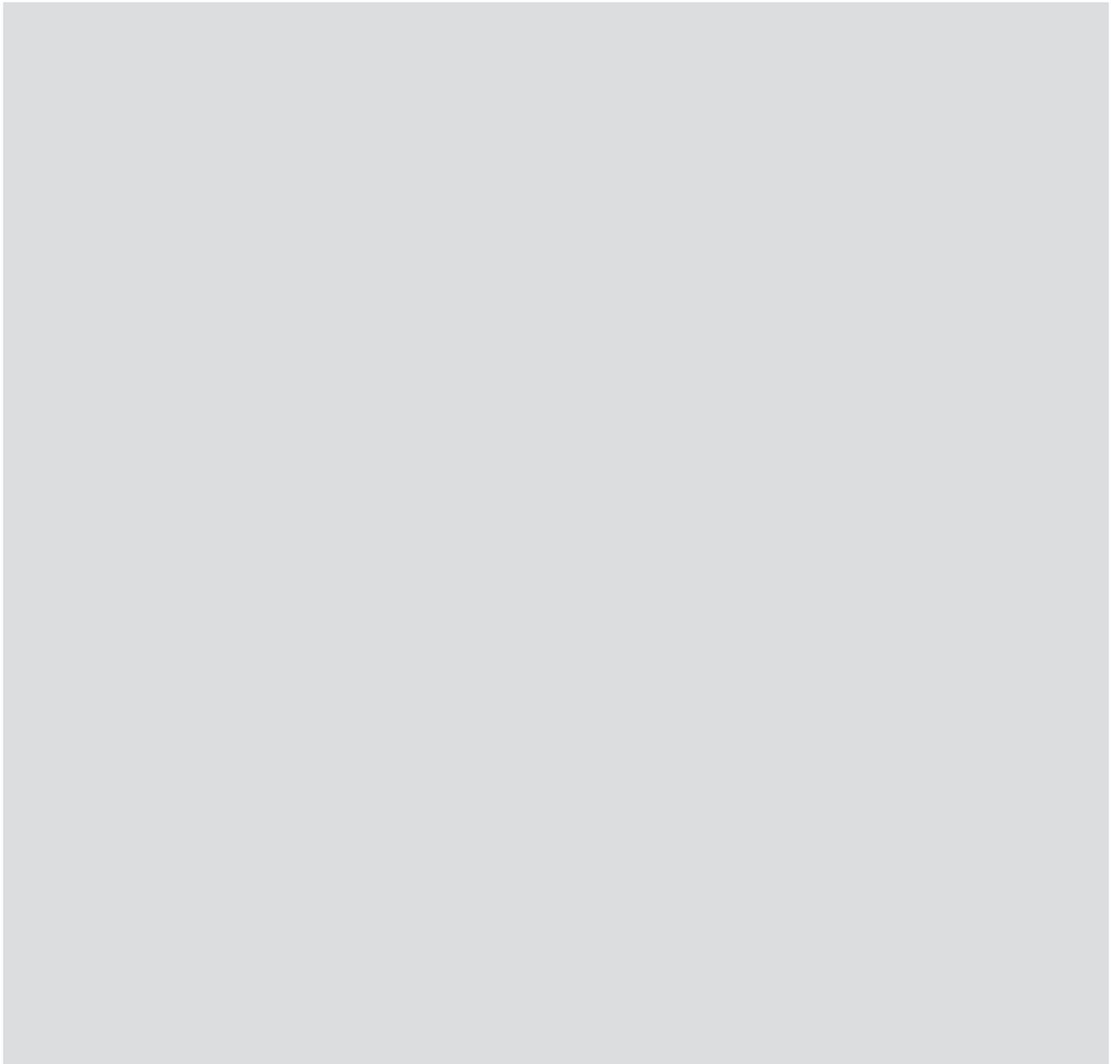




## National Platform



# Chapter 3: Building Australia's future

## Introduction

- 1 Investment in people, skills and infrastructure is crucial to a strong economy. In the 21st century, successful nations are those with highly skilled workforces and modern, well planned infrastructure. Labor recognises that Australia is an economy in transition, in a world where economic power has shifted dramatically to the Asia-Pacific and where the increase in demand for our resources is unprecedented. Labor understands the importance of infrastructure investment and the need for an activist industry policy to boost productivity and continued economic growth and prosperity.
- 2 Labor has a strong tradition of nation building. Previous Labor governments had the vision to build the transcontinental railway, the Snowy Hydro Electricity Scheme and to invest in massive urban infrastructure that provided sewage and running water to many Australian homes for the first time. More recently, our economic stimulus plan heralded a comprehensive period of nation building that protected jobs and boosted long-term productivity and economic prosperity.
- 3 The Australian economy is diverse and priorities differ across industries and in regional, urban, coastal and remote contexts. Labor understands this diversity and the patchwork nature of the economy and it is reflected in our infrastructure and industry policies. Labor also recognises the critical role of state, territory and local governments in delivering infrastructure and essential services, and in improving productivity right across Australia.
- 4 Labor has always been the party of regional development and investing in the regions. Successive Labor governments have recognised the role of the Commonwealth in regional development and introduced innovative policies to address regional needs. By contrast, Coalition governments have abrogated their responsibility to regional development.
- 5 The Australian economy is also adapting in response to global markets, climate change and new technologies. Labor is committed to managing this change. We are putting innovation, science and research at the centre of our approach to economic and social development. We are investing in training and skills to equip our workforce for the future. Labor is providing the necessary support to ensure that all Australians should have the opportunity to have meaningful work, and recognise that government has a role to play in ensuring this.

## Labor values

- 6 We believe the federal government needs to provide leadership in planning and delivering national infrastructure, including transport, water and communications networks. Building world-class infrastructure creates jobs, supports jobs and is the means by which our economy grows.
- 7 Labor believes governments have a responsibility to intervene in the economy to help achieve economic, environmental and social outcomes to address market failure. Labor will intervene where appropriate to advance broader economic, social and regional objectives.
- 8 Labor believes that the support of a well resourced public sector workforce whose rights are respected is fundamental to achieving these objectives. Australians rely on this workforce to deliver quality services and infrastructure that secures our future and as such our investment in their skills, their job security and their rights at work remains a cornerstone of our community and our economy.
- 9 Labor will pursue an industry policy based on supporting innovation and improved competitiveness, supporting jobs in all sectors of the economy, including new clean energy industries. Labor recognises the special competitive challenges facing manufacturing and related service industries. A vibrant manufacturing sector is an essential feature of the economy. Governments have an important role in building the competitiveness of industries and business and increasing their capacity to penetrate markets, gain access to finance, increase employment, innovate, and diversify. Labor will use strategic public and private investment in innovation to grow new industries and transform existing ones.
- 10 Labor is committed to building strong and dynamic regional communities. Regions play a vital role in Australia's economy. Labor is investing in regional Australia and in nation-building infrastructure to enable our regions to prosper. Investment in quality government services, local skills development and a high speed National Broadband Network are vital to our region's economic health. The patchwork nature of our economy also means we must engage the regions. The regions are the patches and by tapping in to their local input, we can make the patches work better. If communities are stronger and more connected at the local level, overall productivity rises at the national level with benefits for regions and the nation. Labor affirms its commitment to utilising the local expertise available in our regions through the structure of Regional Development Australia to deliver leadership on economic development and diversification for their communities.
- 11 Labor recognises the threat posed by climate change. This is particularly acute in regional Australia and for employees and businesses in agriculture, tourism and related industries such as retail and hospitality. Labor is committed to tackling climate change and ensuring support for regional Australia in responding to the challenge of climate change including drought, increased adverse weather events and environmental degradation. Labor recognises that in protecting our communities, well resourced and maintained emergency services are necessary in protecting our communities.
- 12 Labor supports the continued development of Australia's natural resources through a competitive minerals, resources and energy industry, which can create export-oriented jobs for our modern economy. Labor believes that agriculture and fisheries industries will continue to contribute a large share of export revenue and economic activity in regional and rural Australian communities, and that these industries must be supported as they adapt to climate change and shifts in global markets.
- 13 Labor believes that government has a key role to play in infrastructure financing and provision, and also in providing the forward planning of projects for well-managed private sector investment, and providing a framework through which superannuation funds can make long-term infrastructure investment. Labor supports working in partnership with the private sector in the provision of infrastructure and services where this represents good value to the Australian community.

- 14 Labor is committed to lifting Australia's competitiveness, so that more people buy Australian goods and services, both at home and abroad. Labor believes that maximising Australian industry participation in domestic and international projects is critical to supporting and creating Australian jobs. Labor's aim is to capitalise on the steps it has already taken to boost Australian industry participation, including:
- increasing support for the Industry Capability Network through the Supplier Access to Major Projects program
  - appointing Supplier Advocates to champion Australian industry in the government marketplace and improve competitiveness
  - requiring all firms bidding for major Commonwealth contracts and work on major Commonwealth-funded infrastructure projects to submit Australian Industry Participation Plans
  - applying more comprehensive monitoring and accountability criteria and transparency arrangements for firms accessing duty free imports through the Enhanced Project By-law scheme to ensure opportunities are being made available to Australian industry
  - requiring project proponents to list details of opportunities for Australian industry to participate in major for Enhanced Project By-law scheme projects greater than \$500 million
  - requiring accountability, auditing and public reporting against the success of Australian Industry Participation Plans encourage state governments to consider industry participation, manufacturing and Australian content as part of the approvals processes of resources projects.
- 15 Labor is committed to the pursuit of progress in science, industry and technology. Labor believes in the power of ideas to transform our nation for a richer, fairer and greener future. We turn to science and research to understand the world, and to help it change. We need new ideas to meet emerging challenges and pursue new opportunities with confidence. We seek to harness new technologies for the benefit of all Australians.
- 16 Labor is a social democratic party and believes in activist government. We seek to transform our economy, business by business, and region by region, through science and innovation. Government and industry must be co-investors in the jobs and opportunities of the future. Assistance to industry and business will be structured to achieve clear employment, training, research, innovation, local content and export objectives. Labor builds partnerships that turn research into results. We believe that universities and research agencies must be responsive to the communities that sustain them. The business community must share responsibility for the strength of the knowledge assets they harness. Government must broker the partnership, and help to bridge the cultural and practical divides between the laboratory and the factory floor.
- 17 Labor helps provide the tools for breakthrough discovery. We know that government has a significant role to play in building and providing access to world-class research infrastructure. Australians will reap the maximum benefit from the efforts of our scientists and researchers if we provide them with the best infrastructure we can afford.
- 18 Labor defends the integrity and independence of research. We recognise that science and research must be free of commercial influence and political interference. The rigorous application of the scientific method and scholarly debate is essential to ensure public confidence in the discoveries of our scientists and researchers. We value universities as repositories of knowledge, havens for advanced learning, sites of groundbreaking research and hubs of community engagement.

