



FACTSheet

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Introduction

This latest FACTSheet produced by the Committee for Perth contains a snapshot of key facts relating to the current performance of Western Australia and Perth.

It draws on data from a range of sources including FACTBase reports, Committee for Perth research, government departments and media sources.

The economy¹

Gross state product

- Western Australia's **gross state product (GSP)** was **\$249 billion** in 2014-15, 15% of Australia's gross domestic product (GDP).
- GSP per capita** was **\$96,475**, 42% above the national average of \$68,171.
- Real GSP** rose **3.5%** in 2014-15, below annual average growth of 5.3% over the past ten years.
- WA Treasury forecasts **real GSP growth of 1.0%** in 2015-16.
- Australia's real GDP** rose **2.3%** in 2014-15 and the Australian Treasury forecasts growth of 2.5% in 2015-16.

Real expenditure on GSP²

- Merchandise exports** made the largest contribution to **real GSP growth** in 2014-15, up 9%, above annual average

- growth of 5% over the past 10 years.
- Real business investment** fell **12%** in 2014-15, compared with annual average growth of 12% over the past 10 years.
- WA Treasury forecasts **annual average growth of 4% in the volume of merchandise exports** over the five years to 2019-20, offsetting falling real business investment over the period.
- Mining was the largest industry** contributing to real GSP growth in 2014-15, up 10%.

Industry sectors³

- The **mining industry** accounted for **26%** of Western Australia's GSP and 58% of Australia's mining gross value added in 2014-15.
- Mining industry gross value added**, fell **23%** to \$63.6 billion in 2014-15, despite a 10% rise in volumes.
- Construction gross value added**, rose **1%** to \$32.9 billion in 2014-15, despite a 5% fall in volumes.
- Agriculture, forestry and fishing gross value added**, fell **23%** to \$4.5 billion and volumes fell 16% in 2014-15

Population growth⁴

- Western Australia's population was **2.60 million** in the 2015 September quarter, 11% of the nation's population.
 - The 2015 WA Tomorrow report forecasts a

population of 3.27 million by 2026.



Population rose 1.3% or 33,213 in 2014-15, below annual average growth of 2.6% over the past 10 years.

- Natural increase of 21,053 and net overseas migration was up 14,122, which offset falling net interstate migration, which was down 1,962 in 2014-15.
- WA Treasury forecasts annual average population growth of 1.2% in 2015-16.

Labour market⁵

- Western Australia's employment rose 0.05% or 700 people to 1.36 million in April 2016.



Western Australia's employment rose 1.0% or 1,010 through the year to April 2016, compared with Australia's growth of 2.1% or 244,700.

- Western Australia's jobless rate edged down to 5.7% in June 2016. For the 18th consecutive month, the number of full-time jobs across WA fell, with 41,000 full-time positions disappearing since a peak in December 2014.



Australia's unemployment rate was 5.8% in June.



WA Treasury forecasts annual average employment growth of 0.25% in 2015-16, with an average unemployment rate of 6.25%.

Industry sector employment, annual average⁶



In 2014-15, Western Australia's total employment comprised market services 47%, non-market services 25%, construction 11%, mining 7%, manufacturing 6%, agriculture, forestry and fishing 2% and utilities 1%.



The State's total employment rose 3% or 34,000 to 1.37 million in 2014-15.



Non-market services were up 37,700 or 12%, construction was up 20,100 or 15% which offset falls in market services which were down 7,900 or 1%, mining down 6,300 or 6%, manufacturing down 3,900 or 4%, utilities down 3,900 or 20% and agriculture, forestry and fishing down 1,700 or 6% in 2014-15.

Commodity prices and exchange rate



The Reserve Bank of Australia's monthly index of non-rural commodity prices rose 2% in April 2016. The annual index fell 24% in 2015, down 22% in 2014-15.

- The Reserve Bank of Australia's monthly index of rural commodity prices rose 1% in April 2016. The annual index fell 6% in 2015, down 1% in 2014-15.



The monthly average \$A exchange rate fell 0.03% to US77.7cents in August 2016. The annual average \$A exchange rate fell 17% to US74.6 cents in 2015, down 9% to US82.9 cents in 2014-15 and is forecast by WA Treasury to be US73.3 cents in 2015-16.

Business investment⁸

- Business investment contributed 25% of Western Australia's GSP in 2014-15.
- Western Australia contributed 25% of Australia's business investment in 2015, it was 26% in 2014-15.
- Nominal business investment fell 13.5% to \$58.3 billion in 2015. It fell 9% to \$13.3 billion in the December quarter 2015.



Mining new capital

expenditure fell 8% to \$42.3 billion in 2015. Mining accounted for 83% of Western Australia's private new capital expenditure and 65% of Australia's mining investment.



Mining new capital expenditure fell 22% to \$8.2 billion in the March quarter 2016.

Investment in major resource projects: March 2016⁹



In October 2015, Western Australia accounted for 56% of the value of Australia's major resource projects under construction or committed.



In March 2016, there was \$94.1 billion of major resource projects under construction or committed in Western Australia and \$44.3 billion under consideration.

- There was \$86 billion of LNG projects under construction or committed and \$19.5 billion under consideration.
- There was \$1.9 billion of iron ore projects under construction or committed and \$10.5 billion under consideration.

Major minerals and petroleum sales by value¹⁰

- Minerals and petroleum accounted for 87% or \$89.4 billion of Western Australia's merchandise exports in 2015.



Western Australia's minerals and petroleum sales fell 20% to \$91.3 billion in 2015.



Iron ore accounted for 55% or \$49.8 billion of the State's minerals and petroleum sales in 2015.



LNG accounted for 13% or \$11.6 billion of the State's minerals and petroleum

sales in 2015.

