



LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY

FOR THE AUSTRALIAN CAPITAL TERRITORY

STANDING COMMITTEE ON ENVIRONMENT AND TRANSPORT AND CITY SERVICES

Ms Suzanne Orr MLA (Chair), Miss Candice Burch MLA (Deputy Chair), Mr James Milligan MLA

Submission Cover Sheet

Inquiry into a Territory Coat of Arms

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From: [Liam Craigie](#)
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Name: Liam Craigie

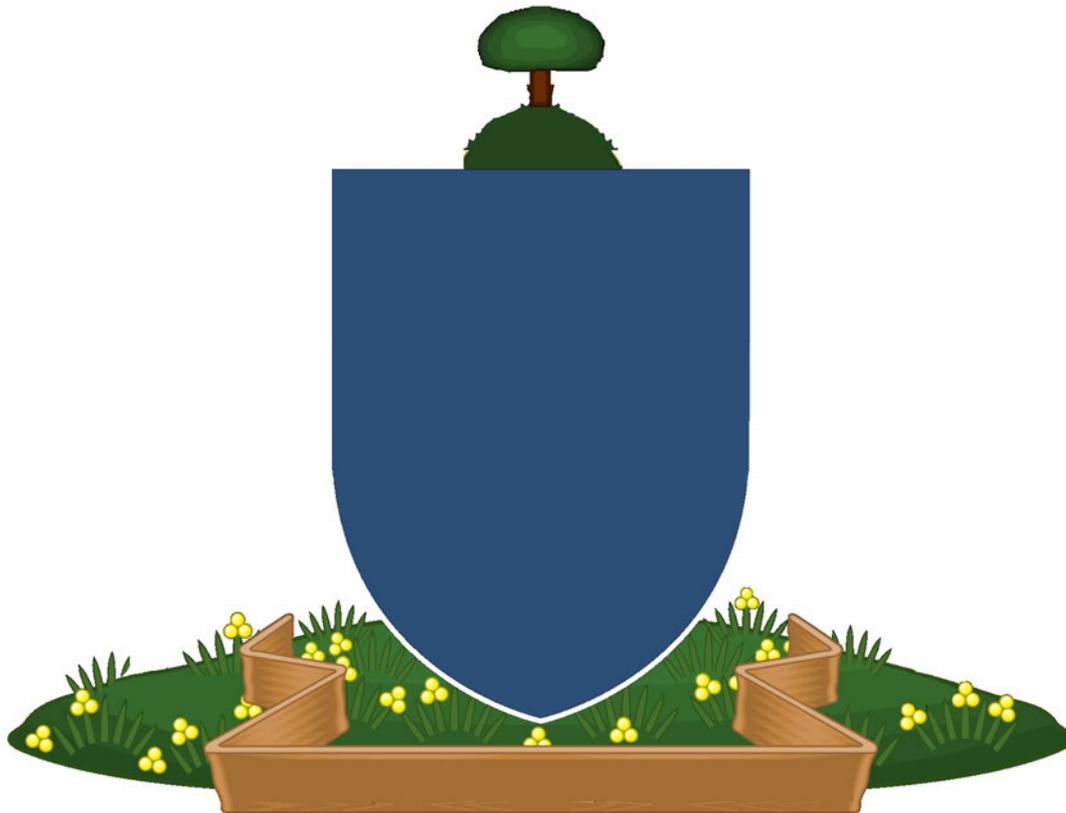

Good evening,

I'd like to extend my thanks for passing a motion to hear feedback from the community.

In regards to the current Coat of Arms of Canberra, I believe it contains many relics of out-dated symbolism and representation.

- **The crown symbolises Royal authority;**
- The mace symbolises the Parliament of Australia;
- **The sword symbolises the Sword of State;**
- **The castle has three towers**, symbolising the three branches of government (executive, legislature and judiciary);
- **The White Rose is the badge of the Duke of York who opened the old Parliament of Australia building in 1927, and who would later be crowned as King George VI.**
- **The crowned portcullis again symbolises the legislature (parliament), this being the traditional symbol of the Palace of Westminster, which houses the Parliament of the United Kingdom;**
- Behind the **portcullis** is a gum tree which represents the growth and progress of Canberra, and the fact that it is garden city;
- **The supporters are the Australian black swan, representing Aboriginal Australians, and the European white mute swan, representing white settlers;**
- **The motto is "For the Queen, the Law and the People", the English translation of "Pro Rege, Lege et Grege", which is found on the arms of the city of Perth, Scotland, as well as those of the Ponsonby family.**

Taking out all these out dated elements, the current coat of arms would look roughly like this:



Clearly this shows the entire design will need to be redone.

There is so little typical of Australian sentiment embodied in the original design. The flag instead embodies Old-world Lords, aristocratic imagery of crowns, castles, portcullis, swords and maces. Canberra should redesign its flag and coat of arms to not contain these medieval English symbols. Our symbols should therefore be reflective of who we are as Canberrans.

We should be including what makes Canberra great. This may be floral, cultural icons, geography, animals

An obvious suggestion would be incorporating the ACT Floral emblem Royal Bluebell (*Wahlenbergia gloriosa*). This would of course then circle back to the coat of arms/flag combination suggested by Ivo Ostyn, designer of the present ACT flag.



My suggestion would be:

1. Scrap the entire heraldic design
2. Announce an ACT Government run design competition. Open to all ACT Schools, Universities and the public.
3. Pick a winner, or gather elements together which represent a true Canberra for the people.
4. Use coat of arms to then redesign new flag.

I am happy to be further involved in this process.



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