



# Matters of public importance —your Assembly @ work

***Sitting week—27 to 31 March 2017***

**Issue 3/2017**

## **Government business**

***Includes all business items presented to the Assembly by the Executive including bills, motions, and papers***

### ***Bills introduced***

#### **Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Elected Body Amendment Bill 2017**

*Summary:* This bill will amend the *Aboriginal Torres Strait Islander Elected Body Act 2008* to strengthen the functions of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Elected Body to consult and provide advice on systemic or whole-of-government issues. The delineation of responsibility between the Elected Body and the ACT Government in the management of operational aspects of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander policy and service provisions will also be clarified by the amendments. The bill will make amendments in relation to community forums and harmonise the Act with the *Heritage Act 2004*.

#### **City Renewal Authority and Suburban Land Agency Bill 2017**

*Summary:* This bill will establish a City Renewal Authority and a Suburban Land Agency and outline the role and responsibilities of each entity. The bill will also make consequential amendments to a number of ACT laws as a result of the establishment of the entities.

#### **Firearms Amendment Bill 2017**

*Summary:* This bill will amend the *Firearms Act 1996* by reclassifying lever action shotguns with a magazine capacity of up to and more than five rounds.

#### **Gene Technology Amendment Bill 2017**

*Summary:* This bill will amend the *Gene Technology Act 2003* and the *Gene Technology*

*Regulation 2004* to align the ACT's laws with Commonwealth, State and Territory legislation to ensure a nationally consistent regulatory system for gene technology. The amendments are minor in nature.

#### **Justice and Community Safety Legislation Amendment Bill 2017**

*Summary:* This bill will amend a number of Territory laws within the Justice and Community Safety portfolio to improve the operation of each amended law.

#### **Red Tape Reduction Legislation Amendment Bill 2017**

*Summary:* This bill will make amendments to a number of Territory laws to reduce red tape. The amendments remove certain administrative burdens for charities and firewood merchants and will decrease the levy charged to small energy utility suppliers. The bill will also introduce a new offence provision for non-compliant licensed agents, remove breed-specific provisions concerning greyhounds and remove certain barriers to those applying for a security employee licence in low risk activities. The bill repeals the *Public Bathing Act 1956* and the *Environment Protection (ACT Firewood) Code of Practice 1999*.

Copies of bills presented to the Assembly and associated explanatory statements can be access from the ACT Legislation Register at [www.legislation.act.gov.au](http://www.legislation.act.gov.au).

#### ***Bills debated***

The following bills were debated on 28 and 30 March and were passed by the Assembly without amendment.

**Crimes Legislation Amendment Bill 2016**  
(28 March 2017)

## **Family and Personal Violence Legislation Amendment Bill 2017** (28 and 30 March 2017)

A full record of the debates will be available from [here](#).

### ***Motion debated***

Vocational education and training (VET) was the subject of a motion moved by the Government on 30 March. The motion noted the importance of the VET sector to the ACT and that the Commonwealth's current funding for the National Partnership Agreement on Skills Reform expires in June 2017. The motion also noted that Commonwealth had refused to schedule a meeting of skills and training ministers to discuss future agreement or funding for continuing funding for this purpose. The motion called on the ACT Government to continue efforts to ensure a properly funded, well-regulated and high quality vocational, education and training system.

The motion was passed by the Assembly after debate.

### ***Ministerial statements***

The following ministerial statements were made on 28 March 2017.

The Minister for Health made a statement concerning the terms of reference for a **system-wide review of ACT Health data and reporting**. During the statement the minister presented the following paper:

Terms of reference for the system-wide review.

Mrs Dunne MLA also made a statement in relation to matter.

A progress report on **implementation of recommendations made in Auditor-General's Report 3/2015 entitled *Restoration of the Lower Cotter Catchment*** was the subject of a ministerial statement made by the Minister for the Environment and Heritage. During the statement the minister presented a copy of the Government's progress report on the matter.