## Labor achievements

### Infrastructure reform and investment

We have:

- established the NBN, which will transform our commercial, education and social communication
- restored national leadership and created Infrastructure Australia to undertake long-term planning and evaluate infrastructure proposals
- set up a Major Cities Unit, which is driving forward our National Urban Plan that will improve productivity, sustainability and liveability
- established the \$37 billion, six-year Nation Building Program to modernise the nation's road and rail infrastructure, lower transport costs, improve productivity, tackle the rising cost of urban congestion and cut travel times
- delivered the Nation Building Plan—more than 44,000 nation-building infrastructure projects, which are supporting jobs today while building a platform for future growth, including major investments in transport, housing, clean energy and the largest school modernisation program in Australia's history
- developed Australia's first ever comprehensive national aviation policy statement—the Aviation White Paper—which provides a blueprint for growth while maintaining the highest safety and security standards and addressing community needs
- announced the most comprehensive package of reforms to the Australian shipping industry ever undertaken, including a zero tax rate for Australian ship operators. These reforms will improve productivity and ensure the safety and security of our marine environment for future generations
- improved road safety at hundreds of dangerous black spots and rail crossings and added rest stops for heavy vehicles
- boosted export performance by investing in rail and port infrastructure to reduce freight times and remove bottlenecks facilitating more efficient movement of goods and increasing productivity
- supported local communities by completing over 3000 local community infrastructure projects, such as playgrounds, libraries and community halls.

### Regional, remote and local communities

We have:

- doubled funding for roads and increased investment in rail ten-fold
- invested \$1.8 billion to provide critical infrastructure upgrades to hospitals and health services for regional Australians
- invested \$109.9 million for universities with regional campuses through increased and better targeted loading payments to regional areas
- provided \$916 million for the first projects under the Regional Infrastructure Fund to help unlock the economic potential of our regions
- commenced the Farming for our Future program so that farming communities can better manage the impact of climate change
- increased funding for the remote air services and aerodromes to ensure that these communities can have access to the Royal Flying Doctor Service and other basic services such as mail deliveries and fresh food

- improved port access transport networks to ensure more products and produce are delivered from remote mines and farms to Australia's export markets
- invested record funding in regional and inter-state rail networks to better link remote communities with major regional centres and capital cities
- established the Department of Regional Australia, Regional Development and Local Government, responsible to a senior Cabinet Minister
- established a House of Representatives Standing Committee on Regional Australia allowing Members to inquire into the needs and resourcing of our regions and the impact of legislation on regional communities
- established a dedicated Cabinet committee for Regional Australia and Regional Development
- revitalised and strengthened the nation's network of 55 Regional Development Australia (RDA) committees. The work of the committee is supported through the newly established Department of Regional Australia, Regional Development and Local Government with \$20 million of new funding in addition to the \$15 million of existing expenditure
- commenced delivering on regional investment through an almost \$1 billion investment in the Regional Development Australia Fund
- assisted Australians moving to regional Australia by providing \$1.7 million towards the Velocities campaign that helps people to relocate to regional Australia and will drive growth now and into the future
- increased funding for Tasmanian island communities through the Bass Strait Freight Equalisation Scheme
- delivered a landmark agreement that will provide certainty for Tasmania's forestry industry and protect the state's ancient forests
- invested record funding in local government in remote areas to deliver better municipal services, community facilities and remote roads
- made significant investments in northern Australia and laid out the policy foundations to enable sustainable development in the longer term, including:
  - committing record funding to upgrade transport infrastructure in north Queensland, Western Australia and the Northern Territory
  - signing a National Partnership Agreement in 2009 with the Western Australian Government to implement the East Kimberley Development Package. This package included \$195 million to support economic development in the East Kimberley through investment focused on social and common use infrastructure
  - committing funding as part of the Ord Stage 2 development in the East Kimberley to address social and economic disadvantage in the region
  - investing in community infrastructure in northern Australia through the Better Regions and the Regional and Local Community Infrastructure Programs
  - investing in housing, education and social infrastructure in Indigenous communities in northern Australia to address disadvantage
  - establishing the Office of Northern Australia to provide high level advice about priorities and strategies that promote sustainable development and barriers impeding the development of significant initiatives in northern Australia
- reforming and reconvening the Northern Land and Water Taskforce, an independent group of Australian experts to examine the potential for new developments in northern Australia that rely on significant local or regional water resources and identify opportunities for further development

- undertaking the first national infrastructure audit to identify backlogs and under-utilisation of infrastructure, including in northern Australia
- publishing a statistical compendium of data relating to northern Australia, which covers population, the economy and workforce, social conditions, transport, infrastructure, climate, land use and industry
- committing \$6 million to the Northern Australia Sustainable Futures program as a response to the final report of the Northern Australia Land and Water Taskforce
- taking a whole-of-government approach to a strategic infrastructure plan for the region that will underpin economic development and economic diversification across northern Australia.

## Industry policy

We have:

- established the Buy Australia at Home and Abroad program, to provide better linkages between major resource projects and Australian firms
- developed a Minerals Resource Rent Tax to maximise the benefits to all Australians flowing from the increased need for Australian resources arising chiefly from the increased demand for infrastructure in rapidly developing economies
- established a single, national petroleum regulator to improve regulation across the sector
- established the National Radiation Dose Register and the National Mine Safety Framework. The Labor Government places the highest priority on worker safety, particularly miner worker safety.
- committed to cut the company tax for incorporated business in 2012–13 and depreciation changes for cars and assets that will improve cash flow for small business.

## Labor priorities

### A national infrastructure agenda

- 19 Labor believes that investment in infrastructure can play an important role in generating jobs and economic activity during the global downturn, while also providing a foundation for economic recovery. Labor has established a policy framework to allow for long-term planning of Australian infrastructure needs. This framework includes identifying, prioritising and redressing inadequacies in Australia's nationally significant infrastructure, as well as undertaking appropriate regulatory reform to ensure efficient use of infrastructure and to remove obstacles to infrastructure planning, financing and delivery.
- 20 Labor will continue to provide the leadership and coordination required to ensure adequate investment is made in Australia's infrastructure, and that infrastructure priorities are delivered. Labor's national infrastructure policies will be shaped by:
- the work of Infrastructure Australia, which is driving the development of a long term coordinated national approach to infrastructure planning and investment
  - financing through the Building Australia Fund, which will provide an ongoing investment fund for the development of nationally significant infrastructure
  - a new national evidence-based approach to identifying and prioritising nationally significant transport, water, energy and communications infrastructure

- the development of a pipeline of projects through the National Infrastructure Priority List and National Audit of significant infrastructure
- the targeting of key areas requiring regulatory and governance reform to improve the utilisation of existing infrastructure
- an acknowledgment of the rapid growth of cities and towns outside the capitals, and the increasing decentralisation of the population, particularly in Queensland, and the challenges, for the provision of infrastructure, that those circumstances will cause.

21 A crucial plank in lifting Australia's productivity is continuing to invest in economically productive infrastructure. Labor is committed to strengthening Infrastructure Australia to develop long-term strategies to tackle infrastructure bottlenecks, improve our vital freight networks, and promote private funding of domestic infrastructure by investors like superannuation funds.

22 Labor supports Infrastructure Australia's ongoing responsibility for maintaining a strategic blueprint for our infrastructure needs, in partnership with all spheres of government, the private sector, unions and the community. Infrastructure Australia will continue to develop updated national Infrastructure Priority Lists to assist the public and private sectors to plan future infrastructure investments. Prioritisation will also assist the implementation of regulatory reforms to ensure policy settings are structured to remove barriers to the planning, financing and delivery of infrastructure. Infrastructure Australia will also provide guidance on the most appropriate procurement method for infrastructure projects.

23 Labor will take into account a range of considerations when determining what constitutes good value for money, not just purchase price. Agencies will not be forced to choose the cheapest suppliers when this would have detrimental social or environmental effects. Agencies will be required to consider all direct and indirect benefits and costs over the whole life of each product and service, along with the performance history of each prospective supplier. Labor will establish Fair Work Principles to ensure that procurement decisions are consistent with the Fair Work Act. Labor will introduce a requirement that supplies and their contractors comply with the Fair Work Principles.

24 The most appropriate financing instruments will be determined on a case by case basis ensuring value for money is preserved. This process will include, but not be limited to:

- a rigorous and publicly transparent public sector comparator that accurately reflects risks
- allowance for all the costs of different procurement methods
- ensuring that employee pay and conditions are not the differentiating factor between options
- high levels of transparency and accountability.

25 Labor will take an integrated, cross-modal approach to infrastructure, treating our infrastructure as a network rather than a collection of individual projects. This will require aligning, planning, regulation, financing and delivery of infrastructure.

26 Labor will continue to facilitate the development of nationally significant infrastructure using the most appropriate financing instruments. It will continue to be necessary for some infrastructure to be jointly procured by government and the private sector. Labor believes government has a key role to play in infrastructure financing and provision and also in providing the forward planning of projects for well-managed private sector investment, and a framework through which superannuation funds can make long-term infrastructure investment. Labor will work in partnership with the private sector in the provision of infrastructure and services where this represents good value to the Australian community.

- 27 Labor recognises that Public Private Partnerships (PPPs) have a legitimate role to play in financing infrastructure. Labor believes that PPP policy and guidelines should be nationally consistent and provide for best practice infrastructure provision, and best practice employment standards. Labor recognises that PPPs will not be the most suitable funding mechanism for many infrastructure projects and that risk should be considered on a case by case basis. Labor believes PPPs should only be used where they represent value for money, and that risk should be allocated to the party best able to manage it. Regardless of the source of capital, Labor will ensure that its fair employment principles extend to the builders and operators of projects built using PPPs.
- 28 The capital required to meet our infrastructure needs will be met from a mix of public and private sources. Labor will work with the superannuation industry, particularly industry super funds, to harness the retirement savings of Australia's workforce to build our infrastructure, and provide stable investment returns for their members. Labor will allocate a share of future surpluses to the \$12.6 Billion Building Australia Fund, to provide a stable funding pool to invest in our critical infrastructure needs. Labor will initiate a review of the mechanisms that support the dual objective of superannuation investment in priority infrastructure and supporting sustainable outcomes for superannuation members.

## Completing the National Broadband Network

- 29 Labor understands that the big drivers of productivity are key investments in quality infrastructure, a skilled workforce and the ability to innovate and capture new opportunities. Few investments will bring us a greater economic return than broadband. That's why Labor has put the National Broadband Network and our Digital Economy Strategy at the heart of our policy program.
- 30 Labor is the nation-building party. Just like the Snowy Mountains Scheme, we are committed to building the infrastructure of the future. The NBN is transformative infrastructure that will pay for itself over time and unlock opportunities of the digital economy not yet even imagined.
- 31 Labor values are about giving people the opportunity to get ahead. They're also about making sure no one gets left behind. Under Labor, no community in Australia will be without access to high-speed broadband. Every home, school, hospital and business will receive high-speed broadband via the NBN—no one will miss out.
- 32 Under Labor, 93 per cent of Australian premises will have access to a high-speed fibre network capable of providing broadband speeds of up to one gigabit per second. The remaining seven per cent of premises will have access to next-generation fixed wireless and satellite technologies providing peak speeds of 12 megabits per second.
- 33 Labor understands the power that the NBN brings to communities across the country—to bridge the digital divide, to provide better educational outcomes, to improve health service delivery and increase economic opportunities. This is what Labor offers now and what we can offer into the future, thanks to the rollout of the NBN.
- 34 Labor appreciates that broadband is an economic game-changer. A Deloitte-Access Economics Report released mid-2011 estimated that the internet contributes around \$50 billion a year or 3.6 per cent of Australia's GDP, the equivalent size of our agriculture industry. That's why we're determined to deliver the NBN and realise its potential through our National Digital Economy Strategy. The possibilities are endless and truly global. Through the NBN, Labor is creating the jobs of today, tomorrow and well into the future.