- ↑ **Gold** accounted for 10% or \$9.6 billion of the State's minerals and petroleum sales in 2015.
- Other commodities' shares of the State's minerals and petroleum sales in 2015 were crude oil and condensate 7% or \$6.2 billion, alumina 6% or \$5.3 billion, nickel 3% or \$2.6 billion, base metals 2% or \$1.5 billion and heavy mineral sands 1% or \$558 million.

Major agriculture production¹¹

- ↓ Western Australia's **agricultural commodity production** fell 8% to \$7.9 billion in 2014-15.
- **Production fell for wheat**, down 17% or \$545 million, canola down 18% or \$194 million, barley down 11% or \$109 million and wool down 7% or \$41 million in 2014-15.
- **Production rose for cattle and calves up 13%** or \$76 million and sheep and lambs up 17% or \$69 million in 2014-15.

Merchandise exports¹²

- ↓ Western Australia contributed 44% of Australia's merchandise exports in 2014-15.
- Exports of goods and services accounted for 47% of Western Australia's GSP in 2014-15.
- **Merchandise exports** accounted for 45% of GSP, while services exports accounted for 2.5% of GSP.
- ↑ The value of **Western Australia's merchandise exports** fell 17% to \$102.8 billion in 2015.
- ↓ The State's merchandise exports in 2015 were mainly iron ore 47%, gold 13%, LNG 9% and crude oil and condensate 6%.

Major trading partners: 2015¹³

- ↓ Western Australia accounted for 41% of Australia's merchandise exports in 2015, including large shares of national exports to China 67%, Japan 42% and Korea 40%.
- ↓ **China was the State's largest export market** in 2015 - \$54.1 billion or 53%, followed by Japan - \$16.7 billion or 16%.
- ↑ The State's exports fell to both China - down 15% or \$9.4 billion and Japan down 31% or \$7.4 billion in 2015.
- ↓ In the December quarter 2015, the State's exports fell 10% to \$4 billion to China but rose 4% to \$1.4 billion to Japan.
- ↑ **China was the State's largest source of imports** in 2015, \$5.3 billion or 15%, followed by Korea \$3.3 billion or 9%.

Agriculture and food exports¹⁴

- Western Australia's **agricultural and food exports** rose 3% to \$7.8 billion in 2014-15, including wheat 38%, barley 13%, canola 10%, wool 6% and rock lobster 6%.
- ↓ **Wheat exports** rose 6% to \$3 billion in 2014-15, in line with annual average growth of 6% over the past 10 years.
- Western Australia's major agricultural and food export markets in 2014-15 were China 23%, Indonesia 14%, Japan 9%, Korea 6% and Vietnam 4%.
- **Western Australia's agricultural and food exports to China** rose 30% to \$1.8 billion in 2014-15.

Services exports¹⁵

- ↓ Western Australia contributed 10% of Australia's services exports in 2014-15.
- ↓ **Western Australia's services exports** rose 3% to \$6.6 billion in 2015, below annual average growth of 5% over the past ten years.
- The State's **services exports** in 2015 included personal travel 30%, education travel 21%, transport 16%, property and business services 15% and business travel 10%.
- The State's **services exports** growth in 2015 came mainly from increases in personal travel up 9%, education travel up 10% and property and business services up 13%.

Iron ore and steel product prices¹⁶

- ↑ The monthly **average price of iron ore** rose 9% to US\$61.0 a tonne in April 2016. The annual average price fell 42% to US\$55.8 a tonne in 2015, down 42% to US\$71.5 a tonne in 2014-15.
- The monthly **average price of steel products** rose 15% in April 2016. The annual average price fell 27% in 2015, down 17% in 2014-15.

Major global iron ore producers: 2014¹⁷

- Western Australia is the **world's largest iron ore producer**, accounting for 37% of world production and 49% of world seaborne exports in 2014.
- The State produced **697 million tonnes of iron ore** in 2014.
- Western Australia accounted for **27% of global crude iron ore reserves** in 2015. The State had an estimated 53 billion

tonnes of iron ore reserves in 2014-15, which could sustain its iron ore industry for another 69 years at current production rates.

Major iron ore export markets¹⁸

- In 2015, Western Australia accounted for **more than half of iron ore imports to China 63% or 612mt**, Japan **54% or 71mt**, Korea **69% or 52mt** and Taiwan **66% or 15mt**.
- **China made up 81% of the State's iron ore export volumes in 2015**, followed by Japan 9%, Korea 7% and Taiwan 2%.

- ↓ The **State's iron ore exports to China rose 11%** to 612 million tonnes in 2015, below annual average growth of 18% over the past ten years.
- The **State's iron ore exports fell to Japan** in 2015, down 7% to 71mt, but rose to Korea, up 1% to 52mt and Taiwan up 1%.

Iron ore sales¹⁹

- ↓ Western Australia's **iron ore sales fell 23%** to \$49.8 billion in 2015, compared with annual average growth of 16% over the past ten years.
- ↓ The **volume of iron ore sales rose 6%** to 741 million tonnes in 2015, below annual average growth of 12% over the past ten years.
- ↓ The **annual average price of iron ore sales fell 28%** to A\$67.2 a tonne in 2015.

Iron ore sales and price outlook²⁰

- ↑ WA Treasury forecasts a **rise of 98 million tonnes in Western Australia's iron ore sales to 817 million tonnes**, between 2014-15 and 2019-20 – an annual average growth rate of 3%.

- WA Treasury forecasts the **annual average price of iron ore will fall to US\$50.90 a tonne** in 2015-16 and US\$47.7 a tonne in 2016-17, before recovering to US\$54 a tonne by 2019-20.

