.

The Anglicare *State of the Family Report* notes that secure housing tenure is a key component of establishing roots in and connection to a community. Belonging somewhere is the beginning of living an included life³.

Providing a home for every one of Australia's people sleeping rough by 2020 is the most urgent place to start.

> HALVING THE TIME AND COST OF HOUSING

Our initiative to build 7000 homes for those sleeping rough by 2020 includes a 50% prefabricated or modular housing target.

The Greens believe the modular housing industry offers a significant and exciting opportunity to deliver new and affordable housing supply we have available right now. It is a far more environmentally sustainable product, can be built to any

design, and is extremely well suited to infill and regeneration developments in urban centres. The housing would be in well located areas with good access to opportunities to jobs, education, health care, services and transport.

As well as caring for people experiencing homelessness, our policy will provide construction jobs at a time the economy risks slowing down at the end of the mining boom. Manufacturing jobs will also be boosted with the stimulus of building prefabricated modular homes that can be made here in Australia.

It's time to harness that opportunity.

Modular housing can be delivered in significantly less time and at up to half the cost of conventional 'brick and tile' homes. Modular housing is also far more affordable to run: its high level of insulation means the house uses 10% of the energy of a five star home, and is far easier to heat in winter and cool in summer.

In suburban Perth, for example, a one bedroom house was recently delivered in just 14 weeks from the time of order to manufacture and delivery to site. At a cost of \$75,000 the house can be installed in 10 hours by four people⁴. A two bedroom house costs about \$100,000.

> FUNDING TO DOUBLE CURRENT SERVICES

Across Australia there are almost 1,500 agencies that provide specialist services to people experiencing homelessness or who are at risk of becoming homeless. More than 230,000 Australians used these services in 2011-12. But that same year there were 136,818 instances where a request for service went unmet. This equates to an average of 374 unassisted requests every day⁵.

In the large majority of cases these unassisted requests were for accommodation – most for emergency or short term accommodation. But in 61% of requests for accommodation there was none available at the time of the request.⁶

Accommodation is not the only service people are being turned away from.

People can become homeless – or be at risk of homelessness - for many reasons, ranging from sudden financial our housing difficulties, to complex issues involving family breakdowns,

¹ AIHW (2012) *Specialist Homeless Services 2011-12*, released December 2012 at <http://www.aihw.gov.au/publication-detail/?id=60129542549>

² AIHW (2012) p89 and Figure 6.6

³ Anglicare Australia's State of the Family Report October 2010.

⁴ This figure has been revised since the release of June 21st. Cockburn Herald 'Pre-fabulous' Cockburn Herald September 15,2012

⁵ AIHW (2012) p85

⁶ AIHW (2012) *Specialist Homeless Services 2011-12* p89 and Figure 6.6



health, and other causes of disadvantage. People receiving support from specialist homelessness services on average identify eight reasons why they require assistance.

Domestic violence is still the main cause for homelessness. 77, 178 of all people receiving assistance from homelessness agencies were escaping some form of domestic violence or family violence, but emergency accommodation was only provided in 81% of cases.

There is also a high level of unmet need for services such as drug and alcohol counseling, intellectual disability services, family planning and pregnancy assistance, child specialist counseling, mental health services, psychiatric services, assistance to maintain tenancies, training and employment assistance, financial advice, and counseling. But research shows that last year **in up to one in five cases, the need for these services went unmet**⁷.

Groups with special interests are overrepresented in the homelessness population, for which more substantial and longer term services are needed. These include children and young people, (43% of all homelessness clients, most often as a result of domestic and family violence); Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples (22% of the homeless population), families (33% of all clients, the majority being single parent families), people with mental health issues (19%) and clients leaving health care (2%) and correctional facilities (2%).

Broadening the base of funding so money could go directly to health, mental health and substance use programs for example is vital, particularly to help people exiting services.

But agencies providing services to these groups are struggling with extremely high case loads and are not able to provide the long term and intensive support needed.

It is unacceptable that Australia has such high turnaway rates. It's also unfair that that people providing these services of care and support are doing so with constant doubt hanging over their heads on how much longer they'll be funded for.

That's why we're announcing our policy to double funding for Homelessness Services to 2020.

More funding for services will enable increased support over longer periods to assist people across a range of complex issues. It would also enable services to reinstate successful projects such as the *Homelessness Innovation Projects Fund*, which focuses on entrenched employment and issues of disadvantage.

⁷ AIHW (2012) *Specialist Homeless Services 2011-12* page 91 Figure 6.8: Services with a high unmet need at the end of support (excluding accommodation) 2011-12. Figure shows between 15-25% of clients requiring these services are going without.

Doubling the funding to Australia's specialist homeless services will provide a more caring Australia, and a more secure job to those providing these important services.

> WHAT IS THE CURRENT FUNDING FRAMEWORK?

Under the National Affordable Housing Agreement (the NAHA) the federal government provides funding worth \$495 million, to providing support and accommodation to 230,500 people (1:97 Australians) including 88,000 children⁸. But it has failed to keep up with the growth in demand over recent years, and is not matched to any key indicators or benchmarks from the states.

Our policy to double funding would be conditional on states committing to a net increase in social housing, contributing 'in kind' (such as government owed land for affordable housing), supportive planning processes, a Royalties for Regions contribution from mining states, and providing transparent annual reports on their additional spending on homelessness and affordable housing programs.

The National Partnership on Homelessness (NPAH) signed in 2009 and expiring in June 2013 provided \$550 million over four years, to support a further 180 programs aimed at prevention and early intervention, breaking the cycle of homelessness, and providing 'street to home' initiatives. The federal government has at the last hour announced \$159 million 'transition' funding to scrape through to next year while a new partnership is negotiated with the states. Meanwhile the organisations that rely on this funding and the people that rely on those organisations have no future certainty.

The Auditor General's May 2013 report found the National Partnership was failing to reduce homelessness under the targets agreed to in the White Paper: Between 2006-2011 homelessness increased by 17% overall. The number of Indigenous homeless people rose by 3%.

The Greens believe it's not enough to simply increase funding for existing services. We need to rethink the overall system to get a better design and better outcomes, and we also need to target housing and services effectively. The Greens recognise much of the research is pointing to the fact that most clients need limited upfront support for short periods to get back on their feet, but many more require intensive support for short and long periods of time, and sometimes permanently.

⁸ Australian Institute of Health and Welfare (AIHW) 2011. Government-funded specialist homelessness services: SAAP National Data Collection annual report 2010-11: <http://www.aihw.gov.au/WorkArea/DownloadAsset.aspx?id=10737420818>



The problem is our systems are still designed around crisis rather than ongoing support that eases off as the situation improves. This is why the Greens will tie this package to **system redesign** to ensure effectiveness and efficiency.

The Greens recognise the sector and service providers have the expertise, along with people who have experienced homelessness, to guide where the funding should go and how programs need to evolve over time to be most effective. Ongoing, regular roundtables and formal vehicles such as the Prime Minister's Council on Homelessness are strongly supported for this purpose.

> THE ROAD HOME?

In 2008 the Australian government announced an unprecedented commitment to tackle homelessness. It released a policy White Paper called 'The Road Home' which included the ambitious goals to halve homelessness by 2020 and provide services to all rough sleepers seeking them. The Road Home emphasised the need for early intervention for those at risk of homelessness as the most effective way to reduce homeless.

For those already experiencing homelessness it emphasised the need to assist people to move quickly to stable housing with continued support so that homelessness does not recur.

Four years on we have made little progress. The numbers of rough sleepers has fallen slightly – showing that progress can be made. But the overall number of homelessness has actually increased by 17% since the last census.

There remains a huge unmet need for accommodation. Last year emergency or short term accommodation was only provided to 68% of the people seeking it, medium term accommodation was provided to 40% and long term accommodation was only provided to 8%.⁹

Housing outcomes are also very poor for rough sleepers seeking assistance. More than 25,400 people were living without shelter when they sought support in 2011-12. 19% were assisted into supported accommodation and 29% moved into a house or flat, but more than half (52%) remained homeless at the end of the support period.¹⁰

Finally, of those who are accommodated, many find themselves without a pathway to stable, secure, long term accommodation and a place to call their own.

The government has failed to make life better for people who are homeless.

> THIS IS JUST ONE ESSENTIAL PART OF OUR NATIONAL HOUSING PLAN

The Greens recognise Australia is in the midst of a housing crisis across the entire spectrum. The Homelessness Action Plan is just one part of the Greens plan to fix housing affordability in a decade.

⁹ AIHW (2012) *Specialist Homeless Services 2011-12* p34 and figure 3.5 p35

¹⁰ AIHW (2012) *Specialist Homeless Services 2011-12* p38



COMMUNITY MEDIA INDEPENDENT & DIVERSE VOICES

The Greens' plan to protect community media and media diversity

Australia's community broadcasters are a vital part of our democracy and media landscape. While control of the mainstream media is concentrated in the hands of a shrinking number of corporations, the alternative voices provided by community broadcasters are more important than ever.

The Greens are proud supporters of community radio and TV, upon which millions of Australian rely. Community TV reaches 3.7 million and community radio reaches over 10 million Australians each month.

The Greens care about the diversity of media voices in our democracy and ensuring that community media has a digital future and broadcasting capacity.

> MEDIA DIVERSITY

The number of people controlling the commercial media in Australia is shrinking at an alarming rate. At the same time, the role of public and community broadcasters in presenting a diverse range of viewpoints from across the country - particularly remote and regional Australia - is more crucial than ever before.

It is in the public interest, and it is in the interest of a flourishing and free press that further diversity of media voices in Australia is encouraged and concentration of media ownership is prevented. Australia's is the most concentrated in the western world.

> CARING FOR COMMUNITY MEDIA

The Australian Greens will provide a solid foundation for community media to flourish. **We will invest an additional \$27 million per year from 1 July 2014 in community media:**

- \$1.4 m each year to continue and further extend community radios transition across to the digital stream;
- \$0.6 m each year for the Australian Music Radio Airplay Project to enable it to distribute new Australian music to 1500 broadcasters and 300 community radio stations;
- Establish a \$7m per year Content Creation Fund to support further innovative programming;

- \$2m per year for a community broadcasting training fund to skill up the next generations of broadcasters;
- \$4m per year Digital Hub Infrastructure Fund to enable the community broadcasting sector to leverage the NBN and safeguard and support free-to-air digital services in a multi-platform environment;
- \$12 m per year additional operational funds to help the Community Broadcasting Foundation to support critical areas for development in rural and regional areas.

> INDEPENDENT AND DIVERSE VOICES

The community broadcasting sector has developed over 40 years to represent a significant contribution to media diversity.

These services provide a highly diverse range of voices from many different parts of Australia, including Aboriginal language content, alternative news and current affairs, services for youth, educational institutions, the print handicapped, religious, ethnic, religious, and arts communities.

The community media sector overall engages 23,000 volunteers, with more than 70 per cent of radio broadcasting stations located in regional and rural areas.

The government provides just 8.5% of the income for average community radio stations and no ongoing support for community TV.

While community engagement is enhanced through people providing financial support for their local TV and radio stations, the sector is forced to divert resources to constant fundraising efforts. While we are handing back hundreds of millions of dollars in licence fees to the commercial broadcasters, acknowledging the pressure that they face, the government ought to do more to support the contribution of community media.