- 35 Labor supports fair and equitable access to services and infrastructure for Australians in regional and remote communities. We're committed to delivering uniform wholesale national pricing within technologies; a universal price for all customers receiving optic fibre, a universal price for all customers receiving fixed wireless, and a universal price for all customers receiving satellite. Uniform national wholesale pricing will help break down the tyranny of distance and bridge the digital divide, providing fairer outcomes for families in regional, rural and remote Australia.
- 36 Labor understands that distance brings unique challenges to Australia's regional and remote communities. We recognise the vital role of telecommunications in supporting regional sustainability, economic development and prosperity. Labor is committed to delivering increased backhaul competition, lower broadband prices and better services for our communities in regional and rural Australia.
- 37 Labor is delivering important microeconomic reform to our telecommunications sector, reforms that will ensure a level-playing field in telecommunications, driving genuine competition at the retail level.
- 38 Labor believes in a strong regulatory framework for telecommunications. Labor is delivering a regulatory environment that promotes enhanced consumer safeguards, greater retail competition and better services for families and businesses.

## Developing Australia's cities

- 39 Labor believes there is a distinct role for the national government in leading and coordinating urban development. The failure to invest in Australia's cities in the past has hindered economic development and undermined social cohesion. Australia relies heavily on the productivity of its cities for national prosperity. The majority of Australia's population and businesses are located in urban areas and our cities are hubs of economic activity that link Australia to the global economy. Labor recognises that rapid growth and development has imposed challenges such as patterns of growth, water supply, urban congestion, climate change and adaptation.
- 40 Labor is delivering new urban development policies through a Major Cities Unit. This coordinated and integrated approach to urban policy development will improve the productivity, sustainability and liveability of major cities in Australia.
- 41 Labor is working with and across all spheres of government, the private sector and the community to improve governance structures and develop integrated long term strategies to better manage land use planning, housing affordability, settlement patterns, climate change and urban congestion.
- 42 The Sustainable Communities package aims to improve the planning and design of our cities and make more efficient use of new and existing infrastructure. The outer suburbs of our capital cities and major regional centres in particular are experiencing population growth pressures and housing and transport affordability pressures. New programs will deliver demonstration projects within capital cities and regional cities that drive urban renewal by:
- investment in capital projects that improve public transport services and support new local jobs
  - working in partnership with the capital city Lord Mayors on demonstration projects that enhance the liveability and sustainability of our capital cities
  - funding capital projects that support urban development or renewal, reduce costs and improve access to transport
  - more efficient and effective use of new and existing infrastructure through smart technology
  - showing how new investments in community facilities and better planning can help improve quality of life in our outer and growth suburbs
  - funding projects in outer suburbs and major regional cities that meet the Council of Australian Governments national criteria and promote improved housing and transport supply.

- 43 Labor is also investing in making our cities more liveable, through design or capital work projects. We are supporting state, territory and local governments to plan and provide for employment precincts, manufacturing hubs and multi-function developments close to residential areas, to reduce travel times to work and services.
- 44 The rapid growth of our cities, as well as the outward expansion of cities over the last 50 years, has created significant congestion on urban roads, which has had an impact on quality of life and reduced family and social time. Labor believes that safe, clean and efficient public transport in our major cities is critical to addressing the economic, environmental and social problem of urban congestion. Managed motorways can be effective in improving productivity by reducing congestion on busy roads, and deliver important sustainability and liveability outcomes from our transport network. Labor is investing in the development of a national smart managed motorways trial to ease congestion, lower urban emissions, and expand the capacity of existing outer city road infrastructure networks.
- 45 Well targeted, high quality investment in infrastructure is vital to lift the productivity of our cities. New measures to encourage increased private sector participation and investment in our nation's infrastructure are being put in place. The Infrastructure Investment and Financing Reforms package of measures will improve the quality of infrastructure development and private sector opportunities to invest in infrastructure, including in urban areas.
- 46 Labor is committed to making our cities more productive, sustainable and liveable into the future. Labor will provide national leadership by working with state, territory and local governments and the private sector to deliver the infrastructure and services our urban communities need to thrive and prosper.

## Strengthening regional and remote Australia

- 47 Australia's regional communities, from large regional cities and towns through to remote communities, coastal and inland, are central to our national identity and integral to our economic prosperity. Regional Australia needs the support of a nation-building government, committed to providing modern infrastructure and quality services, and ensuring decent standards for working Australians and families in regional centres and more isolated communities throughout our nation.
- 48 Labor is committed to engaging with regional communities to develop evidence-based policies, undertake practical regional planning and ensure that national policies achieve desired outcomes. While Labor maintains that regional development should be part of mainstream policy, it will retain regional-specific programs. Labor will ensure transparency and accountability in the delivery of these programs.
- 49 Labor is committed to enabling regional communities to reach their full potential and become more resilient, more viable, more sustainable and more prosperous. Labor commits to ensuring regional communities have physical access to essential government services. If regions are stronger and more connected at the local level, overall productivity rises at the national level. Labor has put in place programs and mechanisms to enable local communities to connect across all three levels of government and develop creative local solutions to local issues.
- 50 Labor recognises that distance brings unique challenges to Australia's remote communities, particularly access to basic services such as food, shelter, education, health care, communications and transportation.

- 51 Regional communities face unique challenges arising from the mining boom, global economic changes, population movements, the disproportionate effects of climate change and limited access to adequate levels of care and support.
- 52 Labor supports equitable access to services and infrastructure for Australians in remote communities, and will work with remote communities and industries to maximise their economic potential.
- 53 Labor will fund programs and implement policies to ensure government delivers practical improvements for remote communities and increase the economic contribution that remote communities make to the nation.
- 54 Labor recognises the diverse range of needs and issues facing this nation's regions. Coastal communities face different challenges to inland regions and solutions are not possible within a single policy approach.
- 55 Labor is committed to continue to work with regional communities to address these challenges, develop practical local solutions and ensure that living in regional and remote Australia can continue to provide a high quality of life for Australians.
- 56 Labor believes that Australia's regions are not only important drivers of our national economy but they are also a source of social and cultural diversity. In order for regional communities to continue making a vital contribution to the nation, they must remain strong and sustainable. Where there is demonstrable need for labour and skills by new arrivals they will be encouraged to settle in such areas.
- 57 Labor recognises that a strong community is underpinned by a stable economic and income base, reasonable physical infrastructure such as roads, telecommunications, and water infrastructure, social infrastructure such as schools, hospitals, community facilities, and good access to health and community services. It also recognises that as key drivers of regional economies, sectors such as agriculture, tourism and retail are interdependent, and require a whole of economy approach to regional development and cross sector policies across government agencies.
- 58 Labor believes that all Australians, regardless of where they live, or where they come from, should have reasonable and affordable access to services including:
- secure and appropriate housing
  - transport
  - basic utilities
  - universal and affordable broadband facilities and mobile access
  - quality education and training opportunities
  - health and aged care
  - financial services
  - personal, family and social services
  - employment services
  - emergency services
  - information on government programs and policies.
- 59 With these basic foundations in place, individuals within regional communities are better able to form social bonds, contribute to their community and the nation's prosperity and to make plans about their future and their children's future.

- 60 Labor recognises that all three levels of government are essential in developing Australia's regions. Labor will provide the national leadership necessary to work with state, territory and local governments to implement targeted strategies and policies in regional Australia. These will include the development of local industry and employment opportunities, access to education, health, housing and community support services, and improved transport links.
- 61 The use of fly-in fly-out workforces or drive-in drive-out workforces presents particular challenges for some areas in regional Australia. Labor recognises that these communities have specific infrastructure, housing and service needs. Labor is committed to improving data collection in these communities to ascertain the extent of these needs and has referred to the House of Representatives Standing Committee on Regional Australia an inquiry into these workforce practices in regional Australia.
- 62 Labor will seek to ensure that rapidly increasing rental costs and other costs of living do not deprive local communities of having locally-based professionals, service industry workers and others not directly employed in mining and resources occupations. Housing affordability and liveability are important considerations in ensuring that growth is sustainable.
- 63 Labor has revitalised and strengthened the Regional Development Australia network of local advisory committees to engage with regional communities and local and state government. The local RDA committees find ways to address the economic, social and environmental needs of each region. They provide local input and strategic advice to all levels of government on the needs of regional communities. Labor is committed to ensuring that Regional Development Australia committees operate in a transparent and accountable manner and are representative of their communities, working closely with state and local governments. To be representative of these communities, the committees must include, for each community falling within their geographic area, persons who are genuinely local, and who have a commitment to realising the opportunities for their region through effective engagement.
- 64 Labor is establishing the \$6 billion Regional Infrastructure Fund linked to the Mineral Resource Rent Tax to help build transport and local infrastructure in communities affected by the mining boom. This will ensure Australians get their fair share of infrastructure investment and a fair return on Australia's mineral wealth.
- 65 Labor will work to enable regions to broaden their traditional economic base—through new partnerships, new skills and new technologies. In this way, communities will become more resilient, more viable and more sustainable in the longer term.
- 66 Labor understands a collaborative approach to regional development that involves all levels of government, the private sector and local communities, will produce the best solutions and outcomes. Strong local engagement will ensure that local employment services are tailored to local job seekers, local skills meet the needs of local employers, and local communities can access the opportunities that better infrastructure, such as the NBN, will create.
- 67 Labor remains committed to embedding regionalism into the way we govern. Regional communities see the opportunities ahead as we embrace the challenges and possibilities ahead. Labor is determined to stand with them and ensure they remain well positioned to meet the opportunities and challenges of the 21st century.

## Local government

- 68 Labor recognises that local government is the level of government closest to the community.
- 69 The role of local government has evolved beyond the traditional municipal and road services to delivering:
- social services such as childcare, aged care, affordable housing and health services
  - environmental services such as coastal management, improved waste management, energy efficiency, and improved catchment and water resources management
  - community infrastructure such as sports grounds, swimming pools, community centres and tourism facilities
  - regional planning and economic development strategies.
- 70 Labor is committed to a new partnership with local government to improve the provision of services and infrastructure for local communities. During the GFC Labor was determined to ensure our nation's economic stability so it called on local government to assist by providing shovel-ready projects under programs including the Regional and Local Community Infrastructure Program. Local government was able to deliver hundreds of projects across the nation, building essential local infrastructure and reinforcing our economy.
- 71 Labor will continue to build on policies to assist local government such as:
- providing record funding through the ongoing Financial Assistance Grants—a program begun by Labor in 1974–75
  - increasing funding for local government-maintained roads through the Roads to Recovery program
  - establishing the first Australian Council of Local Government to consult and engage directly with local government
  - ensuring local government has a voice within Infrastructure Australia and is represented consistently across the Regional Development Australia network
  - participate in a range of programs to provide direct funding to local government.
- 72 Labor will work with local government to consider policies that help make our urban and regional communities more liveable and productive, including urban and regional planning, development assessment and approval processes.
- 73 Labor will promote the role of local government in national and local environmental strategies, such as natural resource management, climate change, water management and natural disasters.
- 74 Labor acknowledges the need for greater local government involvement in pursuing employment and training opportunities, in partnership with other spheres of government, unions, business and regional organisations.
- 75 Labor understands that rising costs and increasing demand for local services have affected the financial sustainability of local governments, in particular, many remote, regional and outer suburban local governments.
- 76 While recognising that Labor is delivering record funding for regional development, we will continue to work with local government to improve efficiency and financial sustainability. We also acknowledge the effectiveness of local government in delivering programs in the interests of local communities.

