

Budget boosts security for Australian Federal Police and Australian Crime Commission

Written by The Conversation USA

Tuesday's budget will provide A\$153.6 million over five years to boost security arrangements for the Australian Federal Police (AFP) and the Australian Crime Commission (ACC) because of the heightened threat environment for law enforcement agencies.

With an emphasis on growth and investment, the budget will also commit to large-scale spending for projects under the Abbott government's asset recycling scheme, which provides federal subsidies when states sell assets and invest the proceeds in new infrastructure.

Treasurer Scott Morrison said this was not a budget or a time to be throwing money around. The budget focused on "an economic plan" which was "all about ensuring that we live within our means", he told the Nine Network. "You have to spend wisely and you have to spend carefully. You have to spend in a very targeted way. And you don't spend more than you save."

The government on Sunday announced \$1.2 billion for schools funding – much less than what Labor is offering. Morrison said that in addition there would be \$118 million over two years, particularly to support disabled children in schools.

Prime Minister Malcolm Turnbull on Sunday night described the tax changes in the budget, which will include limited action on bracket creep, a crack down on superannuation benefits for the wealthy, and phased in company tax relief, as "substantial". With the government having retreated from increasing the GST in this budget he gave an "absolute undertaking" that "there will be no change to the GST in the next parliament".

The security money includes \$65.2 million in capital funding. There will be \$148.5 million for the AFP for more protective security officers, upgraded physical and personnel security and a scoping study for improved protective technical capabilities. The ACC will receive \$5.1 million to upgrade physical and personnel security.

The government is anxious to clear roadblocks and get progress in spending under the asset recycling program. It will write to the NSW government indicating its willingness to provide \$2.19 billion for NSW transport infrastructure, unlocking \$14.2 billion in additional state infrastructure spending.

An agreed schedule of projects would be funded.

They would include the Sydney Metro project, the Regional Road Freight Corridor, Sydney's Rail Future, the long term plan to increase rail capacity, Parramatta Light Rail, the "Smart Motorways" plan, and the clearance of road pinch points and clearways.

Morrison said the government "eagerly" awaited agreement from the NSW government so the funds could flow quickly.

The government is ready to commit \$877.5 million to Victoria for transport infrastructure under the program. Morrison said the offer included funding for the Melbourne Metro Tunnel and Murray Basis Road projects.

With the higher education sector waiting for details of how the government plans to restructure its goal of having students pay a greater share of their university costs, Universities Australia has released modelling showing that having more graduates in the economy creates new jobs and increases wages for non-graduates.

According to the modelling, done by Cadence Economics, in 2014-15 the economic boost from new graduates entering the workforce created 25,000 new jobs for those without degrees.

For every 1000 new graduates who enter the workforce, 120 new jobs are created for people without degrees. The wages of non-graduates increased by \$655 a year when more graduates were in the labour force. Without the entry of new university graduates, the growth rate in jobs for non-graduates would have been zero over the last eight years, according to the modelling. "In particular, the 'spillover benefits' of new graduates entering the workforce in 2014-15 created 8064 new jobs for technicians and tradespeople."

Michelle Grattan does not work for, consult, own shares in or receive funding from any company or organization that would benefit from this article, and has disclosed no relevant affiliations beyond the academic appointment above.

Budget boosts security for Australian Federal Police and Australian Crime Commission

Written by The Conversation USA

Read more <http://theconversation.com/budget-boosts-security-for-australian-federal-police-and-australian-crime-commission-58710>