> THE GREENS PLAN

The 2012 independent inquiry into Australia's media and regulation by former Federal Court judge Ray Finkelstein observed that local news gathering by commercial broadcasters had diminished in regional areas and recommended that Government funding "assist community radio stations in local regional communities to establish and maintain a news website dedicated primarily to the reporting of local news as part of their coverage of local affairs."¹

The Greens plan implements this recommendation by investing an additional \$27 million into these vital programs:

Digital Radio – an additional \$1.4 m

37 community digital radio stations are on-air in Australia's major cities. The Greens support continued levels of funding now in place to ensure community access to free-to-air digital is affordable. An additional 1.4m per year will support the sector's involvement in trials and as digital radio services grow and extend, including outside the metropolitan areas and into the regions. The Greens support a thorough planning process and community sector inclusion as digital services extend.

Australian Music Radio Airplay Project – an additional \$0.6 m

AMRAP distributes and promotes Australia's local music industry to 1500 broadcasters and 300 community radio stations. It helps get Australian music, including live recordings, onto the airwaves by forging agreements with over 3,000 Australian musicians, including unsigned artists, and over 100 record labels. AMRAP has experienced ongoing funding uncertainty which risks listeners missing out on 90,000 music files and 70,000 CDs sent to stations to keep Australian music on the air.

Content Creation Fund – an additional \$7m per year

The Convergence Review recognised that digital TV and radio offered new opportunities for transmitting content but also recognised the risk for a reduction in Australian content given the high expense of creating drama, documentaries and children's television. This Fund will invest in innovative Australian content and its distribution, increasing the community sectors capacity to generate high quality radio and TV programming for the new digital platforms.

Community Broadcasters Training Fund – an additional \$2m

Many of Australia's professional journalists and broadcasting technicians started out in community broadcasting as one of the 22,000 volunteers that keep the sector afloat. This training fund will invest in transferable skills in ICT, broadcast technology, spoken and written communication, as well as leadership and

governance training to support stable and well-managed stations. There is high demand for training, which can open the digital economy to younger people and provide the first chance to learn computer, radio and TV skills for older people. The Fund will also help to increase the training that can be provided online as well as in languages other than English.

Digital Hub Infrastructure Fund – an additional \$4m per year

Digital Hubs are being established to help local communities, businesses and councils take up the opportunities and to experience the services and technology provided by the National Broadband Network. This fund will support new and existing digital hubs and ways to integrate and safeguard a digital multi-platform future for free-to-air community services as high speed broadband takes an increasing role in the production and distribution of Australian content for local broadcasting.

Community Broadcasting Foundation - \$12 m per year

The CBF is independent, non-profit and works closely with broadcasters across Australia, making it is well placed to identify critical needs in the sector, including those not adequately supported by programs such as the Indigenous Broadcasting Program, rural and regional broadcasting and funding for Community TV.

Community TV stations in Melbourne, Sydney, Adelaide, Perth and Brisbane are watched by 3.7 million Australians per month. Not only does CTV produce diverse local news, arts, youth and music, comedy and drama content, these stations are linked to educational institutions to provide training not available through commercial broadcasters for media and students in lighting, sound, production and other technical areas. Funding would establish community television content production equipment and transmission funds. The Greens would further support community television by guaranteeing spectrum access on the sixth channel and amending licenses to allow broadcast into regional and rural areas.

Aboriginal broadcasting shares a wealth of culture and talent while also providing job opportunities, community development pride in community, positive role models and learning opportunities for children, all of which help to close the gap. Over 50% of all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, and up to 73% in the NT, polled by McNair Ingenuity Research had listened to an Indigenous radio station in the last month. The government has yet to respond to the 2010 Stevens review into Indigenous Broadcasting which recommended significant additional investment.

Rural and regional community radio hosts 70% of Australia's community broadcasters. The 2011 Station Census found that 34% of community stations provide the only local content in their area. These services also help support migrants who are increasingly encouraged to rural and regional areas with connection to the community and information about living in Australia.

¹ Finkelstein, The Hon R (2012), *Report of the Independent Inquiry into the Media and Media Regulation*, Commonwealth of Australia, Canberra p 11, 318, 331.



THE RIGHT WAY FORWARD ON REFUGEES

HUMANE, EFFECTIVE, LEGAL

The Greens' plan for a genuine regional response and safer pathways

There is another way. A different approach to refugees can save lives by giving people safer options than leaky boats, and by treating all refugees with humanity and fairness in Australia. Instead of cruelty and punishment, offering a safer alternative to boats is the only way to help people.

The current duelling approach of inflicting ever more cruelty on refugees, including dumping them on our poorest neighbours, will cost many lives and billions of dollars, and is wrong.

The right way forward needs a commitment to a genuine regional approach that cares for refugees with the kind of political leadership shown after the Vietnam War. The Greens are the only party basing their refugee response on compassion, legality and the only model for saving refugee lives at sea that has ever worked before.

The Australian Greens' plan for giving refugees a safe pathway to a better life:

- **Increase Australia's humanitarian intake to 30,000. Within that, resettle an emergency intake of 10,000 UNHCR assessed refugees to Australia from our region to reduce the backlog and give refugees a 'regular' path to a safe life, including resettling at least 3,800 directly from our immediate region, including from Indonesia, as recommended by the Houston Panel.**
- **Additional \$70 million per year in emergency funding for safe assessment centres in Indonesia to provide shelter and welfare services to refugees while they wait for assessment and resettlement, and to boost the capacity of the UNHCR in Indonesia and Malaysia to speed up assessment and resettlement.**
- **Shut down all offshore detention in Nauru and PNG, with Australia to assess the claims of people who arrive by boat.**

We will release further details on the other elements of our comprehensive approach to asylum seekers including:

- Working quickly to open up safer resettlement pathways from countries along the way, like Malaysia and Pakistan.

- Establishing an Australian Ambassador for Refugee Protection to help broker a genuine regional cooperation response, like Malcolm Fraser set up after the Vietnam War.
- Allowing all asylum seekers in the Australian community the right to work to support themselves.
- Lift the ban on people from refugee producing countries coming by air to seek asylum.
- No children in detention in Australia or offshore.
- Open up 4000 more family reunion places in Australia's humanitarian program to stop women and children boarding boats.

> A BASIC HUMANITARIAN RESPONSE

We are facing an international humanitarian problem; not a war, or a national emergency, or a border security crisis. The people who are drowning at sea are fleeing persecution. The challenge for Australia is to have the courage to do the right thing by offering refugees hope and practical steps to a safer and better pathway, so they do not risk their lives for the mere chance of surviving a boat journey to Australia.

Deterrence and cruelty have never been an effective or sustainable way of responding to refugees who come by boat. Australia will never be able to deter asylum seekers who are fleeing threats as dangerous and brutal as the Taliban. **People will keep coming in an 'irregular' manner while there are no 'regular' pathways available to them.**

Australia is experiencing a small part of a global problem. It is reprehensible for the Government and Opposition to severely punish individual people for the failure of Australia, and our region, to even try to offer the safer pathways that would reduce boat departures.



We know that Nauru and Manus Island are no place for traumatised refugees, especially children. The UNHCR has consistently reported that conditions in the detention camps are harsh, cramped, hot, unhygienic, tantamount to arbitrary detention, inconsistent with international human rights standards and leading to deteriorating mental health.ⁱ We know that neither PNG nor Nauru has the capacity to assess protection claims or give refugee families the safe future they are entitled to seek.

Led by the major parties in their race to the bottom, Australia has lost its way. The Greens want to turn this around. It is crucial that our refugee response be geared towards a genuine regional arrangement, founded on compassion, practicality, cost-effectiveness and our international legal obligations under the Refugee Convention.

> 30,000 'REGULAR' PATHWAYS WILL REDUCE UNSAFE BOAT JOURNEYS

As noted in the Houston Panel Report, Australia's Humanitarian Program is a significant contribution to meeting our international obligations by offering protection to asylum seekers who are found to be refugees under the Refugees Convention.ⁱⁱ

The Greens will increase Australia's humanitarian intake by an additional 10,000 to 30,000 per year as a key element of our plan to save lives and provide safer pathways for refugees.

The Houston Panel Report strongly advocated an increase in Australia's humanitarian intake up to 27,000 arguing:

"It would give greater hope and confidence to asylum seekers in the region that regular migration pathways and international protection arrangements provide a practical, realistic and better alternative to dangerous boat voyages to Australia. It would enable Australia to assist in meeting growing humanitarian needs in our region in a fair and timely way. It would support Australian strategies to encourage other international resettlement countries to assist in more expansive ways. A substantially increased and more regionally focused Humanitarian Program would also contribute importantly to the strengthening of regional cooperation on asylum issues."ⁱⁱⁱ

The Houston Panel also recommended Australia take 3,800 refugees out of Indonesia, giving them a safer pathway to protection. The Government has failed to act on this recommendation leaving thousands of refugees feeling more and more desperate to try anything to get to Australia. Australia only committed to taking 600 refugees from Indonesia this year even though there are approximately 1,938 assessed refugees and 7,288 UNHCR registered asylum seekers waiting in Indonesia.^{iv}

The Australian Greens have heard anecdotally from officials and refugees themselves that boat departures reduce when there is a prospect of increased direct settlement.

We welcomed the Government's commitment to increase the humanitarian program by 6,250 last year as an important first step. However, instead of spending billions of dollars on inhumane detention centres in Nauru and PNG, Australia could give hope to asylum seekers in Indonesia and give them a reason not to embark on dangerous, risky boat journeys by further increasing our humanitarian program.

The independent Parliamentary Budget Office has costed an increase to the humanitarian program to 30,000 at \$2.5 billion over the forward estimates.

In contrast the budget demonstrates the Government intends to spend \$7.2 billion on Offshore Asylum Seeker Management.

Australia has a long and proud history of settling refugees, after World War II, in the aftermath of the Vietnam War and in the last few decades from places around the world. We have the capacity, the compassion and the understanding of the social, economic and cultural contributions refugees make to Australia and should be welcoming people fleeing persecution.

> SAFETY IN OUR REGION WILL HELP REDUCE UNSAFE BOAT JOURNEYS

Australia must support better and safer refugee assessments in Indonesia to clear the backlog and stop people being forced by dire circumstances onto dangerous boats.

Consistent with the Houston Panel's recommendation, the Greens will boost funding to asylum seeker services in Indonesia by another \$70 million per annum to assist with international engagement and capacity-building activities.

We must inject those funds into places where refugee adults and children are currently waiting in unliveable and poverty stricken conditions – not after, but before anyone gets on a boat in desperation. Providing safety in the form of assessment centres, run by the UNHCR, international welfare organisations and local services, would give refugees hope and a reason to stay on shore.

The Houston Panel noted the importance of boosting the capacity of transit and source countries to manage and care for asylum seekers and recommended that the current funding of \$70 million be doubled, but in early 2013 only \$5 million had been promised to the UNHCR by the government.^v

As the wealthiest nation in our region with the greatest capacity to help, Australia needs to lead efforts to improve the circumstances of refugees in our region. These funds would go towards maintaining the physical safety of refugees (who do not



have legal status in Indonesia), giving them access to livelihoods, children's education, healthcare and basic services.

We are drawing on the advice of key experts that this critical funding should also go towards improving refugee status determination processes in the region and ensuring that local non-government organisations and the UNHCR are better resourced to assist refugees in our region.^{vi}

> RACE TO THE BOTTOM MUST STOP

Neither of the major parties is offering a compassionate, genuine or affordable 'solution' to save lives at sea. Australia cannot possibly punish people enough to stop them seeking protection in whatever way they can, but we can cause them far more damage and despair in the process of trying.

Labor's announcement of dumping all refugees in PNG, with Australia covering all the costs for the foreseeable future, will drain billions and put refugees into much worse danger. PNG may be a signatory to the Refugee Convention but it does not have the commitment or capacity to protect the vulnerable refugees Australia plans to hand over. PNG already hosts around 9000 West Papuan refugees with great difficulty. Further refugees will be exposed to risks including malaria, lack of safety for women, the illegality of homosexuality, extreme poverty and well-documented violence in PNG, which is Australia's second highest aid recipient.