- 77 Labor will work with local government to achieve best practice in the development, management and maintenance of infrastructure, particularly through asset and financial management frameworks.
- 78 Labor will work with local government to promote collaboration and shared services between councils and with industry skills councils to secure the necessary skills for quality public service in local government.
- 79 Labor will work with local government to build its skills for the future needs of the community including through programs that encourage councils to directly employ and retain employees apprenticeships and trainees.
- 80 Women's representation on local government—as Mayors, Councillors, and General Managers—is unacceptably low. In fact the representation of women in local government is poorer than every other level of government. Labor is committed to working with local government to develop and implement strategies to increase participation by women and Indigenous people in all aspects of local government.
- 81 Labor supports the recognition of local government in the Australian Constitution. Just like the Whitlam and Hawke governments, Labor believes in recognising local government in the nation's foundation document and has appointed an independent expert panel to progress this important issue.

## External territories

- 82 Labor recognises the need for special arrangements between the Commonwealth and the External Territories that are tailored to the particular needs and circumstances of each territory.
- 83 Labor is committed to the good governance of all territories through the maintenance and improvement of the legislative framework for self-governing territories and laws and services for the non self-governing territories.
- 84 Labor believes that the potential of our External Territories and their people will be best realised when they have access to:
- fair and equitable opportunities similar to that in Australian states and mainland territories
  - a diversified economy that recognises the diverse strengths of the populations and environments
  - appropriate economic, social and cultural development strategies addressing the needs and circumstances of each territory
  - governance arrangements that are equitable, fair, sustainable and reflect the islanders' desire for real decision making power and responsibility and a level of autonomy.

## Northern Australia

- 85 Labor believes that northern Australia, identified as that part of Australia north of the Tropic of Capricorn, makes a vital contribution to the national economy, particularly through its resources, agriculture and tourism industries.
- 86 Labor recognises the rich diversity of northern Australian communities as well as its unique and fragile natural environment.
- 87 Labor understands that through distance and decades of under-investment, northern Australia has significant social and economic infrastructure needs.

- 88 Labor believes in encouraging development in northern Australia in a sustainable manner that protects the region's natural environment and its many social and cultural assets while harnessing its potential.
- 89 In addition to recent major investments in northern Australia, Labor will address ongoing infrastructure bottlenecks to remove obstacles for future investment.
- 90 Labor will work with Indigenous communities in northern Australia to tackle systemic disadvantage and ensure access to quality education, housing and basic services, and enable Indigenous Australians to take advantage of employment opportunities.
- 91 Labor will work with relevant state and territory governments, industry, local government and the community to identify further opportunities for investment in northern Australia.
- 92 Labor will take steps to ensure that the natural environment and heritage are protected, and water resources are used sustainably in future development in northern Australia.

## Increasing productivity and opportunity

- 93 Transforming Australia's economy and producing sustainable prosperity requires higher participation, better skills and major industrial innovation. This means we need to invest in people and infrastructure to improve the productive capacity of the economy. Jobs and job security is a key to personal and social wellbeing, to stable family life and strong communities. In particular, Labor is committed to maximising the opportunity for Australians to be employed in secure, high-wage, high-skill jobs.
- 94 Labor believes the dignity and purpose of work should be extended to more Australians. We are committed to delivering new jobs and good quality jobs. At a time when many other developed countries are struggling, the strength of our economy makes it possible for more Australians to participate in the workforce. With unemployment at nearly half that of most developed economies and a huge flow of mining investment supporting economic growth and demand for skills and labour, full employment is a realistic goal, and a Labor goal.
- 95 Labor's agenda for high-quality jobs includes support for a strong manufacturing industry in Australia. We know that a modern manufacturing sector will be driven by a national innovation system, groundbreaking science and technical research, international competitiveness for value-added products and greater productivity. We know that times are tough in the manufacturing sector but are committed to supporting jobs with active industry and sectoral policies.
- 96 Labor is also committed to investing in the drivers of economic progress and productivity by putting innovation, science and research at the heart of our industry policy. Labor sees a vibrant future for manufacturing, the services sector and small businesses. This requires government and industry to work together as we make the transition to a clean energy future and meet the challenges of our patchwork economy.
- 97 Increasing participation is an economic and a social challenge. We know parts of our patchwork economy are struggling. We know Australia is an economy in transition, adapting to new global and domestic skill demands. We also know that some people have been out of work for an extended period, or have a disability or are caring for children or relatives—all of which can make getting or keeping work difficult. We want to create greater opportunity and require greater responsibility in return. We are introducing new rewards, opportunities and responsibilities for key groups with low participation, including improved financial incentives for single parents and Youth Allowance recipients.

- 98 Labor is introducing new measures to increase workforce participation and improve skills. These include:
- investing \$3 billion in a major new skills initiative, including 130,000 new training places
  - strengthening our apprenticeship system so progress is based on skills acquired rather than time served and mentoring 40,000 apprentices to drive completions
  - allowing aged pensioners to earn more without an impact on their pension
  - uncapping university places, which will deliver a 20 per cent increase in the number of funded places
  - delivering a tax cut for people on incomes of up to \$80,000 from 1 July 2012 and improving incentives to work by delivering a tax cut of at least \$300 to 60 per cent of taxpayers
  - tripling the tax-free threshold from 1 July 2012, from \$6000 to \$18,200, meaning that up to one million people will no longer have to lodge a tax return
  - making sure more than 6.5 million low-income earners get more in their pay packets, rather than having to wait until the end of the year
  - reducing effective tax rates for 50,000 single parents who work part-time
  - targeting wage subsidies for the very long term unemployed
  - creating more opportunities for people with disability, through additional wage subsidies and allowing Disability Support Pension recipients to earn more before their pension is affected
  - introducing new approaches in areas of entrenched disadvantage.
- 99 Labor believes education and training is the bedrock of increased social mobility in Australia. Through acquiring knowledge and skills, our citizens can improve their work opportunities and their living standards, and contribute to a more prosperous, productive Australia.
- 100 Our Building Australia's Future Workforce package is putting industry at the heart of the training effort to help meet emerging skills shortages. Central to this package is a National Workforce Development Fund that will deliver around 130,000 high-quality training places directly tailored to industry needs. The training will require co-investment from industry, recognising the shared responsibility for training between the government and industry.
- 101 The fund will be supported by the establishment of a new National Workforce and Productivity Agency. The agency will work closely with industry to identify skills needs and build a more skilled and capable workforce.
- 102 Labor has a fresh vision for skills—a high-quality and responsive training system that meets the longer term labour demand needs and sustains economy growth. Labor is setting tougher new reform standards through the National Agreements for Skills and Workforce Development. This will include increasing the focus on higher level training and aligning effort with economic needs.
- 103 We are also investing in a smarter apprenticeship scheme that works for more Australians. While many Australians start an apprenticeship, less than half of those complete them. Labor is providing support for mentoring, progression and completions. An expansion of the Apprenticeship Access Program will also assist vulnerable job seekers to take on an apprenticeship. Labor is also investing in services to improve the basic employment skills of jobs seekers, which will provide 30,000 additional places in the Language, Literacy and Numeracy Program.

- 104 Labor has also committed to delivering:
- updated apprenticeships—with \$101 million in funding to mentor apprentices and changes to the system to let apprentices progress as their skills increase, rather than time served
  - more funding for language, literacy and numeracy, to help 30,000 job seekers with 800 hours of free language and numeracy training—to help get a job in a high skilled economy
  - reforms to make work pay for jobseekers with a disability and single parents, by allowing them to keep more of their payment if they work more
  - removing the incentive for young people to go on the welfare system early—because we believe they should either be learning or earning
  - funding wage subsidies for the long-term unemployed and disabled—along with extending work experience and work for the dole to 11 out of 12 months of the year for those who have not worked for more than two years.
- 105 Labor has stood shoulder to shoulder with industry for generations, recognising the need to constantly remake our strengths. Labor delivered highly successful sectoral plans in the 1980s and 1990s for automotive manufacturing, steelmaking, shipbuilding, pharmaceuticals and other industries, which continue to deliver returns today. Groundbreaking Labor initiatives, including the Research and Development Tax Incentive, the Cooperative Research Centres Program and the Rural Research and Development Corporations, have been replicated across the world. These measures have been modernised and strengthened to remain at the core of our 21st century innovation agenda.
- 106 Labor has carried that legacy forward through the creation of a new portfolio, uniting federal resources in science, research, industry and innovation. We recognise and respond to the complexity of the innovation journey, from an idea to a commercial return or a new way of doing business.
- 107 Labor developed Powering Ideas, a ten-year innovation strategy for Australia, and has boosted investment in science, research and innovation to new record levels for four successive budgets.
- 108 Labor supported industry through the GFC and with an appropriate stimulus and tax measures, minimised employment losses and maintained important manufacturing capabilities.
- 109 The introduction of the new Research and Development Tax Incentive, in the form of a credit, will give businesses at all stages of the development cycle the encouragement to innovate. It is a generous, flexible and inclusive mechanism, fit for the needs of modern business. Small to medium businesses, the engine of innovation in the knowledge economy, will be able to receive their tax credit each quarter. It will encourage global partners to plan their research investment strategies around Australian affiliates and research institutions.
- 110 Labor is also providing support for our businesses of the future through Commercialisation Australia, a merit-based competitive assistance program to help innovative businesses take new products to market.
- 111 Labor has established Industry Innovation Councils and Supplier Advocates for strategic industries, helping to plan and lead their transformation and link firms with new opportunities in local and overseas markets.
- 112 Labor will continue to deliver major investment packages to transform the automotive and Textile, Clothing and Footwear (TCF) sectors. Labor attracted new investment in the automotive industry during the GFC with the New Car Plan for a Greener Future, which has resulted in local production of hybrid vehicles and a new engine plant at Toyota, new small car by Holden and adoption of new fuel efficiency technologies at Ford. Labor consolidated the supply chain and introduced improved competitiveness and further. The TCF Strategic Capability Program is supporting innovation in the TCF industries.

- 113 Labor has ensured Australian firms get a fair chance to compete for government procurement opportunities, through the Australian Industry Participation framework. Australian Industry Participation plans are now required for a broad array of Commonwealth investments, which have so far reached a combined total in excess of \$2.8 billion. The new \$50 million Buy Australian at Home and Abroad initiative provides further support for local manufacturers to link into opportunities in the resources sector, by improving support for small and medium enterprises and increasing the number of supplier advocates. The package includes:
- boosting our science and research capabilities and reinforcing partnerships with industry
  - appointing a Resources Sector Envoy and new Supplier Advocates to promote local capabilities and identify opportunities for Australian industry
  - boosting the national Enterprise Connect network to give small and medium enterprises in the manufacturing sector the skills and knowledge to integrate into global supply chains
  - embedding an industry capability specialist within major projects in the resources sector to ensure that Australian manufacturers are given fair consideration
  - convening a Resource Sector Supplier Advisory Forum to bring government, industry and major project proponents together, building local capability and developing markets.
- 114 Labor is encouraging the development of a sustainable Australian venture capital market to assist emerging high-tech businesses through the high-risk stages of development.
- 115 Labor has paved the way for the introduction of an emissions trading scheme with the Clean Business Australia and Clean 21 programs, that stimulated investment in new technologies and products and practices in the manufacturing and commercial building sectors.
- 116 Labor is lowering and simplifying small business taxes by allowing instant write off for all assets costing less than \$5,000. The government is also introducing from 2012–13 an early reduction in the company tax rate to 29 per cent to allow small business companies to reinvest and grow. The government is also introducing additional tax benefits, including new depreciation rules for motor vehicles, which will improve cash flow for up to 2.7 million small businesses.
- 117 We are helping to spread the benefits of the mining boom through the Minerals Resource Rent Tax, using the proceeds of the boom to cut taxes for struggling businesses, build up superannuation savings, and invest in infrastructure in our regions. We want to ensure all Australians prosper from the boom.
- 118 We are also committed to making the necessary savings so we can invest in reform priorities, provided that in making such savings we preserve our commitment to ongoing government support for those who are the most marginalised in our society. Labor recognises the need to invest in social as well as economic infrastructure if all Australians are to benefit from a strong economy. We are increasing investment in essential services, such as education, health and housing and in priorities such as mental health, disability and aged care reforms. These reforms and our ongoing robust economic management are making our society and our economy stronger and fairer.