The Minister for Climate Change and Sustainability made a statement concerning progress being made through the **Climate Action Roundtable**, which is a forum of Australian States, Territories and major cities who wish to prioritise action on climate change.

The Minister for Disability, Children and Youth provided a progress update on implementation

## of the **ACT Children and Young People's Commitment 2015-2025**.

The full text of the statements made by ministers and members can be accessed from the Assembly *Hansard* site.

## **Private Members' business**

***Includes all items presented to the Assembly by all non-Executive Members, including bills and motions***

### ***Motions debated***

**Public housing developments** was the subject of a motion moved by Mr Parton MLA on 29 March. The motion included noting that the ACT Government planned to relocate public housing tenants from Northbourne Avenue to suburban sites and called on the ACT Government to cancel the planned housing developments in Chapman, Wright and Holder and consider more suitable locations for public housing tenants. The motion also called on the Government to adopt a genuine salt and pepper approach to public housing.

During debate an amendment was moved by the Government that included, among other things, noting that dispersing public housing and reducing concentrations of disadvantage contributes to a diverse and inclusive community and that public consultation has commenced on new housing sites in Tuggeranong, Molonglo Valley, Weston Creek and Woden Valley. The amendment also included calling on the Government to provide an update on progress under the Public Housing Renewal Program to the Assembly during the May sittings. The proposed amendment was agreed to by the Assembly after a vote.

The amended motion was then passed by the Assembly.

Ms Orr MLA moved a motion on 29 March concerning the **location of Federal public service agencies in the ACT**. The motion included outlining a number of federal government agencies that are located in the Territory and that the role of the Australian Public Service in Canberra has, until recently, enjoyed tri-partisan support.

During debate the Opposition stated that over time federal governments on both sides of politics had undertaken work to bring government agencies to Canberra and therefore many public service jobs and outlined the importance of the federal public service to the Territory. The Opposition indicated their support for the motion with the ACT Greens also outlining their reasons for supporting the motion.

The motion was passed without amendment.

Other motions debated on 29 March 2017 related to:

Community inclusivity—Mr Steel MLA

Dog attacks—Mr Doszpot MLA

Land acquisitions in Dickson—Mr Coe MLA

The full debate on the above motions can be accessed from the Assembly *Hansard* site.

### Matters of public importance

The following matters of public importance were discussed in the Assembly this week—

**The importance of early childhood education in the ACT**—Ms Cody MLA

**The importance of affordable housing in the ACT**—Ms Le Couteur MLA

### Papers presented

The following are papers of interest that were presented during the sitting week:

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Elected Body—Reports on Estimates Hearings 2014 and 2015—Government response (*presented by the Minister for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Affairs on 30 March*)

ACT Auditor-General—Report 9/2016—Commissioner for International Engagement—Position creation and appointment process—**Government response** (*presented by the Chief Minister on 30 March*)

Schools for All—Expert Panel on Students with Complex Needs and Challenging Behaviour—Fourth quarterly report on implementation of the recommendations of the report

Schools for all program: Responding to the needs of children and young people in Canberra schools—2016 Report (*presented by the Minister for Education and Early Childhood Development on 30 March*)

Remuneration Tribunal Determinations relating to:

ACT Civil and Administrative Tribunal—Amended Determination

ACT Supreme Court Judicial Positions

Members of the ACT Legislative Assembly

Head of Service, Directors-General and Executives

Full-Time Statutory Office Holders

Part-Time Public Office Holders—Amended Determination

Part-Time Public Office Holder—Medicinal Cannabis Medical Advisory Panel (*presented by the Chief Minister on 30 March*)

Report of the Independent Reviewer for the period 9 September to 31 December 2016—pursuant to the Government Agencies (Campaign Advertising) Act (*presented by the Speaker on 29 March*)

### Committee activities

#### Committee report presented

##### Scrutiny Committee

**Scrutiny Report 4** (*presented 28 March*)

This report contained the committee's comments on seven pieces of subordinate legislation and eight government responses.