The Government has so far refused to release any costing of the proposal, but we know that the Government's cruel and ineffective offshore detention program was already going to cost \$7.5 billion over the forward estimates before the PNG announcement on 19 July.

Not to be outdone by Labor, the Coalition has adopted Labor's PNG indefinite dumping policy and also promised to open up another detention camp for refugees in a well-known slum in Nauru.

Despite the great expense, the mental anguish and the disturbances that have already happened in Nauru's detention camps, the Coalition now proposes to establish a humanitarian time-bomb in the form of a mammoth 5000 person detention camp.

Australia's gulags on Nauru and Manus Island are already a disaster and will be worse under the Coalition's planned expansion. The damage that the Government and the Opposition are doing to Australia's international reputation, and the suffering their policies are causing to vulnerable people who have nowhere else to turn, cannot be easily reversed. While Labor and Tony Abbott's Coalition continue their poll-driven race to the bottom on refugees, it is only the Greens who are listening to the experts and treating this as the complex humanitarian issue it has always been.

> CHILDREN DESERVE PROTECTION

No child should ever be in detention, in Australia or in any other country. Children can be as much the victims of persecution as their parents and should not be punished for having to flee their homeland in fear of their life. Experts have repeatedly advised that the conditions in offshore detention are not appropriate for children.

Given that the Government has already had to bring back children from Manus after the first failed attempt to house them there, there is no credibility or humanity in any policy proposal that forces children into further danger overseas and fails to live up to Australia's obligations under the Convention on the Rights of the Child.

> CARING FOR ASYLUM SEEKERS

The Australian Greens are offering a suite of policy responses that are backed by the refugee and legal experts, and which work together to provide a legal and humane response to refugee movements in Australia and within our region.

Our compassionate and durable refugee policy will also:

- Restore Australia's migration zone to match our land and sea territory.
- Legislate for fair legal review and community detention options for the adults and children in indefinite detention in Australia due to adverse ASIO assessments.
- Asylum seekers to be housed in the community (including in homestays) on bridging visas as soon as health, security and identity checks have been completed in a maximum of 30 days, and any further detention to be subject to judicial review.
- Replace the Minister with an Independent Guardian for Unaccompanied Children.
- Close the expensive and prison-like remote detention centres on the Australian mainland, along with the offshore centres on Nauru and PNG.

ⁱ Report of the UNHCR Monitoring Visit to Manus Island, Papua New Guinea 11-13 June 2013, released 12 July 2013
<http://www.unhcr.org/51dfd23d6.html>

ⁱⁱ Report on the Expert Panel of Asylum Seekers, August 2012, p. 38.
http://expertpanelonasylumseekers.dpmc.gov.au/sites/default/files/report/expert_panel_on_asylum_seekers_full_report.pdf

ⁱⁱⁱ Ibid, p. 39.

^{iv} As at end of February 2013; UNHCR figures provided 27 March 2013.

^v Answers given by Dr Southern, Senate Additional Estimates, Legal and Constitutional Affairs Committee, 11 February 2013.

^{vi} Media Release, 27 June 2013, Refugee Council of Australia *Operation Sovereign Borders an immature response to serious humanitarian challenges*.



TOO PRECIOUS TO LOSE CARING FOR REMOTE AUSTRALIA

The Greens' plan to double the number of Indigenous rangers in a decade

Indigenous Ranger programs help care for Australia's natural resources, while also improving the economic and social outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples. The Greens' plan will double the number of indigenous rangers in Australia within a decade.

693 Indigenous Rangers currently care for 1.5 million square kilometres of land and sea country. But it's not enough. Much of Australia's fragile remote area land is effectively unmanaged or under-managed.

> DOUBLE THE NUMBER OF RANGERS WITHIN A DECADE

In May 2013 Australia had 693 Indigenous Rangers - 44 in NSW, 144 in Queensland, 282 in the NT, 121 in WA, 70 in SA, 17 in Victoria and 14 in Tasmania. The Government promised 730 Indigenous Ranger numbers by 2015. This is good, but no match for the scale of work needed to care for our fragile remote areas. The Greens will provide an additional \$100 million over 4 years from 1 July 2013 to:

- **Double the number of Indigenous Rangers within a decade.** Our investment will be in addition to the current Government commitment.
- **Provide administrative and operational support for the increase in Rangers.** The increase in Indigenous Ranger numbers will be accompanied by administrative and operational support to ensure the new Indigenous Rangers are able to do the work they've been hired to do.
- **Lengthen Indigenous Ranger contracts to 10 years, provided outcomes continue to be met.**
- **Support more women Indigenous Rangers** with programs that specifically develop the skills and confidence of women to participate in ranger programs.

> HOW INDIGENOUS RANGERS CARE FOR OUR ENVIRONMENT

Indigenous Rangers do conservation work, achieving results through a combination of western science and Indigenous traditional knowledge. They work on matters defined under the *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999* as "matters of national environmental significance", for example threatened species, world and national heritage places, and internationally important wetlands.

There are Indigenous Rangers fighting weeds and invasive grasses, dealing with threats to our wildlife like feral animals and marine debris, managing threatened species like the Flatback Turtle, Greater Bilby, Black-footed Rock-wallaby, and Gouldian Finch, doing fire management and reducing carbon emissions from wildfires, and managing cultural sites.

> HOW THE INDIGENOUS RANGER PROGRAM CARES FOR PEOPLE

Because Indigenous Rangers work in remote areas, people from remote communities where there is high unemployment and poverty are now getting jobs and training. Many Indigenous Rangers are studying conservation and land management at Certificate level.

In addition, the work involved in being an Indigenous Ranger is increasing exercise levels, reducing obesity, diabetes, renal disease, cardio-vascular disease and stress, and increasing levels of confidence, self-esteem and hope. The socio-economic impacts that flow on from conservation and cultural activities



benefit Indigenous Rangers, their families and communities, as well as reducing government expenditure on welfare payments.

> A LONG TERM INVESTMENT

Fixing threats like weeds and feral animals needs consistent effort by trained people over a long period.

A 10 year contract period will enable long term planning for conservation outcomes.

In turn, growth in new Ranger programs will be able to be properly managed. More partnership projects will be able to be developed. For example, Indigenous Rangers who worked on the West Arnhem Land Fire Abatement Project made a deal with gas company, Conoco Philips which paid the Traditional Owners money to reduce their carbon emissions each year by fire management.

> MORE WOMEN RANGERS

Currently, most Indigenous Rangers are men. Encourage participation from women will support their employment.

Cultural reasons can prevent men from entering women's sacred areas and vice versa. Great participation by women can also ensure that conservation work is undertaken at women's sacred sites where men are not permitted to enter.

Central Australia recently got its first Women's Indigenous Rangers group. The Tjuwanpa Women Rangers are spraying for weeds and will soon be dealing with feral cats on the land for which they are responsible and hold traditional knowledge.

The Australian Greens would support programs that specifically develop the skills and confidence of women to participate in ranger programs.

2013 Initiative Current
No Longer Current



SAFEGUARDING OUR HEALTH A CLEAN AIR ACT FOR AUSTRALIA

The Greens plan for improving air quality in Australia

It's time we took the air we breathe more seriously. Industries continue to pump dangerous emissions into our atmosphere that have huge health costs. The Greens will deliver a Clean Air Act to cut down on toxic emissions and help keep our most precious resource clean and healthy.

In recent years new evidence has emerged about the risks of air pollution to human health, particularly about the dangers of small particles that can penetrate deep into the lungs. Australia's regulations are lagging behind, putting our health at risk. It's time for the Federal parliament to show some leadership on this issue and deliver the emissions controls Australians deserve.

Year after year of reviews, studies and scoping papers, and the Federal Government still has not moved to protect people from the toxic emissions from a variety of sources - coal dust and coal smoke, off-road petrol engines and many other sources.

Only Federal legislation can deliver the reforms necessary to cut back the cardio-vascular diseases caused by dust from coal mines, burning coal in our power stations and petrol in our gardens. It's time for action on air quality, and we need a Clean Air Act to deliver the smart reforms.

> THE CLEAN AIR ACT

The Greens will deliver a national Clean Air Act to deliver a suite of targeted measures to improve the air quality in Australia.

The Clean Air Act will:

- **Establish national standards and regulations for air quality, starting with better regulation of particulates from coal mines and coal-fired power stations;**
- **Drive the installation of an air quality monitoring network capable of providing real-time data on pollution sources;**
- **Require coal trains that pass through population centres to be covered; and**
- **Phase in regulations of other sources of polluting emissions**

> NATIONAL AIR QUALITY STANDARDS

There is nothing more important than clean air, clean water and uncontaminated soil. Yet there are communities in Australia who do not enjoy the basic right of breathing in clean air. The United States has had a Clean Air Act since 1970 which has driven reductions in pollution and protecting people's health.

The recent Senate Inquiry into impacts of air quality on human health heard from communities around Australia concerned for their health from coal mines, coal port and coal-fired power stations. The Committee heard evidence that "The science is clear that coaldust is a killer if you are exposed to it too much, so the simple thing is to remove that risk as much as possible."ⁱ

Australia has no national standards or consistent means of regulating air quality standards to reduce pollution and protect health. Instead there is a patch-work of different standards and regulatory approaches across the states, including self-regulatory regimes that are clearly failing. The National Plan for Clean Air, currently being developed at COAG, has dragged on for years and shows no sign of coming to a strong consensus on tough standards to protect health or the environment.

The Greens' Clean Air Act will facilitate the development of national standards and regulations for air quality. The Act will prioritise regulation of coal dust in coal affected communities, including requiring coal trains to be covered, and non-road petrol engines.

> REDUCING THE HARMS OF COAL

The Greens' recent Senate inquiry heard evidence about the impacts of coal mines and coal dust on the communities near the mines and in the corridors where coal is transported. The



inquiry recommended several measures to reduce the harms caused by coal dust pollution including:

- A setback from all coal mines to keep homes at a safe distance.
- Health impact assessments for new developments, so the impact on the health of residents is properly taken into account when issuing approvals.
- Covering trains that transport coal through populated areas. Many residents gave evidence of the huge amounts of dust that accumulate in neighbourhoods close to coal trains and the impact this had on their family's health.

These are inexpensive but effective measures to cut down on harmful particles that threaten the health of thousands of people in Australian cities. The Greens support these recommendations and would implement them through the Clean Air Act and other initiatives.

> AIR QUALITY MONITORING NETWORK

International research clearly indicates serious health impacts for communities living near coal mines and coal burning power stations; however the national regulations direct the States and Territories to monitor ambient air quality away from sources of air pollution.ⁱⁱ While this is valuable information, the existing network tells only half the story.

The National Pollutant Inventory requires reporting from pollution sources, but only to release total annual emissions. We need greater transparency and timeliness in the data around pollution emissions to hold polluters accountable and to help drive mitigation efforts.

Submissions to the 2013 Senate Inquiry into the impacts of air quality on human health made clear the fact that many people living near pollution sources simply do not have enough information about what industry is pumping into the air they are breathing. The NSW Environment Protection Agency has recently identified emissions data analysis by the Newcastle coal industry so compromised that community groups have been forced to run their own monitoring.

With the expansion of coal seam gas extraction, active mining operations are appearing in greater numbers and closer to populations than ever before. The public has a right to know what pollution is being dumped into our air by dirty mining and energy companies; and we have a right to know in a timely fashion.

The Greens will work with state Environmental Protection Authorities and those corporations currently subject to National Pollutant Inventory reporting, to develop the industry-funded installation and operation of a broad coverage air monitoring network around pollution hotspots, like the Hunter and La Trobe Valleys. This information will be made available online in

real time for people to access timely and accurate information about the air they are breathing. Finally, accurate data – not averaged over time or population, but actual levels in affected communities – will be available.