## Transforming manufacturing

- 119 Labor recognises that manufacturing is a cornerstone of the Australian economy. It provides high-quality jobs, it produces high-value exports, it nurtures essential skills and drives innovation across the economy. A dynamic manufacturing sector is an essential feature of a resilient and broad-based economy. The phenomenal productivity of manufacturing sustains activity in other sectors, including services—many of which grow from a strong manufacturing base.

- 120 Labor believes that in order to maximise the competitiveness of Australian industries in global markets, the federal government should work in partnership with state and territory governments, industry, businesses, unions, and research centres to lift productivity, improve workforce skills, foster innovation, enhance competitiveness and improve access to overseas markets.
- 121 Powering Ideas: An Innovation Agenda for the 21st Century will continue to shape and direct the transformation of Australian manufacturing. Labor will build on the strong record of existing programs, including:
- the establishment of Enterprise Connect, a national network of skilled business advisers, has helped small and medium businesses boost their performance. It offers comprehensive, independent business advice and a network of resources uniting cutting-edge technology and best practice business models. Enterprise Connect has already worked with over 7500 firms around Australia. Manufacturing Centres are located in each state, and Innovation Centres and networks have been established for a range of industries
  - using Enterprise Connect as the gateway to the innovation system and to provide a comprehensive range of services to firms, including enterprise improvement, supply-chain development, networking and cluster support, and research and technology assistance
  - implementing the new Better Managers program in Enterprise Connect to strengthen leadership and innovation capability in smaller firms
  - effectively integrating Enterprise Connect and its services with Austrade, the Industry Capability Network and other national and state government business support initiatives, and with the industry development activities of industry associations and unions
  - investing in the future of the automotive sector through A New Car Plan for a Greener Future to make the Australian car industry economically and environmentally sustainable by 2020
  - driving future industry development through Australia's new industry innovation councils for key sectors, including those for the automotive and TCF industries, built environment, information technology, transport and logistics (including shipping), steel, pulp and paper and future manufacturing
  - implementing the National Enabling Technologies Strategy for biotechnology, nanotechnology, information and communication technology and other enabling technologies which will ensure appropriate regulation while maximising their contribution to job creation, productivity and competitiveness
  - supporting international investment in strategic technological capabilities and working with foreign owned enterprises to integrate their local operations and suppliers into global supply chains
  - promoting innovation in government—both in the delivery of government services and through procurement policies that support innovation in supplier firms
  - harmonising Australia's patent laws with those of our trading partners
  - developing and implementing a national design strategy to stimulate the development of innovative products, services and business strategies, building on Australia's strengths in design and our creative industries.
- 122 Labor recognises the specific pressures facing our critical TCF industries in the current global climate. TCF industries employ around 50,000 Australians in the formal sector and many thousands more in the informal sector as home-based workers. They maintain valuable skills and capabilities, and underpin regional economies around the country.
- 123 Labor will accelerate the transformation of the TCF sector by supporting the development of new products and processes, targeting opportunities in ethical production and the high-tech, high-value end of the market.

- 124 Labor will also work to maximise opportunities for TCF in government tenders and private investments, at home and overseas, through Enterprise Connect, the Industry Capability Network and the TCF Supplier Advocate. The TCF Industries Innovation Council will also provide advice on the future directions for the industry and the program support needed to meet long-term objectives.
- 125 The conditions of support to TCF companies will be designed to ensure sustainable employment outcomes, ethical labour and environmental standards, and maintain capacity and build skills.
- 126 Labor will continue to require that all companies which tender for government contracts in the TCF industry hold Ethical Clothing Australia accreditation.
- 127 To ensure a level playing field, Labor will work with agencies to extend requirements for ethical labour standards to companies tendering for government contracts who source their TCF contracts from offshore.
- 128 Labor will further reform and extend the TCF Structural Adjustment Program to ensure an appropriate level of funds and that the program better assists workers who lose jobs in the industry, Including:
- a non-means tested training allowance
  - training in English language and literacy
  - customised support for training and job-seeking
  - funding for community-based organisations to advocate on behalf of redundant workers.

## Securing high-skilled jobs: responding to a patchwork economy

- 129 The resources boom has opened strong opportunities for Australia, but has triggered structural changes of unprecedented speed and magnitude. Labor recognises that governments have a crucial role in helping Australians manage change, ensuring that opportunities are spread across the economy and that Australia maintains a diverse economy. While we can't stop the changes that our economy faces, Labor is committed to help workers in industries and regions under stress to adjust to change. We have a responsibility to help smooth the adjustment.
- 130 Our focus is on ensuring that we manage the transformation in a way that minimises and smooths out the costs that can come with these adjustments in the short-term.
- 131 We can grasp the benefits that will come with the shift in economic activity towards our regions, while still making sure that everyone has the opportunity to share in the benefits of a stronger economy and that no one is left behind. We must seize the opportunity that the resources boom has created by ensuring a partnership of investment from government and employers to train and develop local highly skilled workers in our rural and regional areas.
- 132 In particular, we see a bright future ahead for an internationally competitive manufacturing sector—a sector that is well-placed to continue its efforts to raise productivity, capture niche markets, enter new supply chains, and make more specialised and highly valued products. This is the way to ensure that Australia's manufacturing sector thrives in the future.
- 133 Labor will monitor the labour market impact of the structural adjustment occurring in our economy, and the government assistance to support jobs and competitiveness. There will be a particular focus on the experiences of women workers and workers who move from full-time permanent employment into casual and insecure work.

## Putting innovation at the heart of smaller firms

- 134 Labor recognises the vital contribution made by small business to the Australian economy. We strongly support Australians who choose to pursue a career as independent contractors or small business operators. They are vital contributors to the prosperity of the nation and its people.
- 135 Labor acknowledges that smaller businesses face unique barriers to innovation, in addition to the daily demands of effective business management. We will work with firms to help them invest in themselves. This commitment includes a new Research and Development Tax incentive which will effectively double support to small business compared to the previous tax concession.
- 136 Labor supports competition in the business sector. Where market failure creates anti-competitive conditions Labor will legislate to promote competition. In particular, Labor will legislate effective protections against monopolistic pricing, collusive behaviour, abuse of market power, predatory pricing and unconscionable conduct.
- 137 Labor recognises the difficulties faced by small businesses in recruiting and retaining suitable staff and, through its policies to ease skill shortages and wider labour shortages, will assist small businesses in overcoming these difficulties.
- 138 Labor believes cooperative relationships between small business operators and employees can create the conditions for higher profitability, higher productivity, higher wages and better working conditions.
- 139 Labor recognises that collective bargaining can benefit the public by allowing small businesses and independent contractors to address imbalances in bargaining power with larger businesses. Labor believes small businesses and independent contractors should have choice as to who represents them in collective bargaining. Labor will remove the restriction on trade unions representing independent contractors through the collective bargaining provisions of trade practices law.
- 140 Labor acknowledges that small businesses are less well equipped than larger businesses to bear the compliance burden of government regulation. Labor will continue to advance its agenda of building a seamless national economy and removing excessive red tape and overlapping regulation, in particular through the national reform agenda of the Council of Australian Governments.
- 141 In recognition of the risks and heavier compliance burden borne by small business, Labor supports simplifying the tax system for small business.
- 142 Labor recognises the imperative of small businesses and independent contractors having access to low-cost, timely and informal dispute resolution procedures in respect of their employment and commercial disputes and will ensure that such avenues are available. Dispute resolution procedures will be able to deal with claims of unfair contracts.
- 143 Labor acknowledges that small business owners and managers need ready access to low-cost advice when seeking to start new businesses or expand existing operations and will facilitate the provision of such advice.
- 144 Labor recognises the value of high-speed broadband in boosting the viability of small businesses and independent contractors and will ensure the provision of high-speed broadband through the NBN.

- 145 Labor recognises the important and growing role of women in establishing small businesses, including home-based micro-businesses. Labor will ensure that its small business advisory services are tailored to the needs of women.
- 146 Labor recognises, as a general principle, that genuine independent contractors are governed by commercial law, while employees are governed by employment law.
- 147 Labor recognises that for large numbers of vulnerable independent contractors their protections were watered down by the Howard Government's enactment of the Independent Contractors Act. Labor will move to strengthen protections available to independent contractors by conducting a review of the effectiveness of the Independent Contractors Act. Labor will ensure vulnerable contractors have the ability to access quick, informal and affordable dispute resolution mechanisms.
- 148 Labor opposes sham contractor arrangements, where employees are re-classified as contractors by employers to avoid obligations such as superannuation guarantee payments, workers' compensation coverage and the payment of annual leave and sick leave entitlements. Labor will ensure that, as far as practicable, ambiguity and uncertainty regarding the nature of the contractual relationship is minimised.
- 149 Labor supports the principles behind the alienation of personal services income tax rules and will apply these principles with consistency and transparency. However, the Australia's Future Tax System Review found that the current rules are not fully effective, and are complex and uncertain. Labor will consider a revised regime to prevent the alienation of personal services income. Labor will ensure effective compliance and enforcement of tax obligations and eradicate loop holes that allow employers and employees to evade tax by the utilisation of arrangements that disguise the true nature of the employment relationship.
- 150 Labor recognises that TCF workers and owner-drivers are among the most vulnerable groups of workers and commits itself to the maintenance and enhancement of existing protections for these workers.

## A world-class research enterprise

- 151 Labor is committed to channelling resources into science and technology, accelerating their rise up the global value chain. Labor will stand shoulder to shoulder with firms competing in the global innovation race, putting Australia's researchers in the front-line of our industries.
- 152 Labor recognises that the contribution of public researchers in universities and research organisations such as the CSIRO is critical to Australia's innovation effort. They do the bulk of our basic research and the overwhelming majority of our research in the humanities, arts and social sciences. The market generally does not give private firms incentives to perform this kind of research, so publicly-funded researchers must fill the gap.
- 153 Labor supports Australia's research community and will strengthen the nation's critical research assets to meet the ambitious innovation goals we have set for the nation. We will meet these ambitions in the context of a responsible budget by careful stewardship of our research budget and assets.
- 154 Labor acknowledges the new technological developments and international research being undertaken in relation to thorium, such as molten salt technologies, and supports strengthening Australia's science capability in areas such as chemical engineering and physics; and examine opportunities for developing a local industry based on thorium.

