

	LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY RECORD	
	SIXTH ASSEMBLY	
20 NOV 2007		
MOP No.		
Paper No.		Clerk



Speaker's Response to Standing Committee on
Education, Training and Young People Report (No. 5),
'Inquiry into the Eligible Voting Age'.

Wayne Berry MLA
Speaker
Legislative Assembly for the Australian Capital Territory

Contained within Report No. 5 of the Standing Committee on Education, Training and Young People, 'Inquiry into the Eligible Voting Age' were two recommendations directed, in part at least, towards the Legislative Assembly. Recommendation number 4 of the committee's report recommends that:

... the Legislative Assembly consider the opportunities provided to young people to actively engage in aspects of the political process and develop strategies to increase participation of young people in formal political events and in processes to provide feedback on policy or legislative proposals.

The substance of this recommendation appears to be more a matter for individual MLAs acting in their capacity as ministers, legislators, committee members and political agents, to consider rather than a matter which the Assembly as a whole might be in a position to address. To this end, I ask merely that members consider this recommendation in developing mechanisms for consultation and participation on particular policy and legislative proposals.

Recommendation number 10 recommends that:

The ACT Electoral Commission, the Legislative Assembly and the Department of Education and Training continue to collaborate in the development and expansion of opportunities for active learning about democracy in the ACT.

This appears to be a more a matter for the Legislative Assembly Secretariat rather than the Assembly itself. To the extent that the recommendation refers the Assembly Secretariat, it is worth noting that through its education function the Assembly Secretariat maintains close links with both Elections ACT and the Department of Education and Training and each year, among other activities, conducts:

- a schools visits program which explores a range of issues relating to the ACT form of Government, the process of elections and democracy more generally;
- a school debates program for school years 8 – 12 which helps students to understand the Westminster system of government and the role that parliamentary debate plays in formulating public policy; and
- a constitutional convention for students in years 11 and 12 which aims to familiarise participants with the importance of the Australian constitution and the processes involved in bringing about constitutional change (including the conduct of a mock referendum process).

The Secretariat agrees to continue its collaboration with Elections ACT and the Department of Education and Training to explore the development and expansion of opportunities to promote active learning about democracy in the ACT.

Wayne Berry
Speaker
Legislative Assembly for the ACT

November 2007