



Sid Sidebottom MP ... for a fair go in Braddon

Media Release

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More than 22,000 North-West Pensioners to share in up to \$24.4m additional support per year

Federal Member for Braddon Sid Sidebottom has welcomed the Rudd Government reform to the pension system which will see at least 22,777 North-West and West Coast pensioners share in up to \$24.4m in additional pension support each year.

Announced in last night's budget the increases will see the Rudd Government provide and additional:

- \$32.49 per week for single pensioners on the full rate pension
- \$10.14 per week for pensioners couples (combined) on the full rate of pension.

"I am delighted to see this announcement which has considered all forms of pensioners," Mr Sidebottom said.

"I have talked with many North-West and West Coast pensioners in the past year who have spoken to me about their struggle to make ends meet.

"These increases will come as welcome relief to them."

In real terms, Mr Sidebottom said the pension increases would see an additional:

- \$165,731 per week and \$8.61m per year to Single Age Pensioners
- \$80,106 per week and \$4.16m per year to Age Pension couples
- \$104, 162 per week and \$5.4m per year to Single Disability Support Pensioners
- \$24,690 per week and \$1.28m per year to Disability Support Pension Couples

"Those receiving Veterans Service Pension, income Support Supplement, War/Widow/ers Pension, Bereavement Allowance, Wife Pension and Widow B Pension will also benefit from the increases," Mrs Sidebottom said.

The payment increase will take effect from September 20, 2009.

North-West Carers will also benefit with the new permanent Carer Supplement of \$600 per year for recipients of Carer Payment and an

additional \$600 per year for Carer Allowance recipients for each eligible person in their care.

“This means that on top of the general increase the Carer Payment, the 1460 recipients will receive an additional \$600 each,” he said.

Some 2705 recipients of Carer Allowance will also receive \$600 per year for each eligible person in their care.

“This supplement replaces the previous one-off bonuses and will ensure ongoing and certain assistance to the hardworking carers on the North-West and West Coast.

Mr Sidebottom said the first Carer Supplement payment would be made on or before June 30, 2009.

Mr Sidebottom said from 2017, the qualifying age for Age Pension would progressively increase to 67 by 2023.

“This change reflects both an increase to life expectancy for Australians since the pension was first introduced, and making sure the greatest financial assistance is delivered to those who are most in need,” he said.

The current pension age is 65 years for men and 63 and a half for women.

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