- 155 Labor recognises that the research workforce is ageing, and the competition for new talent is intense. Labor’s Research Workforce Strategy will lay the foundation for attracting and retaining leading international talent, facilitate researchers returning to the workforce from family responsibilities and promote research training experiences within industry. It will ensure Australia creates viable and attractive career paths for researchers.
- 156 Labor will maintain the pursuit of excellence in Australia’s public research sector, harnessing the knowledge collected through Excellence in Research for Australia . We will encourage research groups to perform at world-class levels, and use new mission-based compacts to encourage the effective allocation of resources between disciplines and institutions, while contributing to national priorities. We will also continue to encourage universities to organise themselves into hubs and spokes, helping smaller and regional universities develop their research capacity in areas of strength and strategic interest by teaming up with other institutions.
- 157 Labor has invested in world-class research infrastructure, and opened access to resources at home and overseas, through the Strategic Roadmap for Australian Research infrastructure and the National Research Infrastructure Committee.
- 158 Labor will ensure that Australians have the chance to collaborate and compete on the global stage. The great leaps of the past century were made possible by scientific experiments on a massive scale, far beyond the resources of any one nation. Australia will continue to contribute its research strengths to international collaborative missions such as the European Molecular Biology Laboratory, the International Census of Marine Life, astronomical projects such as the Gemini Observatory and the Giant Magellan Telescope, and the Large Hadron Collider.
- 159 Labor will also continue to support the ability of Australian researchers from all disciplines to collaborate with their colleagues abroad, accessing new ideas and forming and maintaining valuable research networks with the best minds on the planet, through schemes such as the Australia–India Strategic Research Fund and the Australia–China Science and Research Fund.
- 160 Labor understands that the success of the Australian research enterprise—including its ability to reach out effectively to industry and the public sector—requires the active enthusiasm and support of the community at large. We also appreciate the paramount importance of rigorous evidence-based advice. Labor will continue to implement the Inspiring Australia program, promote Questacon’s vital education role, support the office of Chief Scientist in its invaluable work, and engage the expertise of the Learned Academies and the networks of other sector bodies.

## Building strategic research strengths

- 161 Global competitive pressures are driving a relentless race for research talent and investment. Labor will seek to develop research precincts of global scale in Australia, with the critical mass to deliver breakthrough discoveries and inventions. The CSIRO will work with governments, industry and the research community to channel our separate resources to this collective ambition.
- 162 Labor will also build on Australia’s recognised strengths and priority research needs by expanding research in targeted fields. At the same time, Labor will support the development of strategic interdisciplinary collaborations and emergent fields, founded on strong national capabilities across the range of disciplines from the physical and technical to the human and social sciences.
- 163 Labor will ensure our research efforts are trained to the imperatives and opportunities presented by the global challenge of climate change, including the development of clean technologies and strategies to protect our natural assets. Recognising the importance and unique vulnerability of our tropical regions and marine environment, Labor will promote research in these critical fields.

- 164 Labor also recognises Australia's increasing reliance on space infrastructure. Our ongoing social and economic wellbeing and our nation's security depend on access to space-based research.
- 165 Labor is committed to the development of a National Space Policy that provides a clear statement of intent for Australia's future space-related activity and harnesses the strengths of our space research and space industry sectors.
- 166 Labor will strongly pursue Australia's bid to host the Square Kilometre Array, the most ambitious global astronomy project in generations. A successful bid will ensure Australian researchers and firms are at the heart of this revolutionary fifty-year global mission, and will help our people benefit from the diffusion of its technology, access to the world's top astronomers and technologists, and the economic opportunities it will bring.

## Putting researchers on the front-line for industry

- 167 Labor recognises that collaboration between government, business and the research community is vital to building industries that can not only survive but that can compete aggressively. We are embedding the goal of collaboration into every research and industry initiative, and building networks that foster new partnerships.
- 168 Enterprise Connect will facilitate the development of partnerships between researchers and firms, drawing on the early success of the new Researcher in Business grant scheme. The introduction of new Australian Research Council Industrial PhDs will provide further avenues for researchers to contribute their talents to industry, and for employers to offer the ultimate in professional development for their research-capable staff.
- 169 Labor will use the mission-based funding compacts to encourage universities to undertake industry-driven research more vigorously. We will continue to utilise the revamped Cooperative Research Centres program to help build novel collaborations between researchers in the universities and agencies and the end-users in industries hungry for practical solutions.
- 170 Labor will also assist firms across the economy to capitalise on the opportunities created by the new Research & Development Tax Incentive.
- 171 Labor is continuing to reform Australia's intellectual property system to create an ideal environment for stimulating innovation and investment.

## Science and research

- 172 Labor is building globally competitive research assets, and restoring the dignity and standing of our research community. Labor is building a research infrastructure toolkit for the 21st century, through Super Science scheme and the Education Investment Fund.
- 173 We have put universities on a secure financial footing by re-establishing realistic indexation arrangements for block grants, and providing real funding for the indirect costs of research.
- 174 We have also renewed the nation's commitment to the CSIRO, Australia's premier industrial research institution, at a record \$3 billion over the four years 2011–15.
- 175 Labor has renewed Australia's commitment to key international collaborative research facilities, prosecuted Australia's bid to become the host site of the landmark Square Kilometre Array radio-telescope project, and commissioned a new research vessel, the Investigator.

- 176 Labor established the position of Chief Scientist for Australia as a full-time office and strengthened the independence of the role.
- 177 Labor restored the independence of the Australian Research Council through the appointment of a high level Advisory Committee with the confidence of the university sector.
- 178 Labor is helping the nation to recognise and foster excellence in research. We will maintain Excellence in Research for Australia, a new world-leading research quality evaluation tool that provides the government, industry and researchers with the evidence to make informed decisions.
- 179 Labor has revolutionised the research funding system through new grants and fellowships to help talented researchers at every point in the career cycle realise their full potential, from the ambitious early career researcher to the internationally celebrated mentor. Labor remains on track to double the number of Postgraduate Awards, and has raised the stipend by ten per cent.
- 180 Labor is ensuring that Australia has sufficient numbers of qualified research workers so as to fill the gaps in our researcher workforce, both now and in the decade to come and beyond. At the same time, Labor has already acted to implement programs in areas of obvious need, such as assisting Indigenous researchers to access and pursue research careers, helping to retain talented women researchers, and promoting the closer involvement of industry in hands-on research training.
- 181 We reinvigorated the degraded Cooperative Research Centre program by restoring public good outcomes, opening the scheme up to social and cultural innovation from the humanities and social sciences, introducing annual selection rounds, and sharpening the emphasis on fostering new collaborations and transition to autonomy of established ones. Labor has introduced mission-based compacts to help universities align their resources to their areas of strength and strategic interest, and to help the sector as a whole more effectively address our national priorities and needs.
- 182 Labor has safeguarded the independence and autonomy of researchers working in our publicly funded research agencies and our universities by entering into binding charters and passing legislation to ensure scientific independence and academic freedom. Labor will extend those safeguards, by passing legislation, to cover all researchers working across the Australian Public Service.
- 183 Labor has initiated a groundbreaking science engagement program, Inspiring Australia, which goes beyond the limited aims of science communication and career promotion to bring of the transformative power of science and research to every corner of the nation.

## Road, rail and aviation infrastructure

- 184 Labor recognises that all forms of transport have a role to play in moving people and freight, especially within our major cities. It is essential that an efficient road and rail network, supported by a robust public transport system, co-exist in a way that make our cities more sustainable and liveable.
- 185 Labor understands that rail freight is becoming an increasingly significant factor in Australia's economic and environmental performance. Well planned rail freight can stimulate new business activities, and increase the productivity and competitiveness of our export industries. Rail freight is also critical in minimising the transport sector's greenhouse gas emissions.
- 186 Labor understands the importance of reducing transport related emissions in any transition to a low carbon economy. Given the low emissions of rail freight and mass public transport, Labor supports incentives to encourage their use.

- 187 Labor recognises that better planning and investment in road and rail infrastructure is required to serve freight supply chains and the movement of people, particularly in major cities. Labor believes greater uniformity in national regulatory structures will improve the efficiency and competitiveness of road and rail infrastructure. Labor will provide funding for critical road, rail and freight infrastructure including track upgrades and construction, the early commencement of national road projects, and additional funding for the Black Spot program.
- 188 Labor will streamline and improve the regulation, operation and development of land transport policy. Labor will continue to pursue nationally agreed road safety reforms through a National Road Safety Council. Labor will develop a truly national transport policy so that freight and services logistics systems are integrated across modes and can operate efficiently and competitively, with only necessary and nationally consistent regulation.
- 189 Labor will continue to work towards a single national system for each of rail safety regulation and investigation, maritime safety regulation and heavy vehicle regulation.
- 190 Labor will work with the states and territories, the providers of public transport, to achieve greater use of all forms of public transport, thereby contributing to reductions in greenhouse gas emissions and congestion in our major cities.
- 191 Labor will have a high level investigation of the feasibility of High Speed Rail for the east coast of Australia as a visionary future infrastructure project for the nation.
- 192 Labor notes the need to encourage the use of the most appropriate forms of transport for the increasing freight and passenger tasks. Intermodal hubs allow passengers and freight to move from one form of transport to another efficiently and effectively. Labor will therefore ensure that any land transport plans identify potential sites for these hubs as a matter of priority.
- 193 Labor is committed to the maintenance of a strong Aviation industry with a secure Australian workforce. Labor recognises that aviation plays a large part in connecting Australia to the world and linking our towns and cities, as well as servicing the needs of regional and remote communities. Labor developed Australia's first ever comprehensive national Aviation White Paper that recognises that safety and security are critical for the travelling public, and that investment in well planned airports and a strong domestic market and general aviation sector are crucial for the long-term future of aviation in Australia. Labor supports well-resourced and maintained emergency services for the aviation industry and is committed to developing an emergency response strategic plan for the aviation industry. Labor supports ownership provisions for Australia's airlines that keep the governance of these airlines in Australia. Labor supports well-resourced and maintained emergency services for the aviation industry and is committed to developing an emergency response strategic plan for the aviation industry. Labor supports ownership provisions that keep majority ownership, operation and governance of these airlines in Australia. Labor supports the inclusion of labour standards in (Open skies) Air Transport Agreements. Labor supports fair and equitable remuneration of aviation workers within the Australian and New Zealand Closer Economic Relations Trade Agreement region. Further, Labor will take steps to ensure that the intent of this platform is given effect on Australia's airlines however they are structured.
- 194 Labor will develop an integrated Sydney Aviation Plan that provides for Sydney's future airport needs. Labor supports a second airport for Sydney to serve the future needs of the region. Labor will maintain the cap and curfew at Kingsford Smith Airport and implement the long-term operating plan maximising take-offs over water.

- 195 Labor recognises that safety and security are critical for the travelling public, and that investment in well planned airports and a strong domestic, general and international aviation sector is critical for the long term future of aviation in Australia and that Labor needs to be constantly investigating options to secure these objectives consistent with the principles in this platform.