Petroleum prices²¹

- The monthly average price of **West Texas Intermediate (WTI) crude oil rose 8%** to US\$41 a barrel in April 2016. The annual average price fell 48% to US\$48.70 a barrel in 2015, down 32% to US\$69.30 a barrel in 2014-15.
- The monthly **average price of LNG imported by Japan was unchanged** at US\$7.80 a million British thermal unit in April 2016. The annual average price fell 35% to US\$10.40 a million British thermal unit in 2015, down 15% to US\$13.60 a million British thermal unit in 2014-15.

Major global LNG exporters: 2015²²

- Western Australia is the **world's third largest LNG exporter** behind Qatar and Malaysia, accounting for 8%, 20.4mt, of global LNG exports of 245 million tonnes in 2015.
- The **rest of Australia, excluding Western Australia, exported 9.1 million tonnes of LNG** in 2015.
- In 2015, most of Western Australia's LNG exports went to Japan, China, Korea and other Asian and Middle Eastern countries.

Natural gas resources by basin (trillion cubic feet): July 2015²³

- Western Australia accounted for **1.2% of global natural gas reserves** in 2014, according to the BP

Statistical Review of World Energy.

- In July 2015, the WA Department of Mines and Petroleum estimated the **State had 39 trillion cubic feet of conventional natural gas reserves** tied to producing LNG and domestic gas facilities and 94 trillion cubic feet of conventional natural gas resources in non-producing fields.
- Western Australia's 39 trillion cubic feet of conventional natural gas reserves in producing fields in July 2015, could sustain its LNG and domestic gas industry for another 29 years at current production rates.

LNG sales²⁴

- ↓ Western Australia's **LNG sales fell 26%** to \$11.6 billion in 2015, compared with annual average growth of 10% over the past ten years.
- The volume of **LNG sales fell 3%** to 20.4 million tonnes in 2015, compared with annual average growth of 6% over the past ten years.
- The annual average price of **LNG sales fell 24%** to A\$10.90 a million British thermal unit in 2015.

LNG sales, capacity and oil price outlook²⁵

- The WA Department of State Development expects Western Australia's **LNG production capacity to grow from 20.6 million tonnes a year in 2014-15 to 49.1 million tonnes a year in 2018-19**, when the Gorgon, Wheatstone and Prelude projects are complete.
- WA Treasury forecasts the **annual average price of West Texas Intermediate (WTI) crude oil will fall to US\$41.10 a barrel** in 2015-16, before recovering to

US\$50.90 a barrel by 2019-20.

Gold sales²⁶

- The monthly **average price of gold fell 0.2%** to US\$1,242 an ounce in April 2016. The annual average price fell 8% to US\$1,161 an ounce in 2015, down 6% to US\$1,223 an ounce in 2014-15.
- ↑ Western Australia's **gold sales rose 10% to \$9.6 billion** in 2015, below annual average growth of 12% over the past ten years.
- ↑ The **volume of gold sales rose 0.1%** to 193 tonnes in 2015, below annual average growth of 1% over the past ten years.
- ↑ The **annual average price of gold sales rose 10%** to A\$1,403 an ounce in 2015.

Crude oil and condensate sales²⁷

- ↑ Western Australia's **crude oil and condensate sales fell 35%** to \$6.2 billion in 2015, above annual average decline of 3% over the past ten years.
- ↑ The **volume of crude oil and condensate sales rose 7%** to 15 gigalitres in 2015, compared with an annual average decline of 2% over the past ten years.
- ↑ The annual **average price of crude oil and condensate sales fell 39%** to A\$66.2 a barrel in 2015.

Alumina sales²⁸

- The monthly **average price of aluminium rose 3%** to US\$1,571 a tonne in April 2016. The annual average price fell 11% to US\$1,665 a tonne in 2015, up 7% to US\$1,883 a tonne in 2014-15.
- Western Australia's **alumina sales rose 15%** to \$5.3 billion in 2015, above annual

average growth of 4% over the past ten years.

- The **volume of alumina sales fell 1%** to 14 million tonnes in 2015, compared with annual average growth of 2% over the past ten years.
- The annual **average price of alumina sales rose 16%** to A\$382 a tonne in 2015.

Economic news

- A breakdown of the **industries that employed the most people** in the CBD, 29,110 worked in professional, scientific and technical services, 19,188 in public administration and safety, 14,063 in mining, 12,736 in financial and insurance services, 10,518 in health care and social assistance and 7,802 in accommodation and food services.⁴⁶
- An **influx of new office space in Perth's CBD and weakening demand by tenants has resulted in the highest vacancy rate for 20 years.** The Property Council of Australia's office market report found the CBD's office vacancy rate rose from 19.2% to 21.85% in the six months to August 2016, the highest since 1992 when it was 31.8%.³⁴
- In April, **local shipbuilder Austal received an order from the US Navy for construction of an 11th Littoral combat ship**, with the deal worth a reported \$735 million. The new combat ship will add to the US Navy's \$US3.5 billion order for 10 vessels to be built by Austal, which was received in 2010.³²
- A survey by the Chamber of Commerce and Industry found that the vast **majority of West Australians don't believe the State Government has a realistic plan to regain a AAA credit rating.** The CCI surveyed 402 people during the March quarter and found about 80% did not think the Government had set out a credible path to restore its top-tier rating.³⁴
- In April, it was announced that from 2020, **Western Australia will take over the construction of the Offshore Patrol Vessels (OPV)** from South Australia in a contract worth more than \$3 billion, creating more than 400 direct jobs. Austal Ships was also selected as the preferred tenderer to construct and maintain up to 21 replacement steel-hulled Pacific patrol boats at their premises at the Australian Marine Complex. This contract is valued at \$500 million and is expected to create about 130 jobs.³⁸
- Perth experienced a **drop of -4.5% in its Residential Property Price Index** between March quarter 2015 to the March quarter 2016. By comparison, the weighted average of the eight capital cities was growth of 6.8% with Sydney and Melbourne experiencing growth of 9.7% and 9.8% respectively.³²
- **Housing affordability in Perth improved**, with median house prices decreasing 1.4% in the June quarter. The retreat takes Perth's median house price to \$522,500 while the median price for units was \$406,000 in the same quarter.⁴³
- The inner city Perth suburb of **Glendalough has topped the list for most affordable suburbs in a 10 kilometre radius from the CBD.** Glendalough was one of five suburbs within 10 kilometres of the CBD where buyers could purchase a house, townhouse, duplex or triplex for \$500,000 or less. The suburbs of Osborne Park, Nollamara, Bentley

