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Civil Service Association of WA

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General Media Enquires

P: (08) 9323 3800

(request Publicity Office)

F: (08) 9323 3878

E: publicity@cpsu.org.au

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Latest cutbacks WILL affect the frontline services

Western Australian Treasurer Troy Buswell and Premier Colin Barnett are out of touch with the real world if they think more cutbacks to government agencies will not have an impact on front line services.

That's the view of Community and Public Sector Union/Civil Service Association Branch Secretary Toni Walkington after the Barnett Government today released its Annual Report on State Finances for the 2011-12 financial year.

The government has announced an immediate cut in jobs as well as a further 1.5 per cent reduction in agencies' 2012-13 budgets.

"The government has been a cutback crusade since introducing a three per cent dividend in 2009-10 and had already decided on a two percent cutback this financial year, following by another three per cent over the following three years," Ms Walkington said.

"This is cumulative and will force agencies to find 6.5% in cutbacks by 2015-16.

"With the extra 1.5 % just announced for this financial year it is ridiculous for the Barnett Government to suggest that frontline services won't be affected – they have already been compromised for some time."

Ms Walkington said WA's population was increasing with an estimated 1000 people entering the state each week, placing a massive demand on public services.

She said the public expected to get timely access to these services but waiting lists were getting longer, delays greater and more vulnerable people missing out.

Ms Walkington said cutbacks to the public sector should not be seen as a quick fix.

"There has been a lot of government commentary in recent weeks about how commodity prices and the high Australian dollar is putting a strain on the State's finances – is this the government's way of inoculating the

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electorate for a tough-times message and softening everyone up for their slash and burn approach to the public sector?”

Additional notes for journalists:

- There are an estimated 9300 Working with Children checks yet to be processed at the Department for Child Protection due to workload issues.
- More than 740 children at Child Protection are yet to be allocated a case worker.
- Recall waiting lists at public dental health clinics have blown out to more than two years.
- Adults with intellectual disabilities have lost vital support with the abolition of Community Social Trainers from the Disability Services Commission.

FOR COMMENT:

Toni Walkington
CPSU/CSA Branch Secretary
9323 3800

FOR INFORMATION:

Darren O’Dea
CPSU/CSA Media Liaison Officer
M: 0421 934 794
P: (08) 9323 3855
E: darren.odea@cpsucsa.org

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