> NON-ROAD ENGINE EMISSIONS

Australians buy around 1 million unregulated non-road petrol engines every year. Non-road engines such as those used in gardening equipment, lawn mowers and outboard motors, have been shown to contribute significantly to urban air pollution. These unregulated engines produce nitrogen oxides, volatile organic compounds, carbon monoxide, carbon dioxide and particulate matter; and they often do it at a mere arm's length from the operator.

After years of studies, reviews and consultation, there is broad agreement within industry that new standards must be introduced. However the Government still delays on action to protect Australians from these toxic emissions. Australian standards are now lagging so far behind the rest of the world that international manufacturers are effectively dumping engines in Australia that cannot be sold in other countries.

The Greens will move swiftly to introduce emission standards that mirror the current US EPA standards. Given the nature of international trade in these engines, it is highly desirable that introduced regulations are consistent with those in force in the larger global markets for this equipment, and the US EPA is the current standard.

These minimum standards will be supported by a labelling scheme to drive more informed purchasing of lower emissions technologies.

A full range of clean, low emission engines are already being sold in Australia, with a market share of about 50%. There is no new technology to be developed, nothing new to import, no one new to train. These regulations will simply work to remove the worst polluters from the dirtier end of the market.

In 2008, the Federal government estimated these regulations could result in cost savings of up to \$2.8 Billion over 20 years.ⁱⁱⁱ

> CLEANER HEATERS FOR CLEANER AIR

Despite solid evidence that woodsmoke can have significant impacts on human health, the regulations around wood heaters have not been updated to keep pace with heater technology. The health impacts from woodheater emissions are conservatively estimated at \$190 million per annum.^{iv}

The Clean Air Act will impose tighter emissions standards on **new** heaters and provide the necessary support to make them effective.



The Clean Air Act will mandate an emissions standard of 1g/kg of burnt fuel and 65% efficiency for all new woodheaters manufactured in or imported to Australia. This standard will be supported by the introduction of a Commonwealth certification and audit process to make sure wood heaters are performing as well as they need to be.

The federal government recently estimated that these regulations could result in cost savings of up to \$1.7 Billion over 20 years.^v

> A COMPREHENSIVE SOLUTION

The Clean Air Act contains measures that will make a real difference to air quality for many Australians. But there are no safe levels of exposure to the ultrafine particles that can penetrate deepest into our lungs. That is why the Greens would move as rapidly as possible to achieve nationwide, enforceable standards around particulate pollution.

The Greens care about health and we believe that our wellbeing should not take a back seat to commercial interests. All mining developments should first undergo a rigorous health impact assessment to estimate the consequences it would have on the health of the community.

These measures put health first where it belongs. Australians should be able to breathe easy, knowing that it is safe to breathe the air in their homes.

ⁱ [Senate Community Affairs Committee, Impacts on Health of Air Quality in Australia, 2013](#)

ⁱⁱ [National Environmental Protection Measure on Ambient Air Quality](#)

ⁱⁱⁱ DEWHA, Cost Benefit Analysis of Options to Manage Emissions from Selected Non-Road Engines, August 2008

^{iv} EPHC, National Approach to Reducing Woodheater Emissions Scoping Paper on Regulatory Options 17/8.1/A

^v [National Environment Protection Council, Regulatory Impact Statement for Reducing Emissions from Woodheaters, April 2013](#)



RESTRICTING SPORTS BETTING ADS PROTECTING KIDS, PROTECTING SPORT

The Greens plan to end the barrage of gambling ads during sport

Sport is a big part of Australian life, but thanks to the rise of the sports betting companies, professional sport is now saturated with gambling ads. The Greens care about sport and want it to be about the competition on the field – not about the odds.

Australians love sport. Sport has a central place in our culture. Watching and playing sport is a great way for families and communities to come together. But there is an ever-growing nexus between sport and gambling including advertising, sponsorship and broadcast tie-ins that mean it's now impossible to watch a major sporting event without being urged to bet.

> ENDING THE AD BARRAGE

In order to return sport to the family-friendly activity it ought to be, the Greens will:

- **Ban ads for gambling services in children's viewing hours before 9pm** including during sports broadcasts.
- **Ban the advertising of live odds** at any time to weaken the constant inducements to gamble.
- **Prohibit cash-for-comment** where sports commentators integrate promotion of betting companies into sports programs such as the footy show.
- **A ban on sponsorship of sporting teams by gambling companies** to limit the exposure of gambling brands to young kids.

> THE SPORT-GAMBLING CONNECTION

In recent years, the connection between sports and sports betting has been growing at an accelerating rate. Online betting is rising, with up to \$1.6 billion lost online every year including sports betting.ⁱ There's big money in sports betting, and the betting companies have moved in on professional sports. Between the saturation advertising, billboards at the ground and constant references to betting during sporting commentary, it's almost impossible to enjoy a game of football without being encouraged to gamble.

Gambling is part of Australian culture and many Australians enjoy a punt. But gambling has a dangerous side. Problem gambling destroys lives and is on the rise. By normalising gambling behaviour, and associating it forever with sport, we may be turning our kids into the problem gamblers of the future. Research already shows that most kids are able to identify several sports betting companies – just from watching the footy.ⁱⁱ Young men in particular are being trained to believe gambling is a skill and are primed, often through peer pressure, to start their gambling careers early.ⁱⁱⁱ

The growing nexus between sport and gambling has gone as far as including a bookmaker as part of the commentary team of a televised rugby game. When a bookie is signing autographs for kids at a game of footy, things have gone too far.

> CLEANING UP SPONSORSHIP

Kids also see Gambling logos every time they look at some of their favourite athletes – plastered right there on the guernsey. This makes the highly visible gambling message all the more appealing to young fans. At the same time, visitors to any major sporting stadium may be constantly exposed to sports betting ads during at the ground the whole game. In the past, we have even see clubs team up with betting companies to launch club-themed gambling web sites.

By ending team sponsorship by sports betting companies, we can reduce exposure to gambling messages only to those places where it is transparent and accompanied by a responsible gambling message.

> RESTORING THE INTEGRITY TO SPORT

The Greens care about sport. During the last term of Parliament the Greens initiated several inquiries into sport, including sports gambling and the regulation of sports science. When it comes to gambling, both the experts and public agree things have gone too far.



We have to stem the tide of sports betting before a trip to the footy is like a day at the races. Sport should be about community and healthy competition, not an interactive gambling experience.

ⁱ Review of the Interactive Gambling Act 2001 (2012)

ⁱⁱ Parliamentary Joint Select Committee on Gambling Reform: The advertising and promotion of gambling services in sport report 2013

ⁱⁱⁱ JSCGR report

2013 Initiative
No Longer Current



NATURAL TREASURE, NOT RUBBISH DUMP

STOPPING DUMPING ON OUR REEF

The Greens' plan for protecting the Reef from industrial dumping

The Great Barrier Reef is under threat like never before: it has lost 50% of its coral cover in the last twenty five years; it is threatened by climate change, land-based pollution and rampant industrialisation. We need to urgently reduce these pressures on the Reef so that it can survive this century.

The old parties know that offshore dumping damages the Reef. Senate estimates revealed that draft reports from the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority suggest that the damage could be even worse than initially expected. Instead of standing up for the people who depend on a healthy Reef, the old parties have given into the mining companies, who want to dump dredge spoil so that building new coal ports is quicker and cheaper.

Dumping of port dredging spoil offshore in the Great Barrier Reef world heritage area seriously threatens the health of marine life and corals including by degrading water quality, mobilising legacy pollutants, including heavy metals found in ports and harbours, and smothering flora and fauna.

> BANNING OFFSHORE DUMPING

Our plan will ban offshore dumping:

- **No new permits for offshore dumping to be issued.**
- **No new permits for dredging to be issued, unless there is a plan to dispose of the dredge onshore.**
- **Some maintenance dredging will need to continue; however any further permits need to be reviewed and informed by the best available science to minimise impacts, ideally by reducing dredging and finding onshore solutions.**

> WHY DUMPING IS A PROBLEM?

At last update, since 2000, the dumping of 22 million cubic metres of dredge spoil has been approved.

It was revealed in senate estimates last week that new draft research by Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority, using 3D modelling and factoring in deep ocean currents, indicates that dumped dredge spoil travels further than previously thought.

We understand there are currently five applications to dump dredge spoil offshore being assessed by the federal government – four of these are in the Great Barrier Reef marine park: Abbott Point, Hay/Dudgeon Point, Townsville, Gladstone's second shipping channel and Cairns. *(All but the Cairns development are to expand fossil fuel exports.)*

Last week leading Reef scientists told a Senate inquiry into The Greens' bill to protect the Reef that dredge spoil is highly damaging to the Reef, and should simply not be dumped in a world heritage area.

> DUMPING REGULATION STATUS QUO

In considering whether to permit dumping of dredge spoil offshore, our international obligations under the *London Protocol (which bans offshore dumping with few exceptions)* are that alternatives to dumping offshore need to be fully evaluated. The Greens are very concerned this is not currently being done properly resulting in the extensive offshore dumping permitted in the world heritage area to date.



Australia's international obligations are given force by the *Environment Protection (Sea Dumping) Act 1981*, administered by the Environment Minister.

Where a proposed disposal of dredge spoil at sea is likely to have a significant impact on matters of national environment significance, in this case, impacting on the Great Barrier Reef World Heritage Area then EPBC Act approval is also required.

2013 Initiative
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PROMOTING AUSTRALIA TO THE WORLD SUPPORTING OUR TOURISM INDUSTRY

The Greens' plan to ensure the ongoing success of the tourism sector

Australia's status as a desirable destination means the tourism industry will continue to grow if we promote ourselves effectively and protect our greatest tourism asset, the natural environment, including the Great Barrier Reef and the Tarkine.

Australia's natural environment is the tourism industry's most important asset. The Greens are committed to protecting the environment and caring for the people who work in tourism by ensuring a strong sustainable tourism industry. The mining boom threatens some of our most spectacular places such as the Great Barrier Reef, James Price Point and the Tarkine as well as contributing to driving up the Australian dollar, which has hurt tourism businesses.

> ENSURING THE GROWTH OF TOURISM

Tourism is an important part of the Australian economy. Unfortunately factors such as the high Australian dollar have meant parts of the industry are struggling. Underpinning this industry are over half a million employees and their families who work hard to ensure visitors to their cities, towns and regional areas enjoy their time away.

The Greens will assist the tourism industry by:

- **Increasing Tourism Australia's funding by \$100 million over the forward estimates** to allow an expansion of promotional activities.
- **Continuing to stand up for environmental standards and protections so our greatest tourism assets are protected for the long term.**
- **Providing \$3 million of federal funding for a World Heritage Interpretation Centre** in Tasmania that complements Tasmania's world heritage areas by telling the story of their values and the struggle to protect them.
- **Directing \$3 million for a digital tourism experiences program** to provide funding for the development of smartphone and tablet applications for specific regions that use crowd sourced content to help enhance the visitor experience.

These initiatives will help the tourism industry continue to be an important part of the Australian economy while embracing new technologies. Increased funding for Tourism Australia means they can expand their promotional activities further into established and new and developing markets such as China and Indonesia.

The ongoing fight to protect our precious places especially from the mining boom is critical to the continued growth of the tourism industry. Authenticity is key to marketing.

> PROTECTING OUR TOURISM ASSETS

The Greens have always stood up for the environment. What is increasingly being realised is that the natural environment not only inspires us but generates a considerable amount of economic activity for Australia. Protecting these places is in the interest not only of our natural heritage but also our economy.