## Shipping and maritime infrastructure

- 196 Labor recognises that shipping is a key sector in the transport industry and the national economy, and in manufacturing and resource supply chains, with strategic, security, defence, economic and environmental benefits. Labor remains committed to supporting its potential to grow and generate new jobs and economic activity. Labor also recognises the importance of an Australian shipping industry to the development of a maritime skills base required of an exporting and importing nation dependent on shipping and an efficient ports sector.
- 197 A strong national shipping industry is an essential feature of a globalised island economy. Accordingly Labor recognises the important role of government in supporting shipping competitiveness and also supporting the competitiveness of Australia's international shipping opportunity, so Australian shipping can grow market share, gain access to finance, increase employment, innovate and diversify.
- 198 Labor will work to secure employment and career pathways for domestic seafarers, and employment and skill development for seafarers from regional Asia–Pacific nations in the international dimensions of Australian shipping.
- 199 A strong domestic shipping industry can assist in the alleviation of land transport bottlenecks, infrastructure constraints and environmental impacts, as well as improving national security and providing economic benefits derived from the creation of local employment and the growth of maritime services.
- 200 Labor believes that Australia needs a consistent national approach to port infrastructure. Our international gateways and supporting supply chains need governance reforms, improved strategic planning, adequate investments in landside infrastructure and terminals, and better coordination in port precinct and land transport planning. Labor will address the key bottlenecks at Australia's major export terminals, which have been identified by Infrastructure Australia. Labor recognises that the stevedoring industry is one of the most dangerous industries in Australia, and will take action to address this. Labor will work with industry stakeholders and state and territory governments to examine safety issues and to work towards solutions which will underpin a new safety culture in the industry. Where the Commonwealth already regulates private sector Occupational Health & Safety and Workers' Compensation in the shipping, offshore oil and gas, and stevedoring industries, Labor will make further efforts to eliminate regulatory uncertainty and dual jurisdictional involvement including through cooperation with state and territory governments.
- 201 Labor will undertake ongoing harmonisation of shipping policy and regulation. Labor will work towards building a viable and efficient domestic shipping industry, ensuring decent wages and conditions for working Australians, responsible use of single and continuous voyage permits, safety and security in our ports and shipping lanes, a strong regional ports network and a skilled workforce. In particular Labor will:
- build the Australian shipping flag in both domestic and international shipping
  - establish global best practice mechanisms encouraging long-term investment in the Australian shipping industry, address the maritime skills shortage, protect our vast coastline and marine environment and improve our defence capability

- ensure relevant domestic laws apply to all aspects of coastal shipping operating in the Australian Exclusive Economic Zone
- ensure maritime security laws fairly balance national and domestic security requirements with the civil and industrial rights of workers
- explore ways to better integrate shipping reform, maritime employment and maritime skills developed into resource projects, focusing on international trade where Australian exports are crucial to the regional economy
- facilitate a high degree of cooperation between the Australian Defence Force and the Australian merchant fleet
- ratify and implement appropriate International Labour Organisation and International Maritime Organisation conventions, codes and recommendations.

## Primary industries

202 Australia's primary industries have played a key role in national economic development throughout our history. They have generated a large share of Australia's wealth, helped shape Australian culture and our national identity and underpinned the establishment of rural and regional communities throughout the nation.

203 Labor believes that in the century ahead of us, primary industries will continue to play a major role in creating wealth, income and jobs in rural and regional Australia, and generating export income for the nation.

204 Labor will support the productivity and development of Australian primary industries by:

- ensuring Australia plays a strong role in efforts to address global food security challenges
- helping our primary industries prepare for climate change and future droughts and extreme weather events
- helping our farmers, forest growers and landholders reduce emissions through the carbon farming initiative
- fixing our biosecurity system to help prevent the introduction of exotic weeds, pests and disease
- strengthening the role of farmers in the delivery of environmental services
- boosting productivity through investment in research and development, skills and training
- boosting productivity through innovation and uptake of new technologies
- maintaining existing markets and developing new trade opportunities
- developing policies to support new forms of rural investment
- improving safety in the workplace and on the farm
- supporting the development of fisheries and aquaculture
- supporting the sustainable use of forest resources.

205 Labor supports a partnership between government and industry for investment in rural research and development. Labor will ensure more effective multi-sector facilitation and prioritisation of investment in research and development through a coordinating Rural Research and Development Council to ensure programs address:

- productivity
- climate change
- energy and/or water efficiency

- regional employment
- family issues and cost of living
- industry consultation and uptake of technology
- effectiveness and timeliness of commercialisation of research outcomes.

206 Labor will work with industry to develop programs to upgrade workforce skills and expand the opportunities for the primary industry sector workforce, with a particular focus on women, young people, and people from non-English speaking backgrounds and Indigenous Australians, especially in regional, rural and remote communities.

207 Given the importance of the reputation of Australian produce for its quality, hygiene standards and safety, Labor believes government has an important role to play in supporting innovation, export market development, skills development and productivity through the food industry's production, manufacturing, marketing and distribution chain.

208 Labor will seek to maximise access to domestic and international markets for Australian agriculture, fisheries and forest products, in particular through multilateral negotiations and treaties by providing a level playing field in domestic and international markets for Australian producers consistent with our international trading obligations and the promotion of core labor standards internationally, while also supporting domestic and international marketing of Australian primary industries.

## Australian agriculture

209 Labor recognises the need for the Australian and international community to address global food security given the threats to the life and health of millions of people resulting from increases in food prices.

210 Labor believes the global food security challenge must be addressed by boosting research and development, helping to remove barriers to global trade and driving productivity along the food production chain. Labor believes Australia has an important role to play in facilitating long-term solutions through increasing the sustainable production of more food while building agricultural capacity in developing countries.

211 Labor acknowledges the growing importance of farmers in the development and production of alternative fuels, including biofuels produced on farms. Labor supports the need for research and development into new technologies and processes that support the development of second generation biofuels technology.

212 Labor believes the use and approval of Genetically Modified (GM) crops should be regulated before they can be grown commercially in Australia, in order to protect the health and safety of both people and the environment.

213 Labor will develop a National Emerging Technologies Strategy to increase research and improve the regulation of biotechnology, nanotechnology and other new technologies. Labor understands the value in looking at the science and research on GM crops on a case-by-case basis. Labor recognises that GM crops can contribute to meeting global challenges of climate change and food security. Labor believes:

- a licence for a GM crop must not be issued unless it can be demonstrated that any risks can be managed to protect the health and safety of people and the environment
- foods produced using gene technology must be assessed as safe for human consumption before they can be sold

- labelling should enable people to make informed choices about what they eat
- rules requiring food containing DNA and/or protein resulting from genetic modification must be labelled 'genetically modified' should be retained.

214 Labor believes that a rigorous and effective biosecurity system is vital to the Australian economy, our unique environment and sense of community wellbeing. Labor supports a biosecurity system that allows us to trade goods and move people between borders, while also protecting the integrity of our environment, the health of all Australians, our favourable pest and disease status, and the productivity and ongoing viability of our primary producers. Labor is committed to acting in response to the Beale Review, to ensure Australia's biosecurity system is better able to respond to increasing and more complex threats associated with globalisation, agri-terrorism and climate change.

## Australia's fisheries industry

215 Labor recognises the importance of Australia's recreational and commercial fisheries in providing economic opportunities and supporting the social wellbeing of rural, regional and metropolitan communities. Labor supports the responsible use of Australia's fisheries resources for wild harvest commercial fishing and aquaculture activities and recreational, sport and charter fishing activities.

216 Labor believes aquaculture will play an increasingly important role in meeting the challenges of global food security, regional economic development, Indigenous employment opportunities and in relieving pressure on wild fish stocks.

217 Labor supports the need for investment in research and development that aims to improve commercial fisheries' productivity, assist the wild harvest and aquaculture sectors to respond to a changing climate and ensure sustainable use and appropriate protection for marine, estuarine and freshwater fisheries' resources.

218 Labor recognises that climate change threatens the productivity of fishing and aquaculture businesses and that Australians working in these industries will need support as they respond to the challenges of climate change.

219 Labor supports collaboration with near neighbours on measures that encourage responsible fishing practices, actively prevent illegal fishing activities in Australian waters and impose tough sanctions on illegal foreign fishers.

## Australia's forest and forest products industry

220 Labor recognises the importance of the forest and the forest products industry to the Australian economy and employment, and the need for forests to continue to be based on ecologically sustainable development principles. Future development of the forest and forest products industry must take place on an ecologically and economically sustainable basis. Labor initiated a Commonwealth parliamentary inquiry into the current and future prospects of the Australian forestry industry and has received a report from the Standing Committee on Agriculture, Resources, Fisheries and Forestry. Labor will respond to the report and its recommendations in consultation with industry stakeholders, timber communities and interested parties in order to secure the social, economic and environmental dividends associated with a robust and vibrant industry.

221 The forest and forest products industry provides a source of employment for regional communities and contributes to economic growth and employment through increasing downstream processing of resources taken from public and private forests, including pulp and paper milling, veneer milling and plywood manufacturing.

- 222 Labor has established a Pulp and Paper Industry Strategy Group, which has reviewed current industry arrangements, including investment incentives, identifying new markets and generally assisting the industry to reach its potential. The Pulp and Paper Industry Strategy Group has submitted a detailed report to government on the strengths, opportunities and challenges facing the industry. Labor is committed to the industry and will work with the established Pulp and Paper Industry Innovation Council in implementing the report's recommendations to secure the future of the industry.
- 223 Labor will develop a comprehensive forest plantation strategy, while reviewing the impact of log exports to ensure the long term future of the forest industries and Australian forest communities that depend on the continuing viability of our forest industry, by responding to the report from the inquiry into the current and future prospects of the Australian forestry industry and its recommendations in consultation with industry stakeholders, timber communities and interested parties.
- 224 Labor has acted on the historic Tasmanian Statement of Principles and helped to deliver a landmark agreement that will provide certainty for Tasmania's forestry industry, support local jobs and communities, and protect the state's public native forests. The intergovernmental agreement that has been reached between the federal and state Labor governments is unprecedented in the forest debates, in that, rather than seeking to impose a solution, it implements an agreement reached between key stakeholders. This approach provides the opportunity for confidence in the durability of the outcome for industry, workers and environmental non-government organisations. The agreement will help the forest industry adapt to market changes whilst restructuring will support further local value adding and downstream processing. The industry's transition will attract investment in innovation in order to meet the challenges faced by the industry and the agreement provides support to the communities and families that rely on the public native forest sector through retraining, regional development and investment in plantations. Significantly, the agreement guarantees additional protection for Tasmania's public native forests, complimenting the state's world-class reserve system which protects high conservation, ecological and biological values. Tasmania will immediately place 430,000 hectares of native forest into informal reserve, subject to verification of conservation values and supply needs, which the governments will protect under a Conservation Agreement. This agreement marks a new chapter in the diversification of the state that state's economy, the development of a strong forest and forest products industry in the state and the protection of Tasmania's precious environment.

## Minerals, resources and energy

- 225 Labor values the enormous contribution to the national economy made by Australia's minerals, resources and energy industries. They generate the largest share of export revenue, support regional economic development, provide employment directly and indirectly for hundreds of thousands of Australians and improve the living standards of the entire community.
- 226 Labor recognises that the development of Australia's natural resources requires that the benefits are shared equitably between producers and the Australian community. Labor is committed to ensuring that the Australian community receives a fair return on the profits made from extracting our resources, while keeping a strong resource sector that remains sustainable into the future. Labor believes it is important that the Australian community gets a fair return from our resources, to put towards building a better nation. Labor has worked with the resources industry to design a profits based resource tax, and we are now progressing the legislation of this initiative. A Minerals Resource Rent Tax will apply to the mining of iron ore and coal in Australia. The Petroleum Resource Rent Tax will be extended to all Australian onshore and offshore oil and gas projects, including the North-West Shelf.

