



# State Budget 2009

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FROM THE MEMBER FOR GEOFF HOWARD

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Tuesday, 5 May, 2009

## BUDGET BOOST FOR POLICE TO KEEP STATE SAFE

The Member for Ballarat East, Geoff Howard today said the record \$1.9 billion Victoria Police budget unveiled in today's State Budget 2009 highlights the Brumby Labor Government's commitment to investing in our police force to deliver a safer Victoria, now and into the future.

Geoff Howard said as part of this record funding an additional **\$48.3 million** will go towards improving police facilities across the state, including the rebuilding of Buninyong Police Station.

"I'm sure the local community of Buninyong will welcome the building of a brand new police station," Mr Howard said.

"In committing to the new Buninyong police station we are ensuring our local police officers have the modern facilities they need to do their job and keep our local area safe.

"The Brumby Government is rebuilding ten regional police stations in this budget – at a cost of \$32.3 million – providing a major boost to regional economies and local jobs.

"Victoria Police have a good record in targeting local builders and contractors for projects in regional areas and anything which stimulates our local economy is obviously a terrific thing."

Mr Howard said **\$16 million** of the \$48.3 million package was allocated to refurbishing Victoria Police accommodation at the World Trade Centre and ensuring planning is undertaken for an efficient relocation to another site.

"Since coming to office in 1999, this Government has committed nearly \$450 million to rebuilding or significantly refurbishing over 160 police stations and residences across the State.

"I am proud to say that over three quarters of these new police facilities have been in regional Victoria," Mr Howard said.

Mr Howard said the Budget also has measures to combat the road toll, especially in regional areas, giving police access to the latest in speed, drink and drug detection devices to save lives.

He said the **\$1.8 million** program to install Moving Mode Radar units into police cars would allow police to monitor traffic speeds while patrolling.

"This equipment is an effective way to reduce crashes on undivided highways in regional areas."

Mr Howard also announced that there would be a toughening up of the Brumby Government's anti-hoon regime.

"Under new laws, first-time offenders caught speeding at 70 kilometres per hour or more above the speed limit will have their vehicle immediately impounded for three months."

Mr Howard said new laws would also target repeat drink, drug and unauthorised drivers.

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“Drivers who speed excessively, repeatedly drive under the influence of alcohol or drugs, or drive while disqualified will now face having their vehicle impounded by the Courts,” Mr Howard said.

“The Brumby Government’s anti-hoon regime has been very successful as it hits hooners where it hurts by taking away their car.

“I know our community will join with me in welcoming a toughening up of our hoon laws as they are a menace to our local neighbourhood and endanger themselves and others with their irresponsible behaviour.”

Mr Howard said the Brumby Government recognised graffiti continued to be a problem and was responding with a further funding commitment.

“We recognise graffiti is a stain on local communities and we will deliver \$4.5 million to extend the Government’s successful Graffiti Prevention and Removal Strategy, Mr Howard said.

“As part of the Government’s graffiti strategy we will continue to provide grants to local communities for graffiti removal projects and put low-risk offenders to work cleaning up graffiti in neighbourhoods as reparation for their crimes.”

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