A considerable amount of tourism in Australia is centred on spectacular natural places like the Great Barrier Reef and Kakadu. Much of Australia's tourism marketing to the rest of the world leverages off these natural wonders. The Greens will always stand up for these places and ensure they are protecting for future generations to enjoy.

> THE IMPACT OF THE MINING BOOM

The mining boom continues to have a large impact on Australia's tourism industry. It continues to threaten Australia's environment including important tourism assets as well as placing economic pressure on the tourism industry through the higher dollar.

The impact of mining in Australia especially the contribution of coal exports to climate change directly threatens our natural places. We will run down the value of our assets unless the environment and climate is protected.



The mining boom has also hollowed out some of the tourism sector as the higher dollar and in some areas the competition for accommodation between mining companies and tourism operators has led to tourism operators shutting down because of the high cost of accommodation.ⁱ Not only is the mining industry and port developments in Queensland directly threatening the Great Barrier Reef tourism industry and the 63 000 jobs it supports, a world heritage “in danger” listing will be devastating.

> HELPING TOURISM AUSTRALIA ACCESS MORE MARKETS

The growth of Asia has been well documented. Visits from Chinese tourists have grown rapidly over the past 10 years.ⁱⁱ The growth in tourists from Indonesia and Taiwan has also been impressive.

The potential for further growth in visitors from this region is exciting. Tourism Australia has done a great job in promoting the benefits of Australia to the newly developing middle classes of Asia who are keen to enjoy clean air, unpolluted water and unspoilt environment.

The Greens will provide extra funding to ensure Tourism Australia can expand their promotions and programs into other places within these markets. Extra funding will provide Tourism Australia with flexibility to expand to new markets especially in emerging economies to promote Australia, our world famous environment and continue to grow the industry.

> TASMANIAN WORLD HERITAGE INTERPRETATION CENTRE

The value of world heritage areas to the Tasmanian tourism industry is crucial. As well as the environmental significance of world heritage areas, the story of the establishment of Tasmania’s world heritage has become a point of interest and attraction for tourists visiting Tasmania. To complement the world heritage areas a world heritage interpretation centre will be established that explores the history and the people behind the environmental campaigns in Tasmania. The Greens will commit \$3m to begin the investigation, design and establishment of this centre in Tasmania. A contribution from the Tasmanian Government will also be sought.

> DIGITAL TOURISM EXPERIENCES

The way people interact with media has dramatically changed over the past few years. Many people, including tourists travel with smart phones and tablets which can receive and access incredible amounts of information. At the same time people are looking for more local and authentic experiences.

Arguably the tourism industry is yet to take full advantage of this change. This is especially the case for smaller regions that have less resources and time to invest in creating digital tourism applications.

To help this transition the Greens will establish a fund worth \$3m over three years to allow local councils or regional based tourism groups to apply for grants to develop their own smart phone and tablet application telling the unique stories of their region and promoting their tourism offerings. The funding is intended for the technical work of programming the application and preparing and editing the information sourced from the local community.

This will mean tourists are able to access the applications in these specific regions as they travel and gain an insight into an area they may not have otherwise had. At the same time regional groups can tap into new media and promote themselves and their area in a way that more and more people are finding easy and accessible.

> PROTECTING AND CREATING TOURISM JOBS

The contribution of the tourism industry to employment in Australia is under recognised. For instance in Tasmania more people are employed in the tourism industry than in agricultural, fisheries and forestry.ⁱⁱⁱ The tourism industry nationwide currently employs over half a million people twice the amount employed by the mining industry.^{iv}

By providing more funding to Tourism Australia the Greens will increase the promotion of Australia across growing markets in Asia. The continued promotion of Australia and our natural environment will help grow the Australian tourism industry and create jobs across the country.

ⁱ Tourism Research Australia, ‘The Economic Impact of the current mining boom on the Australian tourism industry’ January 2013.

ⁱⁱ Australian Bureau of Statistics, ‘Australia Triples in Popularity with Chinese and Indian Visitors’ 6 February 2013.

ⁱⁱⁱ Australian Bureau of Statistics, *Tourism Satellite Accounts*, 2011 - 12

^{iv} Australia Bureau of Statistics, *Labour Force*, July 2013.



BETTER RURAL MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES CARING FOR COUNTRY AUSTRALIANS

The Greens' plan for improving mental health care in rural Australia

Australians in the bush are missing out on life-saving mental health services. A caring society looks after everyone. The Australian Greens are standing up for a healthier, happier, stronger rural Australia.

With 20 per cent of Australians experiencing mental health issues in any given year,¹ mental health policy goes to the heart of our nation's wellbeing and touches all of us.

Rural Australians have unique pressures affecting their mental health and currently lack access to adequate mental health services.

The Australian Greens recognise the need for innovative, community-based responses to overcome the growing disparity between city and country mental health services.

> LISTENING TO VOICES FROM THE FRONTLINE

In 2012 and 2013, Australian Greens Spokesperson for Mental Health, Senator Penny Wright undertook a rural mental health consultation tour of regional Australia. Senator Wright met with over 185 people, including consumers, carers, service providers and other stakeholders in order to unearth the strengths and weaknesses of the rural mental health system.

Holding 55 meetings across six states and 24 Australian towns, Senator Wright listened to the voices and experiences of people living in country Australia. What emerged from the mental health consultation tour were recurring issues, central to the delivery of mental health services in country Australia. The Greens' rural and regional mental health policy responds to those concerns.

You can find our full report on the rural, regional and remote mental health tour at <http://greensmps.org.au/ruralmh-report>.

Years of under-investment in rural mental health has cost lives and left gaping holes in access to care for country Australians. The Australian Greens have a plan for increased and more targeted investment in rural, regional and remote mental health services.

Our rural mental health plan offers cost effective, community-based solutions, is people-focused, and will take the pressure

off crisis-driven services by emphasising prevention and early intervention.

The Greens' plan for rural mental health will ensure more country Australians are receiving the mental health care they need. Our fully costed, 8-point package, totalling a \$552.6 million investment over the forward estimates from 1 July 2014, includes:

- **Reforming rural mental health across the lifespan**, developing flexible, multi-disciplinary and community-based care in local communities, through an investment of \$55 million per year.
- **Increased resourcing for community-based mental health and wellbeing centres**, including neighbourhood houses and community centres, worth \$20 million per year.
- **Developing a rural mental health workforce plan** and greater investment in education, research and training, through an investment of \$35 million per year.
- **Stepped prevention and recovery facilities including step-up, step-down accommodation and residential care**, worth \$35 million per year.
- **Increased support for existing mental health services to expand outreach and telepsychiatry services**, investing \$20 million per year.
- **Investing \$15 million in mental health training for frontline staff and community members.**
- **A national social inclusion campaign to tackle the stigma surrounding mental health**, costing \$4.2 million per year.
- **Changing the Centrelink Carer Allowance form** to ensure its relevance for those caring for someone with a mental illness.

> MENTAL HEALTH CARE ACROSS THE LIFESPAN

Country Australians face unique challenges. Drought and other natural disasters, the threat of climate change, isolation, rural



unemployment and poor access to health services all have their effects on mental health and wellbeing.

When the nearest psychologist or mental health worker is a two hour drive away - or more - accessing the necessary services can be a significant challenge. That's why the Greens are proposing robust, community-based responses to be delivered locally.

We want to build on the success of the headspace model, offering grants and tenders to design and test new models of community-based care to cover key life stages. These should provide whole-of-person care – mental health, general health, housing assistance, financial counselling and services related to welfare and employment. We will develop flexible, multidisciplinary and community-based care in local communities.

> COMMUNITY-BASED SOLUTIONS

Neighbourhood houses and community centres connect people and build community resilience in many regional communities. They offer a place where people can share meals and socialise, participate in recreational activities, learn new skills and access services including financial counselling, housing support and Centrelink-related assistance.

We will invest \$20 million per year to increase resources for community-based mental health programs, including neighbourhood houses and community centres. During our rural mental health tour, we learned that resources for such facilities are limited, despite there being a serious need for community-based responses in rural or regional areas – especially in the aftermath of extreme weather events or emergencies. Those we met with in Queensland told us community centres and neighbourhood houses were the “glue” of their communities but funding uncertainty continually inhibited the scope of what they were able to do to support the community.

Increasing resources for neighbourhood houses and community centres will assist with social inclusion and community wellbeing by encouraging participation and a place of belonging where people can join in, have fun and also access a range of services and advice. The Greens believe in community-based solutions because they're cost-effective, socially inclusive and proven to work.

> ADDRESSING WORKFORCE CHALLENGES

The current rural mental health workforce is under-staffed, under-resourced and under-trained. Almost 90 per cent of psychiatrists and two thirds of mental health nurses work in major cities, leaving country Australians without life-saving services and care.

During our rural mental health consultation tour, we heard from those experiencing the negative effects of the current workforce. One service provider told us her rural community required “systematic plans to attract and retain high level professional staff” and “greater training of emergency department doctors and staff on mental health issues and treatments.”

Challenges associated with recruiting and retaining staff affect both service providers and people trying to access care. Right now, these people are not getting the help they need.

As well as specialists we heard that there is an urgent need to attract and retain mental health workers from Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander and culturally diverse backgrounds, to rural practice, and to develop training, supervision and accreditation for the employment of peer workers in paid and voluntary positions.

That's why we're announcing a rural, regional and remote mental health workforce plan, investing \$35 million per year for research and training and the development of pathways and incentives, to grow and develop a strong and effective rural mental health workforce.

Better access to highly trained mental health professionals, as well as support for peer workers, means country Australians will be able to get the care they need closer to their homes.

It will also mean that mental health issues are less likely to reach crisis point, taking the pressure off hospitals and emergency services and ensuring better mental health outcomes for country Australians.

> FUNDING SUB-ACUTE SERVICES

The current rural mental health system is crisis-driven and fails to adequately fund prevention and early intervention measures, including community-based sub-acute services.

Our plan includes \$35 million per year for stepped prevention and recovery residential care such as community-based, step-up, step-down accommodation for people becoming unwell or recovering from an acute psychiatric episode.

For too long, the mental health system has been geared toward crisis services which, in many cases, do not meet the needs of rural Australians seeking help. As one participant explained during our tour of regional Australia, “we need a mental health safety net, not an ambulance”.

Our plan for community-based sub-acute services will adopt a whole-of-person approach to mental health while reducing the number of hospital admissions.



> BETTER SUPPORT FOR OUTREACH SERVICES

During our mental health tour, we found that people value outreach services. Many of the people we spoke with talked about the important role of outreach services in preventing mental illness crises for those who live outside population centres.

We also learned that another benefit of outreach services – including those provided by visiting practitioners from urban areas – is that they can offer a solution to problems of privacy and conflict of interest in small communities where there are a limited number of qualified service providers.

Conversations with individuals and organisations showed that outreach services are valuable but often difficult to deliver. Poor weather and road conditions affect workers' ability to reach people in need. Cost and the time involved in assisting people who live remotely were the most common challenges associated with outreach services.

Furthermore, we heard during our consultations the growing importance of telepsychiatry as a tool to overcome the tyranny of distance. Whether as a way of overcoming the difficulties associated with remoteness, transport, workforce shortages or privacy, more and more people are choosing to access information and treatment via their computers.

Those living in remote areas are often isolated. Outreach and online services play a crucial role in ensuring those living remotely are able to access mental health advice and treatment. That's why the Greens will invest \$20 million per year for existing mental health organisations to provide outreach services and expand telepsychiatry.

We believe that distance should not be a barrier to accessing the care and support needed to ensure better mental health for Australians living in the bush.