and Cloverdale round out the top five.⁴⁴

- **Perth's median property price slipped to \$490,000** as demand in for housing remains low. In June, house prices fell 0.9% rounding out a 4.3% fall in the three months to July.³²
- In March, **almost 14% of Perth homes were selling for less than their previous purchase price.** City of Perth home sellers are being hit the hardest, with 43.1% of homes selling at an average \$43,000 less than their original purchase price. Twenty per cent of Claremont, Mandurah and Cottesloe sellers were suffering a loss. On the other hand, 95.1% of Bassendean homes were selling for more than they were bought for, with a median gain of \$175,000.³⁴
- A survey by REIWA released in March revealed the **eight cheapest suburbs for rental properties.** In the three months to February, Wembley, Armadale, Kelmscott, Osborne Park and Medina all had a median weekly rent price of \$300 a week. Gosnells, Glendalough and Maddington also made the top eight with median rents under \$325 a week. Perth's median rental price was \$400 a week.⁴⁵
- A report by Moody's Investors Service found that **Western Australia had the highest level of mortgage arrears** in 2015 with the rate rising by a significant 0.48% over the year. It says the mining downturn and soft property price growth are expected to hurt Australians with a mortgage, especially in resource-reliant regions.³⁴
- The suburbs of Murdoch and Crawley, both known for their hospitals and universities, were the **only two postcodes to record significant house rent**

growth over the past 12 months to March. Property experts suggested the medical and higher education sectors may be taking some of the slack from the mining boom.⁴⁴

- **Car sales in Western Australia remain stalled.** About 8,200 new cars were sold in WA in July, down 1.3% on the previous corresponding period. In the year to date, sales are down 3.9% in the state, while nationally new cars sales have risen by 2.8%.³²

Western Australia's construction industry²⁹

- **The construction industry employs approximately 11.1% (annualised) of the overall State workforce, 151,270 people.**
 - Compared to 2014, at the end of December 2015 (annualised), there was a **12.9% decrease in construction apprentice commencements** and also a 3% decrease in electrical apprentice commencements, a combined decrease of 9.3%.
 - There are currently **4,330 building trades apprentices 'in training'** which is the highest number since 2007. Together with electrical trade apprentices, there are 8,273 apprentices in training which is the highest ever recorded.
 - **Electricians account for over 31% of all tradespeople in construction** with a proportion of these working in the mining/resource sector.
 - As of December 2015, the **construction industry employed just over 48% of all Western Australia's apprentices, building trades and electricians combined.**
 - It is estimated that
- **approximately 17,000 construction industry employees are working on resource industry construction projects.** This is a significant reduction from the 29,000 estimated to be employed in the sector in 2013.
 - The value of **residential and non-residential construction work, excluding heavy engineering, in the year to December 2015 increased by 3.1%** compared to December 2014. The engineering construction sector, excluding heavy engineering, decreased by 22.7% in Western Australia between September 2014 and September 2015.
 - **The housing sector has in recent months pulled back,** with annual total dwelling unit approvals to January 2015 dropping to 28,133 or 20,346 houses, compared to a previous peak of 32,714 or 24,395 houses in January 2014.
 - Seasonally adjusted, **building approvals for total dwelling units increased by 7.2% between December 2015 and January 2016.** Building approvals in the November 2015 to January 2016 quarter dropped by 13.8% against the previous quarter.
 - **Trend building approvals in Western Australia decreased by 1.8%** between December 2015 and January 2016 and fell by 13.9% over the year, annualised average.
 - Seasonally adjusted, **dwelling commencements increased by 1.69%** in the quarter to September 2015; and on an annualised basis compared to September 2014, commencements decreased by 3.48%.
 - **Apprentice commencements in construction fell 12.88%** between 2014 and 2015. For electrical apprentices it was

- 2.92% down and combined 9.30% lower.
- Some trades have seen **an increase in apprentice commencements** including painting, which increased by 28%, plastering by 53% and wall and floor tiling by 13%.
 - There are **4,330 building and construction trade apprentices and 3,943 electricians in training**, the highest combined number since 2014. The high in-training numbers are a result of high commencements in the previous three years. There is concern the current drop in commencements will have a negative impact on the in-training figures.
 - Although some trades show a decline in apprentices since 2011, the **overall performance shows an increase of between 10.3% including electricians and 14.1% for building and construction - excluding electricians**.
 - Over the past four years there has been a **decline in the training rates for a number of construction trades** but an increase in others. Increases in bricklaying correspond to a significant increase in commencements. The decline in electricians can be directly attributed to a 31% increase in tradespeople since 2011.
 - There are currently **93 female apprentices in training**. Over the past 10 years, the overall proportion of female apprentices in construction has risen from 1.2% to 2.2%.
 - There are currently **70 female trainees**, which is an increase from 2.2% to 8.3% of total trainees over the past 10 years, with a 169% increase in the actual numbers over the past year. It is believed that one factor is the increased promotion of 'women in trades'

subsidies and scholarships. Another factor is the concerted efforts by the civil construction sector to employ young women.