- 227 To maximise the minerals, resources and energy industries' social, environmental and economic contribution to Australia, Labor will continue to:
- encourage, in conjunction with the states, an intensified national minerals, oil and gas exploration effort, and the development of new exploration science and technology
  - develop strategies with industry and states and territories to maximise Australian labour participation, including training and skill development, in all phases (exploration, design, construction, extraction, processing and transportation) of minerals, resources and energy projects, including in the offshore hydrocarbons sector
  - promote the sound development of Australia's coal, oil and gas resources, with particular regard to domestic requirements, the development of Australia's coal, oil and gas exports, and the need for a stable and profitable coal and oil and gas industry
  - encourage the development of low emission fossil fuel technologies
  - encourage downstream processing of minerals, resources and energy products, and, through public and private avenues, the infrastructure necessary to achieve this
  - facilitate the commercialisation and export of minerals-related services and technology
  - create a more efficient national energy market that can enhance Australia's natural advantages in downstream minerals processing for domestic and export markets
  - bolster research, development and technology efforts to ensure the international competitiveness of the minerals, resources and energy industries, including technology and services derived from those industries
  - harness the scientific, technological, research and development, and engineering ingenuity of our minerals and resources industries in a nationally coordinated way
  - make a national effort to maximise our energy security, capacity, efficiency and the lowest practicable and sustainable energy prices for Australian industry and consumers.
- 228 Labor will maximise local content in the manufacture, construction and maintenance of facilities and equipment for production and processing in Australia's minerals, resources and energy industries, including by promoting specific facilities and infrastructure that can build and service major offshore and onshore hydrocarbon projects.
- 229 Labor will continue to ensure that mineral development on Indigenous land proceeds consistently with Labor's land rights and native title policy, maximises Indigenous employment, business, education and training opportunities, and maximises Indigenous community development and self determination opportunities.

## Uranium

- 230 Labor recognises that the production of uranium and its use in the nuclear fuel cycle present unique and unprecedented hazards and risks, including:
- threats to human health and the local environment in the mining and milling of uranium, which demand the enforcement of very strict safety procedures
  - the generation of products that are usable as the raw materials for nuclear weapons manufacture, which demands the enforcement of effective controls against diversion
  - the generation of highly toxic radioactive waste by-products that demand permanently safe disposal methods.
- 231 Labor accordingly will only allow the mining and export of uranium under the most stringent conditions.

232 In relation to mining and milling, Labor will:

- ensure the safety of workers in the uranium industry is given priority. Labor has established a compulsory register for workers in the uranium industry that includes regular health checks and ongoing monitoring. The register is held by an independent agency and will be subject to privacy provisions
- ensure that Australian uranium mining, milling and rehabilitation is based on world best practice standards, extensive continuing research on environmental impacts and the health and safety of employees and affected communities, particularly Indigenous communities
- ensure, through public accountability mechanisms, that the Australian public is informed about the quality of the environmental performance of uranium mines
- foster a constructive relationship between mining companies and Indigenous communities affected by uranium mining
- prohibit the mining of uranium within national parks under International Union for Conservation of Nature protected area category 1A, category 1B, and category 2, and listed world heritage areas.

233 In relation to exports other than to India, Labor will allow the export of uranium only to those countries that observe the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT), are committed to non-proliferation policies, have ratified international and bilateral nuclear safeguards agreements and maintain strict safeguards and security controls over their nuclear power industries.

In relation to India, an important strategic partner for Australia, commitments and responsible actions in support of nuclear non-proliferation, consistent with international guidelines on nuclear supply, will provide an acceptable basis for peaceful nuclear cooperation, including the export of uranium, subject to the application of strong safeguards.

In addition, Labor will work towards:

- strengthening export control regimes and the rights and authority of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA)
- appropriate international responses to violations of existing safeguard commitments
- limiting the processing of weapon usable material (separation of plutonium and high enriched uranium in civilian programs)
- tightening controls over the export of nuclear material and technology
- universalising of the IAEA additional protocol making it mandatory for all states and members of the Nuclear Suppliers Group to adhere to the additional protocol as a condition of supply to all their transfers
- criminalising actions of individuals and companies that assist in nuclear proliferation
- the development of an international guarantee of nuclear fuel supply to states foregoing sensitive nuclear technologies
- revising the NPT to prevent countries from withdrawing from the NPT and passing a new resolution in the United Nations Security Council addressing the penalties for withdrawal from the NPT
- encouraging all nuclear states to join the NPT
- reserving the right to withhold supplies of uranium permanently, indefinitely or for a specified period from any country that ceases to observe the non-proliferation safeguards and security conditions applied to Australian uranium exports to that country, or which adopts nuclear practices or policies that do not further advance the cause of nuclear non-proliferation
- supporting the maintenance and enhancement of international and Australian safeguards to ensure that uranium mined in Australia, and nuclear products derived from it, are used only for civil purposes by approved instrumentalities in approved countries that are signatories to the NPT (with the exception of India) and with whom Australia has safeguard arrangements
- seeking adequate international resourcing of the IAEA to ensure its effectiveness in undertaking its charter.

234 Labor will progress these commitments through diplomatic means including the re-establishment of the Canberra Commission to re-invigorate Australia's tradition of middle power, multilateral diplomacy. In doing so, Labor believes that as a non nuclear armed nation and a good international citizen, Australia can make a significant contribution to promoting disarmament, the reduction of nuclear stockpiles, and the responsible use of nuclear technology.

235 In addition, Labor will:

- vigorously oppose the ocean dumping of radioactive waste
- prohibit the establishment of nuclear power plants and all other stages of the nuclear fuel cycle in Australia
- fully meet all our obligations as a party to the NPT
- remain strongly opposed to the importation and storage of nuclear waste that is sourced from overseas in Australia.

## Strengthening the services sector

236 Labor recognises that our services industries provide a very large proportion of Australia's employment and a very large proportion of national income. Since many services are also direct inputs into other business activities, effective and efficient services are fundamental to maintaining and enhancing business competitiveness. Ensuring that employment in the services sector continues to provide career development, job security, access to collective bargaining and fair remuneration for employees continues to be a priority. Labor recognises that a strong and efficient service economy is crucial to Australia's long-term economic prosperity and ability to take part in the global services economy.

237 Labor recognises the importance of maintaining and creating high skill, quality jobs in the domestic services sector. The prosperity of the years ahead will increasingly come from businesses that provide the many services that are essential to consumers in a modern industrial society—such as financial, retail and personal services, transport, communications, information technology, data management, legal, medical, scientific, engineering, construction, education, tourism, hospitality and leisure services—due to their increasing capacity to:

- improve our ability to compete on the international stage by making export initiatives in other sectors more competitive
- penetrate services export markets in their own right
- and compete with imported services on cost and quality.

238 There is great opportunity to grow Australia's services exports, however Australian consumers are increasingly receiving services from off-shore locations with no knowledge that this is occurring. Where services are provided from off-shore locations this should be disclosed to allow consumers to make informed purchasing decisions. Labor has implemented a service economy strategy that has, where feasible, introduced country of origin disclosure legislation for services and we will continue to work with the industry and unions to ensure disclosure is appropriate in the area.

239 Off-shoring of service sector jobs has been emerging as an important issue impacting employees and communities for a number of years. Service sector employees e.g. banks, communications and IT in particular, have been interested in off-shoring as a way of reducing costs. Labor believes that all service sector businesses have a responsibility to support and promote new and better Australian jobs, creating opportunities for local employment as they grow their operations.

240 Labor is committed to ensuring that services industry organisations who derive their business and profits from the Australian community contribute economically and socially into the future. Australia needs a service industries strategy. This must be led and developed by a task force that includes all the relevant players. The Service Industries Task Force should report directly to a government with the capacity to implement recommendations across the whole of government. The strategy needs to focus on innovation and identifying capabilities that exist in the Australian economy that can provide the basis for a globally competitive services sector. The objective must be for Australia to establish itself in the global traded services economy. Implementation of the strategy will need to focus on:

- developing stronger linkages between universities, industry bodies, training institutions business, unions, state and federal governments
- improving skills through training and other targeted skills development initiatives
- scaling up parts of the Australian services sector through clusters, networks and mergers
- encouraging leaders in the services sector capable of building a globally competitive and productive sector
- development of infrastructure with internationally competitive costs
- leveraging the roll out of the NBN to build competitiveness and productivity and strengthen the regional job market
- building capabilities in data management
- building market linkages into the global services sector
- investment attraction for companies who can build an international presence for Australia
- marketing and branding Australia's key capabilities in the services sector.

241 Labor is concerned with the widespread use of sham contracting in the services sector. Sham contracting is the deliberate or reckless misclassification of the working relationship as a contract for services instead of traditional employment relationship. This misclassification results in knowing or reckless behaviour designed to result in workers being denied employment benefits and protections, including superannuation entitlements. Labor notes that the Fair Work Ombudsman has recently identified vulnerable workers in the call centre, cleaning and beauty industries as being particularly susceptible to this practice. Having high risk factors for potential underpayment and misclassification of workers as independent contractors, where they are in truth employees. Labor will continue to act to ensure compliance with the Fair Work Act and its provisions against the misclassification of the working relationship. Further, Labor will strengthen current measures to stop the use of sham contracting by unscrupulous employers.

242 Labor believes contemporary Australia is a powerful brand, drawing visitors from around the world and across the nation for both work and leisure. Spending by international and domestic visitors contributes \$34 billion to Australia's economy. Visitors create employment for one in every 12 working Australians and support hundreds of small and regional businesses.

243 Labor supports the tourism industry as a leading economic force and is working with industry to ensure tourism's growth is consistent with our broader economic, environmental, cultural and regional objectives.

244 Labor recognises that the strong Australian dollar is a challenge for tourism and has been working hard with the industry to secure the sector's continued success.

245 Labor believes that we can best fulfil the potential of Australia's tourism industry through:

- introducing a price on carbon to preserve the resilience of some of our most prized natural assets, including the Great Barrier Reef, Kakadu National Park and the Australian Alps
- continuing to encourage businesses to develop cost effective energy saving opportunities to reduce carbon emissions
- contributing direct support of almost \$650 million over the coming years for leading edge marketing and supply side development
- support for education and training via a nationally recognised formal training package based on agreed industry standards and national regulation of Vocation and Educational Training
- engaging with governments, industry and unions to create and develop quality jobs in the tourism sector including through appropriate training and safe work strategies to encourage long term skilled and stable employment with career options, including appropriate recognition in wages of training and productivity outcomes
- taxation arrangements that are conducive to the industry's growth
- recognition of the significant and growing potential of agri-food, nature based-tourism and heritage tourism, as well as the potential for these parts of the tourism industry to contribute to making the tourism industry more ecologically sustainable and responsive to our cultural heritage
- developing tourism projects to enhance employment and business opportunities for Indigenous Australians in conjunction with appropriate Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander representative bodies, and foster tourism that builds a wider understanding of the culture of Indigenous Australians
- appropriately resourcing the marketing and promotion of Australia for visitation, tourism trade investment and employment through Tourism Australia
- working collaboratively with the states and territories to ensure Australia is adequately promoted for domestic tourism visitation, trade, employment and investment
- providing adequate tourist forecasting and research services, recognising the significance of accurate robust data to inform long-term government and industry and investment and union support
- supporting the development of regional destinations by implementing programs that encourage authentic product and experience development for new and existing small and medium enterprises
- committing to quality, long-term, skilled and stable jobs, with access to training and career development
- recognising prior learning for employees in the tourism sector.