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**HEATHER BUTLER**  
Parliamentary Secretary to the Premier

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**\$1.4 m Southern student accommodation facility**

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A \$1.4 million redevelopment of Springvale Hostel in the State's south is providing first-class student accommodation, Parliamentary Secretary to the Premier, Heather Butler, said today.

Officially opening the purpose-built, 90-place redevelopment, Ms Butler said that the revamped facility was very important for students from Tasmania's regional areas.

"The major project, designed by architect Michael Cooper and built by Bennett Construction Pty Ltd, provides for an extra 20 students to be accommodated, new shared ensuites, two kitchenettes as well as the creation of an improved outdoor courtyard for students," Ms Butler said.

Ms Butler said that the State Government was committed to ensuring that all students in Tasmania have access to facilities that enable them to complete their education.

"For some students living in isolated areas it's necessary to move to a city area in order to attend school or to complete their senior secondary education," Ms Butler said.

"The Springvale Hostel project is an important element in the establishment of the new Tasmanian Academy and the Tasmanian Polytechnic," she said. Ms Butler said that the State Government had created more than 100 extra accommodation places over this year and next year for students who must live away from home to study.

“A 75 per cent increase in accommodation places is being achieved through increases in hostel places here at Springvale, a \$4.4 million facility at the Newstead campuses of the Tasmanian Academy and Polytechnic, and also by combining the Burnie campuses of the Skills Institute, the Polytechnic and the Academy.

“We’ve also boosted the Student Accommodation Allowance for senior students – by 33 per cent from \$1050 a year to \$1400 a year and eligibility criteria has been relaxed to support more students, including part-time students.”

Ms Butler said that this year alone the Government was spending \$41.8 million to redevelop schools, libraries and other Department of Education buildings across the State as part of a four-year \$162.87 million Capital Investment Program. These figures don’t include the significant investment in hostel accommodation of \$5.8 million for Springvale and Newstead.

“Tasmanian Government schools will also benefit from the investment of close to \$300 million over the next three years on school facilities under the Australian Government’s \$14.7 billion spend on the important economic stimulus package Building the Education Revolution,” she said.

“I’m sure the students and staff at Springvale Hostel will enjoy your fantastic new facilities as a home away from home.”