- There are currently **179 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander (ATSI) apprentices** in training. Over the past 10 years the overall proportion of ATSI apprentices has risen from 3.0% to 4.1% which is indicative of the increase in the number of ATSI people in the general population.
- There are **63 trainees in training with an ATSI background**, which represents approximately 7.5% of all building and construction trainees. This increase appears to coincide with a concerted effort to recruit ATSI people by the civil construction sector.
- There are currently **1,074 trainees in training**, primarily in the civil construction sector. Including the civil construction Supervisor Level 4 qualification, there has been an overall 129% increase since the 2009 figure of 470 trainees in-training.

Reforming and reshaping

- In July, the **State Government launched its transport plan** to ensure Perth's bus network, rail links, roads and cycleways can cater for a population of 3.5 million. Key rail projects proposed include expanding the city's train network from 180 kilometres to 300km and including a new rail line to service Morley and East Wanneroo; extending existing rail lines to Yanchep, Bellevue and Byford to cater for growing suburbs and extending the Thornlie line to Cockburn Central. The plan also

recommends Bus Rapid Transit (BRT), where buses have a designated lane, to areas where the level of demand does not warrant heavy rail. BRT routes would connect Ellenbrook to Bassendean Station, Midland and the new East Wanneroo rail link. BRT or light rail would connect Glendalough Station to Scarborough Beach. Key plans for roads included: Stock Road to extend north from Leach Highway, linking with Stephenson Avenue at Jon Sanders Drive with an extension tying into the Mitchell Freeway. The extension will include tunnels. Fremantle-Rockingham Highway to serve the Western Trade Coast strategic industrial centre. Lastly an East-West City Link connecting Canning Highway at Berwick Street to Riverside Drive and a tunnel connecting Riverside Drive with the Narrows interchange.³⁰

- In July, **Transperth services started operating from the new \$217 million underground Perth Busport**. The new Busport has been designed to accommodate 50% more bus movements than the old Wellington Street Bus Station. The Perth Busport is fully air-conditioned, features 160 seats, 16 bus stands, two bus entrance-exits, toilets and baby change facilities, and two kiosks.³⁰
- In August, **work started on a \$25 million upgrade to East Perth Station** to make the station more modern, accessible and better able to host larger crowds expected once Perth Stadium opens. About 7,500 people of a capacity crowd of 60,000 people are expected to use the station as their route to and from the new stadium.³⁰

- In April, **construction began on the \$32.1 million dedicated Charles Street bus bridge and busway**. The bridge and busway will be built from the current James Street bus bridge over the Graham Farmer Freeway to Charles Street. Bus lanes will be built along Charles Street to Violet Street. It's expected to remove more than 1,000 buses a day from James and Fitzgerald streets in Northbridge. The project is expected to be completed by early 2017.³⁰
- In April, **Prime Minister Malcolm Turnbull pledged to give Western Australia an extra \$260 million towards the Perth Freight Link project, for a tunnel**. Instead of a surface upgrade of Stock Road and Leach Highway, the plan involves a tunnel from the Stock/Winterfold Road intersection to the Stirling Highway/High Street intersection in Fremantle.³⁵
- The State Government won an appeal against a Supreme Court decision which ruled **environmental approvals for Perth's Roe 8 highway extension were invalid**. In a unanimous decision, the Court of Appeal ruled in favour of the State Government, finding the Environmental Protection Authority was not obliged to take its own policies into account. In August, Roe 8 opponents filed for special leave to appeal the decision in the country's highest court. The Save Beelihar Wetlands group launched a crowdfunding campaign to help meet the legal costs of the High Court battle.³¹
- The **first dedicated bus corridor in Western Australia will be introduced** to improve a public transport link between Ellenbrook, its neighbouring communities and the Midland Line. The \$49 million Ellenbrook Bus Rapid Transit (EBRT) project will provide a nine-kilometre continuous connection for buses between Ellenbrook Town Centre and Marshall Road.³⁰
- In February, the **State Government started trials of the yellow box junction**, to deter motorists from stopping within intersections and blocking other vehicles. The yellow box junctions are used successfully around the world to show the extent of an intersection and indicate the area where drivers should not stop.³⁰
- Mt Hawthorn will have **Perth's first bike boulevard**, where priority will be given to cyclists and vehicle speeds will be reduced to 30km/h. The Cities of Bayswater, Belmont and Joondalup also want to take part in the bike boulevard pilot project.³⁵
- Premier Colin Barnett says he has an open mind about **trials of a program forcing motorists to maintain a one-metre gap around cyclists**, despite previously having ruled out the safety buffer. The concept is already in place in several other states, with new laws coming into effect in New South Wales in March and police in South Australia starting to enforce the rule in January.³¹
- In April, the State Government announced it will allow **cyclists of any age to ride along footpaths**. The change is targeted at parents and leisure cyclists who travel at low speed and do not feel comfortable riding on the road. Under the previous rules, only children aged under 12 years could ride a bicycle on footpaths.³⁰
- FACTBase 50 found that a **substantial proportion of public transport projects including rail, light rail, rapid bus and ferry, dating back from 1955 to the present, have not been implemented**.⁴⁶
- **Competition in Perth's on-demand transport sector increased with Shofer entering the market** in March, declaring it will take on Uber. Safety features such as video monitoring, a panic button and an in-vehicle breathalyser for use before all trips are in use in all cars. Within a week of starting, the Department of Transport was investigating whether it complied with its small charter vehicle licence conditions.^{31&32}
- **Plans for the new Western Australian Museum have revealed the new \$428.3-million, 23,000-square-metre museum will be four times the size of the existing museum**. It will comprise 7,000m² of gallery spaces, including a 1,000 m² gallery space for temporary exhibitions, as well as retail and food and beverage outlets and opportunities to see scientists and curators at work.³⁹
- The Metropolitan Central Development Assessment Panel has **rejected developer Zone Q Investments plans to build a \$174 million, 38 storey, mixed used development including 163 apartments in South Perth**. The DAP said the proposal for 88 Mill Point Road wasn't acceptable because it didn't meet the City of South Perth's planning requirements for buildings over a certain height to be predominantly commercial use.³²
- **Elizabeth Quay's first major private development started in August**, months later than the Western Australian Government had previously hoped. The Far East Consortium's apartment and hotel development on the