> MENTAL HEALTH ON THE FRONTLINE

Our consultations across Australia revealed a need for greater investment in training and education about mental health and suicide prevention for frontline workers and staff who are in a position to help others within their communities.

Whether stock and station agents, bank staff, teachers, hairdressers or council workers, many felt they would benefit from better training to assist their colleagues and friends who may be struggling. Our plan will invest \$15 million each year for training and awareness of mental health and suicide prevention.

> ADAPTING THE CARER ALLOWANCE FORM

As part of our rural mental health plan, we are proposing changes to the Centrelink Carer Allowance application form. During consultations with carers, we learned that many are prevented from accessing the benefit because the current application form is either too complex or irrelevant to their situation.

We are proposing changes to make the application form appropriate where the relevant disability is psychiatric as well as where the relevant disability is physical.

Carers play a pivotal and hugely valuable role in supporting their loved ones who experience mental ill-health. They are an integral part of the rural mental health system. The proposed changes to the Centrelink Carer Allowance application form will make a difference for those caring for people with mental ill-health and help them to receive some of the support they need.

> TACKLING MENTAL HEALTH STIGMA

Australia is one of the only English-speaking OECD countries without a national anti-stigma social inclusion campaign. Living in small remote towns can be isolating and challenging. We know that people in rural Australia experience stigma when seeking mental health assistance – some even travel great distances to seek treatment in other towns.

During our tour of regional Australia, we found that stigma is a significant barrier to accessing care for mental ill-health. We learned that rural Australians are less likely to seek help when they live in small towns because of their enmeshed social networks and lack of privacy.

The need for a national social inclusion and anti-stigma campaign in Australia has been recognised by many mental health organisations and advocacy bodies.

As one rural GP told us, "If your car is out the front of my service, everyone knows...if you become very unwell, people remember." Another person responded to our online discussion paper, saying: "Stigma is very slowly lessening, but much more work needs to be done in order to support people and assure them that they deserve help, that it exists, and how to access it."

Find out more about the Greens' rural and regional mental health consultations and see the full range of places we visited here: <http://greensmps.org.au/content/news-stories/rural-mental-health-services-consultation-tour>.

¹Australian Bureau of Statistics, *National survey of mental health and wellbeing: summary of results* (2007), [http://www.ausstats.abs.gov.au/ausstats/subscriber.nsf/0/6AE6DA447F985FC2CA2574EA00122BD6/\\$File/43260_2007.pdf](http://www.ausstats.abs.gov.au/ausstats/subscriber.nsf/0/6AE6DA447F985FC2CA2574EA00122BD6/$File/43260_2007.pdf) (7).



GIVING A VOICE TO ANIMALS

ENDING LIVE EXPORTS

The Greens' plan to care for animals and establish an Office of Animal Welfare

How we treat animals is an indicator of a caring society. The live export trade has been shown to be a cruel and inhumane industry. There is a sustainable alternative.

For decades Australian animal welfare groups and the media have exposed witnessed horrific scenes of the brutality suffered by our exported livestock in various receiving countries. The 2011 expose of the animal cruelty taking place in Indonesian slaughterhouses brought hundreds of thousands of Australians together to oppose the live export trade and the suffering it continues to cause to thousands of animals.

The government's response to this appalling situation was to set up the Exporter Supply Chain Assurance Scheme (ECAS) which aims to provide traceability and accountability in the live animal export trade. But it has not stopped the continuing revelations of Australian livestock being subjected to cruel and inhumane mistreatment.¹

The brutal killing of 20,000 Australian sheep in Pakistan in 2012 has been investigated in a government report which has stilled failed to hold anyone accountable.² Indonesian live cattle exports have resumed.³

> LEGISLATION TO END THE LIVE TRADE

The Australian Greens have introduced a bill before the Parliament, *Live Animal Export (Slaughter) Prohibition Bill*, which would end live exports and the related cruelty.

The Greens are committed to keeping the pressure on the government to end the suffering of animals on long and perilous sea voyages to export markets and to push for mandatory pre-slaughter stunning in all Australian abattoirs.

We want to see improved and increased processing in Australia to support local producers and jobs. Processing animals in Australia protects them from inhumane treatment and ensures our laws and standards regarding animal welfare can be upheld.

> AN INDEPENDENT CHAMPION OF ANIMAL WELFARE TO PROMOTE ANIMAL RIGHTS

The Australian Greens have also introduced a bill into the Parliament to establish an independent Office of Animal Welfare.

The *Voice for Animals (Independent Office of Animal Welfare) Bill* will establish an animal welfare champion to promote and oversee animal welfare.

It will be independent of government and the Department of Agriculture to ensure conflicts of interest that compromise animal welfare over profit are removed. The Office will be guided by the advice of an Animal Welfare Advisory Committee including experts in animal welfare, consumer groups, scientists and ethicists. The IOAW will also work to harmonise and improve animal welfare laws across the country.

On-going funding for the Office will be diverted from the Department of Agriculture Fisheries and Forestry's Animal Welfare Branch. An initial investment of \$500 000 will be made for establishment costs.

> WIN-WIN SITUATION

The answer to the live export trade is the substitution of chilled meat export to our overseas markets.⁴⁵ Further developing the highly successful chilled meat export industry will benefit the cattle industry, increase employment as well as improve animal welfare. The Greens support:

- The development of new meat processing facilities in northern Australia by providing incentives to help open abattoirs in a staged fashion, to assist producers to sustainably grow domestic processing.



- Removal of trade distortions and more intensive marketing of Australian meat overseas. Working with industry, the government should actively lobby for an end to subsidies and tariffs which favour the live export trade and put more resources into promoting the boxed meat trade.
- Boosting the skills of workers by providing assistance to help attract and train Indigenous and other meat processing workers to serve a new, strong domestic meat processing industry.

> OTHER PARTIES

Labor's Exporter Supply Chain Assurance Scheme (ECAS), designed to follow animals from farm to slaughterhouse has not improved live export outcomes. Labor's National Conference resolution from more than 2 years ago to create an independent office has not been implemented.⁶

The Liberal-National Coalition continues to support the cruel live export trade, despite the lack of oversight Australia is able to exert on overseas facilities.⁷

¹ <http://lee-rhiannon.greensmps.org.au/content/speeches-parliament/mpi-speech-live-exports>

² <http://www.daff.gov.au/about/media-centre/dept-releases/2013/live-animal-export-investigation-report-pakistan>

³ <http://www.smh.com.au/environment/animals/indonesian-live-cattle-exports-resume-to-meet-postramadan-rush-20130730-2gwro.html>

⁴ <http://lee-rhiannon.greensmps.org.au/banliveexportbill>

⁵ http://wspaliveexport.org.au/media/4471/wspa%20live%20exports%20report%20071009_final.pdf

⁶ <http://lee-rhiannon.greensmps.org.au/content/media-releases/greens-introduce-bill-independent-office-animal-welfare>

⁷ <http://www.nationals.org.au/News/AudioPodcasts/tabid/102/ArticleType/ArticleView/ArticleID/8511/Default.aspx>



HEALTHIER, WEALTHIER, WISER GREENING THE HEALTH SECTOR

The Greens plan for a Health Sustainability Unit

Climate change is a threat to both our health and our quality of life. Australia enjoys a high level of healthcare but it can come at a high environmental cost. Dangerous climate change cannot be avoided without the health sector playing its part to reduce pollution and waste.

The Australian healthcare sector is a big consumer of resources and producer of waste. In spite of the Government's commitment to tackle climate change, there is still no co-ordinated effort to reduce the environmental impact of the healthcare sector or to embrace the financial savings available through improved sustainability.

> MAKING OUR HEALTH SECTOR MORE SUSTAINABLE

A sustainable health and care system is achieved by delivering high quality care and improved public health without exhausting natural resources or causing severe ecological damage.

The Health Sustainability Unit will:

- **Deliver leadership to help drive behaviour change** and co-ordinate the sector's efforts to improve sustainability outcomes.
- **Provide expert advice and support to the healthcare sector in Australia** to become more sustainable by addressing issues such as energy, travel, waste, procurement, water, infrastructure adaptation and buildings.
- **Scope and map the sustainable development requirements of the Australian health sector** to better understand the existing situation, identify opportunities to embed sustainability into healthcare practices and identify further research needs.
- **Engage with the health sector to develop a broad sustainability strategy** to deliver ongoing sustainability, through improved resource efficiency, greener facilities and better practices.

> LEADERSHIP AND CO-ORDINATION

Some Australian health departments and services have taken action to reduce their environmental impact but activities are fragmented and lack strategic direction.

The Health Sustainability Unit will deliver a co-ordinated approach to maximise the social, environmental and financial benefits of improved sustainability.

Based in the Department of Health and Ageing, the Health Sustainability Unit will be a policy, training and engagement unit focusing on organisational and professional changes that reduce carbon emissions within the Australian health system and would link and coordinate activities across jurisdictions.

In England, the National Health Service (NHS) is responsible for approximately 25% of all public sector emissions, while in Australia, the carbon emissions of the health sector remain unmeasured. In 2008, the NHS established a Sustainable Development Unit to help the NHS become a leading, low-carbon, sustainable organisation; and it has quickly delivered financial, social and environmental benefits. The Health Sustainability Unit would be based on the NHS model.

> HEALTHIER, WEALTHIER, WISER

Hospitals generate significant environmental health impacts both upstream and downstream from service delivery, through the natural resources and products they consume, as well as through the waste they generate. Today's health leaders have started to evolve the Hippocratic Oath of "First Do No Harm" beyond the immediacy of the doctor-patient relationship to incorporate a broader vision of environmental health.



Health networks worldwide are beginning to work together to deliver healthcare sectors which recognise the connection between human health and the environment, and demonstrate that understanding through their governance strategies and operations.

The Health Sustainability Unit will help the healthcare sector realise the potential savings of smarter and more efficient environmental solutions to everyday problems from building services through to procurement.

By helping organisations to develop sustainable management plans, conduct audits on energy, procurement and waste, and invest in their staff through education and training, the Health Sustainability Unit will help organisations reap financial and environmental savings across the health sector.

CASE STUDY

The NHS Sustainable Development Unit developed advice for healthcare providers around running their electrical equipment at optimal voltages. Since employing this advice, the following savings have been made:

Sheffield Teaching Hospital is reducing its energy consumption by more than 8% and emissions by 239 tonnes, while saving £45,000 a year.

Norfolk and Suffolk Healthcare Trust is currently reducing its average energy consumption by more than 11% saving 163 tonnes of CO₂ per year and more than £23,000.

> THE HEALTH SUSTAINABILITY UNIT

The Greens are proposing the creation of a Health Sustainability Unit to help guide the Australian health sector towards sustainable health care. It would be a national intelligence unit, carrying out research, producing tools and guides, promoting sustainability, facilitating networking and influencing policy.

The proposed unit would be located within the Department of Health and Ageing and, based on the NHS Sustainable Development Unit, would consist of a small team of around 7 employees. Their first tasks would be:

- 1) A national consultation with health sector bodies
- 2) Measuring the carbon and resource footprint of Australian health services
- 3) Developing a strategy to minimise the environmental impact of the Australian healthcare sector.

The proposed Health Sustainability Unit has been costed by the Parliamentary Budget Office at \$1.1 million per annum. The Greens propose that the Unit initially be funded for 5 years after which time the success of the program would be assessed. This results in an overall cost of \$5.5 million, \$3.3 million over the forward estimates.

Based on the experiences of the NHS model, the Health Sustainability Unit is expected to generate financial savings across the Australian healthcare sector in excess of funding requirements over the life of the program.