#### Committee statements

On 28 March 2017 the following committee statements were made.

The chair of the Standing Committee on Education, Employment and Youth Affairs informed the Assembly that the committee had resolved to conduct an inquiry into **insecure employment in the ACT**. A copy of the terms of reference can be accessed [here](#).

The chair of the Standing Committee on Public Accounts informed the Assembly that the committee had resolved to conduct an inquiry into Auditor-General's Reports 7/2016 concerning certain **acquisitions by the Land Development Agency** and 1/2017 concerning Worksafe ACT's management of its regulatory responsibilities for the **demolition of loose-fill asbestos contaminated houses**.

The chair of this committee also made a statement informing the Assembly that the

committee had written to the Select Committee on the 2016 ACT Election and Electoral Act bringing to its attention Auditor-General's Report 2/2017 on the **2016 ACT Election**.

On 30 March 2017 the following committee statements were made.

The chair of the Standing Committee on Justice and Community Safety informed the Assembly that the committee had resolved to conduct an inquiry into **domestic and family violence**.

The chair of the Standing Committee on Planning and Urban Renewal informed the Assembly that the committee had resolved to conduct inquiries into the following matters:

- . **housing**; and
- . **billboards**.

Terms of reference for both inquiries can be accessed [here](#).

### **Committee inquiries**

#### **Independent Integrity Commission—Select Committee**

The chair of the committee presented the following paper on 28 March 2017:

Australian Public Sector Integrity Frameworks—Issues Paper

### **Education activities**

Education staff are busy preparing for the first Interschool Parliamentary Debate day for year 11 and 12 students to be held on 7 April 2017. The program for the debate is available [here](#).

Further school visits are programmed in early April and May for students from years 4-10 with a number of these including meet a Member sessions in addition to mock elections and role plays.

The first University of the Third Age/Seniors seminar is scheduled for 11 May 2017 (during the next sitting period) and we are currently taking registrations for this day from interested members of the community. A number of Members are currently hosting ANU interns who will conclude their research program in May 2017.

Students completing an internship undertake an agreed research topic that results in the production of a report on behalf of a Member.

Information on our various program offerings are available on the [website](#).

### **Members of the Legislative Assembly for the ACT**

#### **Electorate of Brindabella**

Ms Joy Burch (Australian Labor Party)  
Mr Mick Gentleman (Australian Labor Party)  
Ms Nicole Lawder (Canberra Liberals)  
Mr Mark Parton (Canberra Liberals)  
Mr Andrew Wall (Canberra Liberals)

#### **Electorate of Ginninderra**

Ms Yvette Berry (Australian Labor Party)  
Ms Tara Cheyne (Australian Labor Party)  
Mrs Vicki Dunne (Canberra Liberals)  
Mrs Elizabeth Kikkert (Canberra Liberals)  
Mr Gordon Ramsay (Australian Labor Party)

#### **Electorate of Kurrajong**

Mr Andrew Barr (Australian Labor Party)  
Mr Steve Doszpot (Canberra Liberals)  
Ms Elizabeth Lee (Canberra Liberals)  
Mr Shane Rattenbury (ACT Greens)  
Ms Rachel Stephen-Smith (Australian Labor Party)

#### **Electorate of Murrumbidgee**

Ms Bec Cody (Australian Labor Party)  
Mr Jeremy Hanson CSC (Canberra Liberals)  
Mrs Giulia Jones (Canberra Liberals)  
Ms Caroline Le Couteur (ACT Greens)  
Mr Chris Steel (Australian Labor Party)

#### **Electorate of Yerrabi**

Mr Alistair Coe (Canberra Liberals)  
Ms Meegan Fitzharris (Australian Labor Party)  
Mr James Milligan (Canberra Liberals)  
Ms Suzanne Orr (Australian Labor Party)  
Mr Michael Pettersson (Australian Labor Party)

### **Next sitting**

**Tuesday, 9 May 2017.**

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