Quay's eastern side is expected to take three years to complete. The development will feature 379 apartments, a development known as The Towers, and a Ritz-Carlton hotel. Within days of the sod turning, Far East Consortium announced it would be selling the five-star hotel on a turnkey basis. The apartments, being sold through PRD Nationwide Perth, are already 65%-sold, mostly to local owner-occupiers.³¹

- The **City of South Perth has amended policies to stop serviced apartments being sold as residential property in the future.** There are concern that developers would add serviced apartments to their high rise applications to meet the strict guidelines of a 50% ratio of commercial and residential, then sell them as residential after their commercial rating ended.³³
- The **City of Joondalup is pushing for international trade opportunities with its Chinese sister city of Jinan.** The City has spent the past year researching the tourism, education, aged care and digital/information technology potential held within the city limits and what trade opportunities industries in Jinan would want to pursue. Tourism and hospitality contributed \$850 million to the Joondalup economy in 2013-14, with 41,000 international visitors and almost 1.2 million visitor nights in the city that same year.³²
- The **State Government has made more public open space available to support substantial growth in the City of Wanneroo over the next 35 years.** An agreement between the Western Australian

Planning Commission and LandCorp had enabled the commission to purchase 100 hectares in Alkimos and 350ha in Neerabup for regional open space and infrastructure reserves. The local population is expected to more than double to 740,300 people by 2050.³⁰

- The **State Government has instructed the Department of Planning to prepare a new state planning policy and guidelines on 'building design issues' following contention about infill around Perth.** Perth and Peel need 800,000 new homes and the government is working with industry and councils to develop guidelines encouraging more 'functional, liveable and efficient' buildings and surroundings, particularly with apartment developments.³⁵
- Middle Eastern-backed group **World Trade Centre Holdings is planning to build one of Perth's largest towers,** looking to buy the former Myer Megamart site in Northbridge in a deal believed to be worth about \$50 million.³⁶
- **A \$25 million five-storey complex that includes 78 residential apartments will be built in Woodbridge, close to the Midland train station.** The development will provide social, shared equity and full market value housing. The units will be specially designed to ensure they are accessible for people with diverse needs. At least 12 apartments will be sold to individuals and families on low-to-moderate incomes.³⁰
- In April, the **State Government announced the first stage of a new agricultural and industrial precinct** which is expected to deliver up to 33,000 jobs by 2050 and economic opportunities for the Peel

region. The first phase of funding of \$49.3 million for Transform Peel, comprises a business park, food zone and an integrated water initiative across a 28,000ha zone in Nambeelup, 14 kilometres east of Mandurah.³⁸

- In March, Premier Colin Barnett revealed plans to **relocate the Departments of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry in South Perth and sell off the surrounding land for high-density housing.**³⁷
- The **State Government has allocated \$10 million over four years to redevelop Lathlain Park,** which will include a new training home for the West Coast Eagles. The funding will go towards an extra oval and the rebuilding of the existing oval, lighting, scoreboard, two-lane synthetic running track, pathways, tennis courts and a playground.³⁰
- The **State Government has committed an extra \$18 million in the 2016-17 State Budget to transform the Scarborough Beach foreshore.** The Government, in collaboration with the City of Stirling will invest nearly \$75.4 million over the next three years into reshaping the foreshore into a world-class tourist destination.³⁰
- A **historic freight building in Claremont has been given a new lease of life as a community cultural centre.** The Goods Shed, on the corner of Shenton Road and Claremont Crescent, will deliver space for exhibitions, workshops, artist residencies, cultural events, a community garden and a coffee shop.³⁸
- In March, the Nationals delivered a critical blow to the West Australian Government's plan to **privatise Fremantle Port,** refusing to support the proposed \$2 billion sale. State debt is forecast to reach \$39 billion by 2018, and the port was the centrepiece of the privatisation push as the single largest public asset up for sale. The Nationals' concerns centre on a range of issues, including

pricing and access arrangements with any potential buyer.³¹

- **Market City, Western Australia's fruit and vegetable wholesale market and distribution hub, has become industry owned and operated,** following a successful \$135.5 million bid by Perth Markets Ltd. Perth Markets Ltd is an industry consortium led by the Chamber of Fruit and Vegetable Industries and is the first completed sale under the Government's asset sales program in WA.³⁰
- In March, the State Government started looking for **expressions of interest (EOI) for the proposed divestment of up to 40% of Keystart's loan book.** Interested parties were invited to submit an expression of interest that demonstrates they have the capacity, capability, experience and understanding to complete the proposed transaction.³⁰
- **Legislation establishing the City of Perth as Western Australia's capital city passed both Houses of State Parliament in February.** Under the legislation, which came into effect on July 1, the boundaries of the City of Perth will include The University of Western Australia, Kings Park, Queen Elizabeth II Medical Centre and the Perth Children's Hospital.³⁰
- **Online reporting of gifts and travel contributions was mandated throughout the local government sector under new legislation that took effect in March.** Elected members and senior staff are now required to disclose gifts and travel contributions within 10 days and for the information to be easily accessible on the council's website.³⁰
- **Western Australian ratepayers will be better**

able to scrutinise their local government's financial health and performance with a new website that provides unprecedented access to local government data. The MyCouncil website reveals how local governments were raising, spending and managing their money.³⁰