HEARING HEALTH

CARING FOR EAR HEALTH AND HEARING

The Greens' plan to invest in hearing health

One in six Australians suffers from some degree of hearing loss, and this number is expected to increase to one Australian in four by 2050. By making hearing health a priority, the Greens will improve the lives of millions of Australians, their families and loved ones.

An important parliamentary inquiry was held into hearing health in Australia in 2009. The inquiry found that, despite representing significant social and economic costs, and touching the lives of most Australians in one way or another, hearing health was not ranked as a national health priority. The Greens want to change that.

> OUR PLAN FOR HEARING HEALTH

Hearing loss costs Australia almost \$12 billion a year.ⁱ Hearing loss reduces a person's capacity to communicate and participate in social situations and can affect their education and employment opportunities. It has been estimated that almost 160,000 people are not working because they can't hear well enough.ⁱⁱ

The Greens want to see real action taken to tackle hearing health in Australia. That's why we're announcing our comprehensive suite of initiatives fully costed at \$368.2 million over three years. The elements of our plan are:

- **Extending the eligibility for the Australian Government Hearing Services program** to everyone subject to a means testⁱⁱⁱ and to those who do not meet the means test on a fee-for-service basis (\$274.2 million over three years)
- **A national database to track children with a hearing impairment** (\$2 million)
- **Early evidence-based language and communication intervention** for all children with hearing impairment prior to them starting school (\$45 million over three years)
- **Sound field systems for new classrooms**, and in all existing classrooms where there is a significant population of Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander children (\$12 million over three years)

- An exemplar multidisciplinary **project to address the incidence and impact of otitis media** in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities (\$5 million over 2 years)
- COAG (the Council of Australian Governments) to **prioritise hearing screenings and follow up for all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children** from remote communities prior to commencement of school
- A \$30 million fund (over three years) for **induction programs for teachers** posted to schools in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities

The causes of hearing impairment are varied. Hearing impairment can develop because of an inherited condition, problems during pregnancy and delivery, disease, neurological disorders, injury or excessive noise, or develop over time with age. Hearing loss can result if there's a problem at any point in the hearing pathway – in the outer, middle or inner ears, or in the complex auditory nerve pathway to the brain. The most significant single cause of hearing loss in Australia is exposure to loud noise, with 37% of hearing loss due to excessive noise exposure.^{iv}

> IMPROVED ACCESS TO THE AUSTRALIAN GOVERNMENT HEARING SERVICES PROGRAM

Hear Us, the 2010 parliamentary inquiry report, made 34 recommendations to address significant gaps in hearing services and supports across Australia. Despite the old parties supporting the report's findings, too many of these recommendations have not been acted upon.

The inquiry found that many people suffer significant distress and financial hardship because of a lack of access to services



and supports. Essential services and equipment like hearing aids are expensive, costing between \$3,000 and \$5,000, and requiring replacement every four to five years. This can present a serious financial burden to low income earners.

Access to hearing services and devices under the Australian Government Hearing Services Program is only available to people under the age of 26, Pension Concession Card Holders, people receiving Sickness Allowance from Centrelink, Members of the Australian Defence Force, and some clients of the Department of Veterans' Affairs and the Commonwealth Rehabilitation Service.

A caring society would provide access to publicly funded hearing services and devices to people who need them, rather than abandoning people as they enter the workforce. That's why the Greens will give access to Australian Government Hearing Services to all low income earners, providing a further 133,000 people with access to these vital services.

Our plan will also give optional access on a fee-for-service basis to former Australian Hearing clients who become ineligible for these services when they turn 26. This will allow people to continue to access independent treatment and advice as well as guaranteeing continuity of care. As the cost will be recovered from clients this initiative will not require a funding allocation.

> GIVING CHILDREN WITH HEARING IMPAIRMENT THE BEST START

The welcome introduction of universal newborn screening across Australia has resulted in increased early diagnosis of children with hearing impairment. In order to realise the substantial long term benefits available from newborn screening we must ensure early intervention programs are provided to those children who are diagnosed with hearing impairment.

Early intervention is important for later development of language and communication skills and it is vital to enable children to have the best opportunity to succeed in education and go on to fulfilling lives. Successful early intervention also has implications for lifelong social inclusion for people with hearing loss.

The Greens want all children diagnosed with hearing impairment to have the best possible start in life. That's why we are providing \$45 million over three years to fund early evidence based language and communication intervention for all children with severe hearing impairment who require hearing aids or Cochlear implants prior to starting school.

> A NATIONAL DATABASE FOR HEARING IMPAIRED CHILDREN

The *Hear Us* inquiry found there are gaps between screening of children and the delivery of follow up services and support to those found to have a hearing impairment. Some children with hearing impairment are 'falling off the radar' and failing to receive appropriate support, treatment and intervention.

The Greens have committed \$2 million to establish a national database to track children through neonatal hearing screening, diagnosis and intervention, and to record and report cognitive, linguistic, social and emotional development outcomes of children diagnosed at birth with a hearing loss.

The database will ensure we can monitor and evaluate neonatal hearing screening programs. It will also underpin the development of a nationally consistent quality and standards framework and allow national and international benchmarking and collaboration. Information recorded in the database could provide an important resource for research into risk factors and health conditions associated with permanent childhood hearing impairment. The database will be expanded in future years to track all children diagnosed with a hearing impairment later in life.

> TOWARDS MORE INCLUSIVE AND ACCESSIBLE COMMUNITIES

Hearing impairment is projected to grow along with Australia's ageing population. It is estimated that 8.75 million Australians will be directly affected by hearing loss by 2050.^v An inability to hear too often excludes individuals from meaningful participation in the social, economic and cultural life of the community. It is therefore crucial that we make changes now to improve the way people with a hearing impairment are supported in our communities. While this change will not happen overnight it is vital we start to prioritise a shift to communities that are more accessible and inclusive of people with hearing impairment.

The Greens are committed to progress towards more inclusive and accessible communities. We know there are a range of barriers preventing the full participation of people with a hearing loss and that many people experience significant social isolation as a result of this. We need more Auslan interpreters, more audio described television content, and the provision of more hearing loops in public shopfronts and facilities.

Government also needs to do a better job at raising public awareness and understanding about hearing loss. Work in this area would serve a dual purpose of creating a more understanding and supportive society, and serving to reduce the incidence of avoidable hearing loss.



The Greens are keeping the issue of access on the agenda with the development of a smartphone app that allows people with disability, their family, friends and the community to report accessibility trouble spots from anywhere around the country. This might include failure to provide adequate signs, captioning, audio loops or Auslan interpreters.

The reports people provide to us will be summarised on our website. We will also make the formal report publically available and provide information to Parliament, governments and other organisations, such as the Australian Human Rights Commission. Access All Areas is available for free for iOS and Android devices and can be downloaded, along with a copy of our initiative paper, from www.rachelsiewert.org.au/access.

> CLOSING THE GAP IN HEARING HEALTH

There is a crisis in ear and hearing health in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities with rates of ear disease and hearing loss up to ten times those of the wider community.^{vi}

A significant cause of hearing loss in children is a condition called otitis media – a middle ear infection. Otitis media strikes Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander babies at an earlier age and to a more severe degree than national averages or accepted public health levels. It has been estimated that Aboriginal children experience an average of 32 weeks of middle ear infections between the ages of two and 20 years, compared to just two weeks for other children.^{vii} This represents a serious health and educational issue for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children with significant lifelong implications.^{viii}

Otitis media can cause temporary or fluctuating hearing loss which affects a child's learning, language development and behaviour. Although there is a need for greater research into this area, we know that hearing impairment has a serious impact on educational outcomes, particularly for children from remote areas where English is a second language. Poor educational outcomes, linked to early onset hearing impairment, can lead to increased engagement with the criminal justice system. This is reflected in the high prevalence of hearing loss among Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander prisoners.

The Greens plan to address the alarming disparities between the hearing health of Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal populations. In order to tackle this multifaceted problem we must take a coordinated approach. By fostering links between successful health, education and family support programs that are already operating in a range of communities we can build on local networks and knowledge to more effectively address hearing health.

That's why the Greens will establish an exemplar multidisciplinary program, as proposed by the Australian Collaboration for Healthy Ears, to provide regular testing and diagnosis, specialised early language and literacy support, and ongoing management, evaluation and reporting to government. Our plan builds on and integrates successful programs to develop comprehensive responses to otitis media in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities. Our \$5 million commitment will fund the project in up to five communities for two years from January 2014.

> CHILDHOOD CHECKS LEAD TO BETTER LONG TERM OUTCOMES

Newborn hearing screening is identifying children with hearing impairment earlier than ever before. Universal newborn hearing screening has enabled the identification of the between 9 and 12 children per 10,000 live births in Australia who have a moderate or greater hearing loss in both ears.^{ix}

The identification of these children is a very positive development, but it is only part of the picture. The incidence of hearing loss in children doubles by age five and triples by age 10.^x Around a further 23 children per 10,000 will acquire a hearing impairment that requires hearing aids by the age of 17 through accident, illness or other causes.^{xi}

As newborn screening only identifies approximately one third of children who will eventually require intervention, the Greens believe it is essential that we improve the number of older children receiving hearing screening.^{xii}

We know that the earlier a hearing impairment is identified the greater the opportunity to intervene through the provision of treatment, services, supports and early language and communication intervention.

To build on the gains that have been made through the introduction of universal newborn screening we must achieve better rates of screening and diagnosis of children before they begin school. While there are a range of checks available across the states and territories the uptake rates of these are too low. There is also not enough opportunistic screening being undertaken, for example checking a child's ears when they attend a health clinic for another reason.

A young child who does not have their hearing checked misses an opportunity for a problem to be identified, a referral to be made, and treatment and early intervention provided.

Given the crisis in ear and hearing health in remote Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities the Greens believe that the Council of Australian Governments (COAG) must prioritise hearing screenings and follow up for all children from these communities before they start school.



> SOUND FIELD SYSTEMS IN CLASSROOMS

A survey of 29 communities in the Northern Territory found that only 7% of children had bilaterally normal middle ears.^{xiii}

Children who have difficulty hearing what the teacher is saying will struggle to learn. An effective strategy for improving sound quality in classrooms and increasing student comprehension is through the installation of a sound field system. Sound field systems are low power public address systems with a wireless microphone for the teacher. These systems not only make teachers' voices louder, they also improve clarity through the use of strategically placed speakers.

While children with permanent hearing loss may have hearing aids, these can be lost, may break, or children might choose not to wear them because of embarrassment or shame. Children without a permanent impairment may have fluctuating hearing because of temporary illness. Sound field systems deliver significant educational benefits for all children in a classroom, not only those with a permanent hearing impairment, as all children are better able to hear the teacher and are less distracted by noise outside the classroom.

Our plan is to establish a \$12 million fund to supply and maintain sound field systems in classrooms. New classrooms and those where there is a significant population of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students will be prioritised. Information regarding which classrooms utilise sound field systems will be made publicly available to assist families of hearing impaired children in choosing the most appropriate school for their child.

> EQUIPPING TEACHERS TO MEET THE NEEDS OF STUDENTS WITH HEARING IMPAIRMENT

Teachers posted to schools in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities face classrooms where the students have a very high incidence of hearing impairment. It is therefore crucial that we equip teachers with the knowledge and skills to effectively teach in these environments.

Our plan will provide \$30 million (\$10 million per year over three years) to fund teacher induction for teachers posted to schools in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities. Induction packages will include training about the effects of hearing health on education, and effective evidence-based teaching strategies to manage classrooms where a majority of children might have a hearing impairment.

