

**News**

# Impacts of state budget review

THE state government recently reviewed its 2012-13 budget and has had to make cuts to create \$464million in savings over the next four years.

Treasurer Jack Snelling said some tough decisions were made but necessary since commonwealth revenue has not kept pace with the growing economy.

"If GST collections had kept up with the national economic growth, we would have an extra \$1.9billion in the South Australian budget over the next four years," Mr Snelling said.

"We don't and, combined with continued pressures on the health budget, some tough decisions have needed to be made across government to keep our finances sustainable."

Many are claiming the savings will hurt the state in numerous ways, and the ripple effects are expected to be felt on Yorke Peninsula and in the Mid North.

### Health care

Mr Snelling aims to save \$171million over the next three years by asking government departments to be one per cent more efficient.

The Australian Nursing and Midwifery Federation South Australia branch said this will increase pressure on healthcare.

SA branch CEO/secretary Professor Elizabeth Dabars said the one per cent agency dividend — up from 0.25 per cent — could cause significant job losses.

"With the revised savings target, health will bear the burden of an anticipated total 1750 additional job losses by 2015-16 across all departments," Professor Dabars said.

### Sports facilities

The SA Local Government Association raised concerns about a \$4million cut to the funding for sporting facilities over the next year and a half.

The LGA has estimated this will leave about \$2million per year for every community sporting organisation in the state to share.

District Council of the Copper Coast recently collected money from local organisations to fund a master plan it hopes to use to apply for grants to upgrade the Copper Coast Sport and Leisure Centre.

"We are in a unique position that we have a regional facility that will allow us to seek federal funding," CEO Peter Harder said.

"We also have a state school that needs the facility to function and may be able to seek funding through the education department.

"Funding opportunities change

regularly, but whatever happens we still need to have a master plan and feasibility study completed for the facility; without that, we will keep doing ad-hoc upgrades that will lead to a substandard facility in the long term."

### Waste and recycling

The LGA also criticised the state government for proposing to privatise Zero Waste, its recycling advisory and grants support unit.

Zero Waste has provided funding to local councils in recent years, notably to aid their transitions from dumps to transfer stations.

"The budget paper is showing they plan to continue to increase the hidden tax on ratepayers known as the Solid Waste Levy while reducing reinvestment back in to the sector through recycling and other beneficial waste management initiatives," LGA president Kym McHugh said.

### Primary industries and producers

Shadow Minister for Agriculture, Food and Fisheries Adrian Pederick accused the government of leaving primary producers to pick up its financial slack.

As part of the budget review, there will be another \$13.1million in savings measures over the next three years for primary industries, on top of the \$12.3million announced last June.

Primary producers received \$7.8 million in cost recovery measures.