

Tasmanian Council of Churches

**CHRISTIAN MINISTRY IN STATE SCHOOLS
REPORT TO TCC EXECUTIVE
13 JUNE 2018**

Tasmanian school chaplains are funded by school communities, generous support from local churches and community organisations, and the National School Chaplaincy Programme. On 8 May 2018 the federal Treasurer announced in his 2018-2019 budget speech that the federal government would provide \$247 million over four years from 2018-19 (see table below) for the National School Chaplaincy Programme (NSCP), to assist more than 3,000 schools Australia-wide to engage the services of a qualified school chaplain. Participating schools are eligible to receive up to \$20,000 in metropolitan or regional areas and \$24,000 in remote or very remote areas. The renewed NSCP will have a greater focus on supporting students and school communities affected by bullying, in particular cyberbullying. School chaplains will be required to upgrade their skills by undertaking cyber-bullying training provided by the eSafety Commissioner to ensure they are fully equipped to deal with the challenges in the school community.

An independent evaluation of the NSCP for the federal Education Department found it to be highly effective in boosting student wellbeing. The Department advises this report will be published shortly.

While the Australian Government funds the NSCP, states and territories are responsible for its administration in their jurisdictions through a National Partnership Agreement with the Commonwealth. Agreements have yet to be renewed as part of this process.

National School Chaplaincy Programme — continuation

Expense (\$m)	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22
Department of the Treasury	-	61.4	61.4	61.4	61.4
Department of Education and Training	-	0.3	0.3	0.3	0.3
Total — Expense	-	61.7	61.7	61.7	61.7

Source: The Commonwealth of Australia, *Budget Measures – Budget Paper No. 2, 2018-2019*, 8 May 2018.

State-by-state breakdown of the allocation of this funding has not yet been announced. However (this is not shown in the above table) out of \$60.2 million total in 2017-2018, \$2.2 million was allocated to Tasmania, which no doubt gives a proportional indication of Tasmania's share of the total annual figure shown in the table above.

It is worth noting this budget measure is not without its detractors. The Australian Education Union has issued a media release indicating it opposes the renewal of the NSCP, and arguing for psychologists and counsellors to be employed instead.

David Morris.