ⁱ Access Economics: Listen Hear! The economic impact and cost of hearing loss in Australia, February 2006

ⁱⁱ Australian Hearing, *Hearing Loss in Australia: It's more common than you might think*, available at:

<http://www.hearing.com.au/upload/media-room/Hearing-loss-in-Australia.pdf>

ⁱⁱⁱ The same means test as that applied under the Health Care Card

^{iv} Access Economics, *Listen Hear! The economic impact and cost of hearing loss in Australia*, February 2006.

^v Ai-Media submission to the Senate, Community Affairs References Committee, *Hear Us: Inquiry into Hearing Health in Australia*, May 2010

^{vi} The Senate, Community Affairs References Committee, *Hear Us: Inquiry into Hearing Health in Australia*, May 2010.

^{vii} Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS), *The Health and Welfare of Australia's Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples 2008*, April 2008, p. 134.

^{viii} Australian Hearing, *Hearing Loss in Australia: It's more common than you might think*, available at:

<http://www.hearing.com.au/upload/media-room/Hearing-loss-in-Australia.pdf>

^{ix} Australian Hearing, *Hearing Loss in Australia: It's more common than you might think*, available at:

<http://www.hearing.com.au/upload/media-room/Hearing-loss-in-Australia.pdf>

^x The Senate, Community Affairs References Committee, *Hear Us: Inquiry into Hearing Health in Australia*, May 2010.

^{xi} Australian Hearing, *Hearing Loss in Australia: It's more common than you might think*, available at:

<http://www.hearing.com.au/upload/media-room/Hearing-loss-in-Australia.pdf>

^{xii} Submission to: Senate Community Affairs References Committee, *Inquiry into Hearing Health in Australia*, Australasian Newborn Hearing Screening Committee.

^{xiii} DOHA cited in The Senate, Community Affairs References Committee, *Hear Us: Inquiry into Hearing Health in Australia*, May 2010.



AFFORDABLE, ACCESSIBLE, FAIR CREATING A JUSTICE SAFETY NET

The Greens' plan for equitable access to justice for all Australians

Access to justice means Australians are able to seek legal assistance based on the merit of their claim – not the size of their wallet. A caring society ensures all Australians have a right to legal assistance when they need it, no matter who they are.

Equitable access to justice is a cornerstone of a modern caring democratic society. Without it, the rule of law is fatally weakened – only available to some members of society and not others.

Across Australia, courts and legal assistance services are under increasing pressure to meet demand and hundreds of thousands of Australians are being failed by a costly and complex legal system.

The Australian Greens believe that access to justice is the right of all Australians. Our plan is paving the way to a fairer, more equitable Australia.

> SMARTER, FAIRER, MORE CARING

Unless we resource justice properly now, we will all pay for it down the track. Our plan responds to calls from the judiciary, practitioners, legal assistance advocates and other concerned Australians to urgently address chronic underfunding.

The Australian Greens' plan for access to justice will include an investment of \$842.6 million over the forward estimates by:

- **Increasing legal aid funding** by 50% in 2014-2015;
- **Doubling funding to Community Legal Centres** in 2014-2015;
- **Doubling Indigenous Family Violence Prevention** legal services funding in 2014-2015 and increasing other Indigenous legal assistance funding by 50% in 2014-15.
- **Addressing the impact of rising court fees by returning court fees to 2010-11 levels**, amending the application form for exemptions from court fees to remove ambiguity and introducing a fee exemption category for clients who are being represented on a pro bono basis.

> INCREASING LEGAL AID FUNDING

The Greens recognise access to justice needs both resources and policies that overcome social, economic and cultural disadvantages to restore equality before the law. We understand the importance of legal aid services for the most disadvantaged and marginalised in our community; those who need, but cannot afford, access to private legal representation.

The Australia Institute estimates around 1.7 million Australians encounter a legal problem each year and almost half a million of those people will not receive legal advice because of financial reasons or lack of knowledge.ⁱ Legal costs are a heavy burden for Australians and many people turn to government-funded legal assistance services – only to find they are ineligible for support or face long waiting periods.

Unlike education and healthcare in Australia, there is no safety net for legal help and too many Australians remain marginalised by a legal system which is completely out of their reach.

The tight rationing of legal aid is leading to a situation where only the poorest and the richest Australians can ever hope to obtain legal representation – the many who sit in between often find the legal system inaccessible.ⁱⁱ

In recent years, we have seen Liberal state governments slashing funding to Legal Aid, putting pressure on the court system, leaving people unrepresented in serious trials and risking injustice.

That's why we are proposing a 50% increase in Commonwealth legal aid funding in 2014-15, to be maintained over the following three years. This funding increase will ensure that thousands more Australians are able to get the legal advice they need, making sure access to legal assistance does not become a privilege, but remains the right of all Australians.



> DOUBLING FUNDING FOR COMMUNITY LEGAL CENTRES

Community legal centres are independent, non-profit, non-government organisations providing an integrated, community-based service focused on advice, problem solving and working with other agencies to address connected legal, financial, social and health problems.ⁱⁱⁱ Over 80% of the people helped by community legal centres earn less than \$26,000 a year.

Some community legal centres specialise in assisting women, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, tenants or people with a mental illness to navigate the legal system.

Community legal centres are currently unable to meet increasing demand. According to survey results from Community Law Australia, 72% of community legal workers reported they were forced to turn clients away due to lack of resources and funding.^{iv} Reports show that the shortage of legal services is one of the most significant issues facing the community sector, second only to housing shortages.

The Australian Greens recognise that some of Australia's most vulnerable people rely on the services provided by community legal centres. That's why we are committing to doubling funding to community legal centres in 2014-15 and maintaining that funding over the subsequent three years.

Increasing funding to community legal centres makes good economic sense – investment in legal services now will save money in the future. A 2006 study showed for every dollar spent on a community legal centre, the government saves \$100 at later points in the justice system.^v

More importantly, increasing funding to community legal centres is about caring for and protecting Australian people. It's about people-focused, compassionate policy.

> INCREASING FUNDING FOR INDIGENOUS PEOPLE'S LEGAL SERVICES

Statistics show legal problems are more prevalent among vulnerable groups, including Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, the unemployed, single parents, people living in disadvantaged housing and those whose main income is a government payment.^{vi}

Survey results from the Law and Justice Foundation of New South Wales show that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people are more likely to experience multiple legal problems – including government, health and rights-related issues – and they are less likely to finalise their legal problems.^{vii} This suggests Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Australians require greater levels of legal assistance in order to resolve their legal issues and achieve positive outcomes.

The poorest legal outcomes happen where people are unable to take appropriate action, due to cost, stress or a lack of information. It is vital that we increase funding to Indigenous legal services so that more Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples have access to legal advice and representation. This will also have a number of positive outcomes, including addressing incarceration rates, which are currently 15 times higher for Indigenous Australians than the rest of the Australian population.^{viii}

Our plan includes doubling funding to Indigenous family violence prevention legal services in 2014-2015 and increasing funding to other Indigenous legal assistance services such as interpreter services by 50% in 2014-2015.

The Greens believe all Australians have the right to legal assistance and to have their legal problems resolved in a fair and timely manner. We have an opportunity to improve outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples through an increase in funding to Indigenous legal services. This is all part of creating a fairer, more equitable system which benefits all Australians – not just those in privileged positions.

> ADDRESSING RISING COURT FEES

A 2013 Senate Inquiry into the impact of rising federal court fees found the unprecedented increases to court fees in 2010 and 2013 'have inhibited access to justice in Australia'.^{ix}

Evidence from academic experts, peak bodies in the legal profession and representatives of legal assistance providers showed increases in court fees have had practical impacts on individuals and families.^x

The Greens' plan to improve access to justice addresses the Inquiry's recommendations.

We will invest \$137.7 million over the forward estimates to return Federal court fees to 2010-2011 levels, subject to indexation.

We will amend the application form for exemptions from paying court fees, in the Federal Court of Australia and the Federal Circuit Court of Australia, to remove any ambiguity concerning the ability of clients of Community Legal Centres to access a fee exemption.

Our plan will also introduce a fee exemption category for clients who are being represented on a pro bono basis in Federal courts.

The Greens believe it is merit, not income, which should determine whether people can seek redress through the courts. Our plan to return court fees to 2010-2011 levels will improve access to justice for a great number of Australians.



> WHY OUR PLAN IS DIFFERENT

- **The current environment** for access to justice in Australia is bleak. The old parties are failing the hundreds of thousands of Australians who currently have unmet legal needs.
- **Access to the legal system is becoming less and less attainable** for many Australians, particularly Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Australians, the unemployed and single parents. Our plan is to make justice a reality for all Australians – not just those who can afford expensive legal representation.
- **The Greens** have a long-term commitment to access to justice. In 2013, we initiated a Senate Inquiry into the impact of Federal Court fee increases since 2010.
- **Our plan** will pave the way for more Australians to receive legal assistance and have help to solve their legal problems. The Greens remain a strong, caring, progressive voice for improved access to justice.

ⁱThe Australia Institute, *Justice for All* (2012), 2.

<<https://www.tai.org.au/file.php?file=../IP8%20Justice%20for%20all.pdf>>

ⁱⁱThe Australia Institute, *Justice for All* (2012), 1.

<<https://www.tai.org.au/file.php?file=../IP8%20Justice%20for%20all.pdf>>

ⁱⁱⁱCommunity Law Australia, *Unaffordable and out of Reach: The Problem of Access to the Australian Legal System* (2012), 6.

<http://www.communitylawaustralia.org.au/wpcontent/uploads/2012/07/CLA_Report_Final.pdf>

^{iv}National Association of Community Legal Centres, *Poor funding means too many turned away from free legal help* (2013)

<http://www.naclc.org.au/cb_pages/news/Poorfundingmeanstoomanyturnedawayfromfreelegalhelp.php>

^vInstitute for Sustainable Futures, *The Economic Value of Community Legal Centres* (2006), 4.

<<http://www.isf.uts.edu.au/publications/edgertonpartridge2006economicvalue.pdf>>

^{vi}Law and Justice Foundation of New South Wales, *Legal Australia-Wide Survey: Legal need in Australia report* (2012).

<[http://www.lawfoundation.net.au/ljf/site/templates/LAW_AUS/\\$file/LAW_Survey_Australia.pdf](http://www.lawfoundation.net.au/ljf/site/templates/LAW_AUS/$file/LAW_Survey_Australia.pdf)>

^{vii}Law and Justice Foundation of New South Wales, *Legal needs of Indigenous people in Australia* (2013), 2.

<[http://www.lawfoundation.net.au/ljf/site/templates/UpdatingJustice/\\$file/UJ25_Legal_needs_of_Indigenous_people_FINAL.pdf](http://www.lawfoundation.net.au/ljf/site/templates/UpdatingJustice/$file/UJ25_Legal_needs_of_Indigenous_people_FINAL.pdf)>

^{viii}Australian Bureau of Statistics, *Prisoners in Australia* (2012), 8.

<[http://www.ausstats.abs.gov.au/ausstats/subscriber.nsf/0/24B61FAA213E5470CA257B3C000DCF8A/\\$File/45170_2012reissue.pdf](http://www.ausstats.abs.gov.au/ausstats/subscriber.nsf/0/24B61FAA213E5470CA257B3C000DCF8A/$File/45170_2012reissue.pdf)>

^{ix}Senate Legal and Constitutional Affairs References Committee, *Impact of federal court fee increases since 2010 on access to justice in Australia*, Chair's recommendations (2013), 49.

<http://www.aph.gov.au/parliamentary_business/committees/senate_committees?url=legcon_ctte/court_fees/report/report.pdf>

^xSenate Legal and Constitutional Affairs References Committee, *Impact of federal court fee increases since 2010 on access to justice in Australia*, Chair's recommendations (2013), 49.

<http://www.aph.gov.au/parliamentary_business/committees/senate_committees?url=legcon_ctte/court_fees/report/report.pdf>