- Perth shoppers will enjoy **four extra retail trading hours on Queen's Birthday public holiday** on September 26, 2016, with general retail shops in the metropolitan area allowed to open from 8am to 6pm.³⁰
- **The Fremantle Football Club was granted a licence to field a team in the 2017 AFL National Women's League.** The port club edged out the Eagles to have WA's sole team in the inaugural eight team season.³⁰

Lifestyle

- This year's **Perth Fringe achieved a turnover of \$20 million,** earned \$8.3 million for artists and had a flow-on economic **impact** of \$98 million, a report has found. Beyond the figures, the report found the Fringe's biggest impact was its boost to Perth's cultural life, tourism appeal and social cohesion. Surveys showed 80% of people thought Fringe World, which attracted 990,000 people to free and ticketed events, was one of the best things about Perth. For every \$1 of government investment in Fringe World, the flow-on economic impact was \$74.50, nearly double that of the previous year.³⁷
 - **The Perth International Arts Festival, with a budget of \$17.6 million, was set to reach its \$4.7 million box-office target after a 6% rise in ticket sales to a record of more than 180,000.** There were record crowds of 47,000 people at the
- Perth Writers Festival and thousands more attended the inaugural Chamber Music Weekend.³⁷
 - Western Australia is on track to record its **biggest ever cruise ship season.** Last financial year, the cruise sector generated 1,188 jobs and more than \$275 million for the State's economy with WA leading the nation in terms of growth in the cruise sector.³⁸
 - More than **100,000 people attended this year's Mandurah Crab Fest.** The first Crab Fest was held in 1999.³⁰
 - **The 17th annual Fremantle Street Arts Festival was held in March, attracting more than 100,000 people.** The event's popularity encouraged the City of Fremantle to trial closing its cafe strip to cars for three Sundays in an effort to make the city centre more family-friendly.³⁵
 - **The 3rd annual Food Truck Rumble was held at the Perth Cultural Centre in April.** The event, which was attended by tens of thousands of people included 40 food trucks around the Perth Cultural Centre and Museum Gardens, 10 street food stalls at the Urban Orchard 'Urban Hawker Centre' and 13 stalls in the Art and Crafts Laneway Markets. The event also included the biggest breakdancing competition in Perth.⁴⁰
 - **Perth will become a Rugby League World Cup host city** for the first time when England and France, along with two other European qualifiers, play at nib Stadium for a double-header clash next year.³⁰
 - In July, the State Government announced it had secured Australia's biggest sporting event - game two of the **New South Wales versus Queensland State of Origin series** - for the Perth Stadium

in 2019. State of Origin matches were the most watched sporting events on Australian television, drawing an audience of 3.96 million viewers last year, out-rating popular events such as the AFL Grand Final (3.54 million viewers) and the Melbourne Cup (3.07 million viewers).³⁰

- One of the world's greatest tennis players, **Roger Federer, is returning to Perth for the first time in 15 years to compete at Hopman Cup 2017.** Federer last competed at the Hopman Cup in 2002, his playing partner will be world number 16 Belinda Bencic. More than 96,000 fans went to Perth Arena for this year's tournament, while millions of people worldwide saw the tennis and sights of Western Australia on television and online.³⁰
- The Socceroos will take on Iraq in the opening match for Australia in the **final round of the FIFA World Cup qualifiers in September at nib Stadium.** The match will provide valuable exposure for the State through TV and media coverage and attract fans to Perth.³⁸
- One of the world's biggest ocean sports events, the **2018 Australian Surf Life Saving Championships will be held at Scarborough Beach** next March and April. The event will be broadcast nationally on free-to-air TV.³⁸
- **Rottnest Island played a starring role in the latest There's Nothing Like Australia marketing campaign,** launched by Australian Hollywood star Chris Hemsworth in New York in February. The television, print and online campaign included a magazine featuring stories on Fremantle,

Cottesloe, Rottnest Island, Rockingham dolphins, Ningaloo, the Pinnacles, Monkey Mia, Margaret River, whale watching, the Cape to Cape, Denmark, Broome and the Kimberley's Horizontal Falls.³⁰

- In April, the **State Government committed \$1.1 million towards an artificial reef off Mandurah** to improve recreational fishing opportunities. The reef will be located nine kilometres offshore, due west of Halls Head, in 25 metres of water. It will be funded from the Recreational Fishing Initiatives Fund, which draws on revenue collected from recreational licence fees.³⁰
- In April, the **City of Perth started a trial of 28 pink-outlined 'female-friendly' bays with upgraded lighting and extra security camera coverage in its Pier Street Car Park.** The bays were close to the entry and exit points of the 700-bay car park. Feedback from the public will determine whether it continues.³⁵
- The **average commute distance in the Perth region has increased to 14.9 kilometres,** the second highest of any Australian capital city, marginally behind Sydney at 15 kilometres. When Perth is broken down into regions, people living in and around Mandurah have the longest average commute of 24.4 kilometres.⁴⁶
- For the fourth year running, **world heritage-listed Fremantle Prison and the Kings Park State War Memorial have been named as two of the best landmarks in Australia** by travel website TripAdvisor in its 2016 Travellers' Choice Awards. Fremantle Prison was the seventh highest ranked landmark attraction in Australia. The State War Memorial came in at

eighth.³⁰

- **Almost 30% of West Australians are resigned to working at least until they're 70.** Australian Bureau of Statistics figures show more people are giving up on the idea of early retirement, its latest report shows a clear jump in people thinking they will work beyond 65. In WA, more than 27% of people expect to work beyond 70, a 6% rise on the previous report. Almost three-quarters of West Australians expect to work beyond 65, the highest ratio of any State.³⁶
- Firewater Grille at the Duxton Hotel won the **2016 World Luxury Restaurant award for best hotel restaurant in Australia.** It's the second time the Duxton has been recognised at the awards, after being crowned as best restaurant Australasia and Oceania continent division at the World Luxury Hotel awards in 2014.³²

