



Community & Public Sector Union  
Civil Service Association of WA

## MEDIA RELEASE

Community & Public Sector Union  
Civil Service Association of WA Inc

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### Budget surplus is cold comfort for many says union

Treasurer Troy Buswell's \$140 million budget surplus announced today is cold comfort for people not getting access to much-needed services according to the Community and Public Sector Union/Civil Service Association.

There are still many public services issues such as waiting lists at public dental health clinics and major delays at Department of Transport licensing centres.

The 2012-13 Projections Statement outlines where a lot of the savings are being made to government agencies, including Education Services, by decreasing expenditure on non-essential travel, administration, services and contracts.

The Department of Education's Aboriginal Education branch has been gutted with staff trimmed from 25 to 15 in two years and by February 2013 is expected to be as low as seven, which experienced staff say is having a major impact on delivering frontline services.

Professional learning workshops to regional and remote areas were approved, booked and paid for by the department in September and then cancelled in October.

"Cancelling travel to remote and regional centres indefinitely would result in professional isolation and create a false economy by producing a short-term gain for long-term pain," Ms Walkington said.

"The small amount of money saved now would be nothing compared to the cost of not being able to lure teachers to these hard-to-staff schools in the future.

"In electing to work in our remote and isolated schools teachers do so with the understanding of receiving ongoing professional support from experienced regional and central office staff whose experience and support enables them to work in often difficult situations."

Ms Walkington said a lot of these schools had issues around participation and attendance and the officers worked hard with the local communities to improve student outcomes.

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She said it was a ridiculous situation to have experienced educators employed in central and regional offices that could not go and visit these regional and remote schools.

“The Barnett Government needs to get over the fixation of having a \$140 million surplus and get back to the job the community expects it to do – maintaining public services to an acceptable standard.

“At the moment the government is doing very little to reassure the community it wants to preserve the services that underpin the fabric of WA’s social and economic success.”

**FOR COMMENT:**

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