Knowledge and innovation

- **More than 9,000 Perth households will have their daily travel movements tracked by carrying personal GPS loggers as part of a State Government survey to find out where, why and how people travel.** The household travel survey, to be collected over three or four years, will monitor a participant's reasons for travelling, their chosen travel methods, travel times and places visited using GPS and geocoding technology.³⁵
- In March, Western Australian company **Austral Fisheries became the world's first seafood company to be certified as carbon neutral,** by offsetting its emissions with the planting of native Australian trees. Austral

Fisheries produces about 27,422 tonnes of carbon dioxide emissions a year and estimates that it needs to plant 140ha of native Australian bush each year to offset these emissions.³⁰

- **A facility that converts food and organic waste into electricity started generating green energy** in Jandakot in March. The anaerobic digester at the garden supplies company Richgro was made possible with \$500,000 in Low Emissions Energy Development funding from the State Government. The digester converts food and organic waste from outlets such as supermarkets and fast food stores into methane gas and then into electricity.³⁰
- In March, **Landgate launched Pastures from Space Plus**, a monitoring tool for farmers that integrated high-resolution satellite imagery, a stocking rate calculator, feed budgeting tool and Bureau of Meteorology rainfall data. Farmers who subscribe to the tool can prepare customised charts and calculations to help them make important management decisions about their properties such as feed budgeting, stocking rates and fertiliser application.³⁰
- Up to **20 Western Australian principals will travel to Harvard University to learn from the world's best educators in the first-ever partnership of its kind in Australia**. As part of the partnership, the Independent Public School principals will participate in a two-year leadership development program. The Independent Public School Principals' Fellowship Program includes an intensive course delivered by the Harvard Graduate School of Education, online

learning and executive mentoring.³⁰

- Year 11 students at Carey Baptist College won the **Young Re-inventor of the Year Award** by re-using waste materials to build a vertical herb garden for food technology classes. The students beat 111 other entries by building the garden using plastic milk containers from the school cafe and wooden pallets collected from nearby street verges.³⁰
- Brickworks is set to introduce a **revolutionary new technology to Western Australia that it says will cut the cost of manufacturing bricks by 30% using skate kiln technology**. The new plant is expected to be commissioned by early 2018.³²
- A **vibrant WA high-tech sector could contribute between \$76 billion to \$100 billion in Gross State Product (GSP) in 2025**, with 3,000 to 5,000 new companies formed each year in the sector, creating 150,000 new jobs by 2025 and enabling many more.⁴²
- A privately owned Henderson company is to commercialise a **revolutionary hull cleaning technology** that addresses major environmental and cost pressures facing the global shipping industry. GRD-Franmarine Holdings has spent five years developing its Envirocart technology. The Envirocart is a 1.6-metre-long machine that uses contactless blades to remove biofouling, while also capturing and filtering the cleaned material.³²
- **Plant Biosecurity CRC has partnered with the grains research arm of the Chinese Government to develop non-chemical methods to store grain**. The Australia-China Centre for Post-Harvest Grain Biosecurity and Quality Research will

work to provide clean, residue-free grain by using naturally occurring nitrogen gas to suffocate pests. The partnership also involved private investors, Murdoch University, and the Mingenew-Irwin Group who had been testing nitrogen generation equipment in the Mid West of Western Australia.³¹

- In April, the **State Government launched a new co-working space** to give technology-based businesses, start-up and educational institutions access to its extensive property data. The new hub, named Spur is based at Landgate's building in Midland and will provide businesses with resources and networking opportunities to grow their services and projects.³²
- In April, the **Bravo variety of apple was released to the Australian market**. The apple is a cross between Royal Gala and the WA variety Cripps Red, known as Sundowner. It was developed in Manjimup by the Department of Agriculture and Food WA as part of the Australian National Apple Breeding Program. The Bravo apple will be protected under Australian plant breeder rights and in markets overseas, so the intellectual property remains secure in the hands of the WA Government.⁴²
- **Residents in Alkimos will take part in trials of solar energy technology and battery storage that could lead to large reductions in power bills**. About 100 Alkimos Beach residents could see their energy bills fall by 15% after the launch of the four-year energy storage trial. Perth-based solar and construction engineering company Energy Made Clean has installed a 1.1 megawatt

hour energy storage facility to determine the benefits of integrating solar generation, energy storage and dispatch into a traditional electricity network. The \$6.7 million trial, partly funded by the Australian Renewable Energy Agency (ARENA), is a collaboration between Synergy and development partners LandCorp and Lendlease.³⁰

- Dozens of apartments in White Gum Valley will be able to use, store and trade power under a **world-first trial of micro-grid technology**. The Commonwealth has used \$1 million from its green energy fund Australian Renewable Energy Agency (ARENA) to help pay for the \$3 million project, which will have solar panels and batteries installed across four separate apartment developments. The strata companies managing the apartment buildings will on-sell the electricity to tenants, rather than State-owned energy provider Synergy.³⁷

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