

Agenda

Minister Orr: City and Environment Directorate Regular Meeting

BRIEFING DETAILS			
Date:	Monday, 28 July 2025	Time:	1.00pm – 2:00pm
Location:	via Teams	Apologies:	Fiona Wright

BRIEFING BUSINESS				
Item	Name	Timing	Requested by	Action Officers
1.	Declaration of Interest*			All
2.	Standing Items 2.1 Weekly Brief, Media Forecast and FOI Report 2.2 Ministerials in Action and Action Items 2.3 Assembly and Cabinet Business			Dave Peffer Sam Engele Bethel Sendaba Bren Burkevics Alex Magee
3.	Budget Estimates Hearings preparation <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>Enviro community groups funding questions</i> 	15-20	EPSD/MO	Dave Peffer Sam Engele Bethel Sendaba Bren Burkevics Ros Malouf
4.	Enterprise Agreement Bargaining	5	MO	Dave Peffer Sam Engele Bruce Fitzgerald

Climate Change and Energy				
5.	CAB25/412 - The next ACT Climate Change Strategy: framework and discussion paper	5	EPSD	Dave Peffer Sam Engele Bethel Sendaba
Environment				
6.	Fishing Conservation Funding <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>MO has received several pieces of correspondence on this matter</i> 	5	MO	Dave Peffer Sam Engele Bren Burkevics
Other Business				
7.	Waste Policy	5	MO	Dave Peffer Bruce Fitzgerald
Proposed Forward Agenda				

To: Minister for Climate Change, Environment, Energy and Water

Tracking No.: 25/0000222

Date: 22 July 2025

From: City and Environment Directorate

Subject: WEEKLY BRIEF - Commencing 28 July 2025

Purpose

To provide you with a summary of the current work from the Environment, Planning and Sustainable Development Directorate (EPSDD). The brief also includes matters scheduled to occur from 28 July to 1 August 2025.

KEY ISSUES

Climate Change, Energy and Water

Water

Workshop on ecological indicators to support Snowy Water Inquiry Outcomes Implementation Deed (SWIOID) review

Staff from the ACT Office of Water and Office of Nature Conservation attended a workshop held by the Australian Government to establish ecological values and indicators to support an evaluation of the SWIOID and possible future alternatives. The workshop pulled together ecological experts across ACT Government, NSW Government, and experts from other organisations including University of Canberra and the ACT and Region Catchment Coordination and Management Group.

To date, Australian Government staff have not engaged collaboratively with the ACT Government to set the foundational review framework. This workshop was arranged with limited notice and posed a fast-tracked timeline for review processes that caused concern for the majority of participants. ACT Government staff will continue to monitor Australian Government approaches and expect to be formally engaged as a member of the Review Consultation Group in the coming weeks.

If this information does not go to the office please let me know

Major milestone in the Integrated River Model Uplift (IRMU) project

The ACT Government, through a bi-lateral agreement with the Murray-Darling Basin Authority (MDBA) was funded to develop a water resource model for the upper Murrumbidgee River catchment, for use in the Murray-Darling Basin Plan review. This model will enable the assessment of the outcomes of the Basin Plan since its commencement in 2012. Since September 2023, the Water Information Services team has been building this model. The model is built on the National Hydrological Modelling Platform, which is called 'Source'. This is a nationally recognised standard for hydrological modelling.

The model is nearing finalisation, with four water resources scenarios developed within the model to support the Basin Plan Review. Signing a model sharing agreement has commenced, and the model to be provided to MDBA immediately after. This is a major deliverable of the IRMU program. The remaining major deliverable of this program is with a project examining the impact of farm dams on water resources. The current agreement with MDBA will end in December 2025.

The water resource model will provide considerable benefits beyond just the Basin Plan Review. For example, the Water Resource Assessment project uses this model to assess the water resources of the ACT and region. Likewise, the model may play a significant role in the SWIOID review.

International Wetland City

A proposal to nominate Canberra as an International Wetland City has been canvassed by the Australian National University Fenner School of Environment and Society (ANU-SEE).

An introductory meeting was held on 16 July 2025 between City and Environment Directorate officials (Tom Nilsen - Healthy Waterways, and Michaela Watts - ACT Parks and Conservation Service) and representatives of the ANU-SEE (Peter Bridgewater and Peter Taylor) about the proposal.

Potential benefits of Canberra being recognised as an International Wetland City include:

- a. An opportunity to attract tourism revenue through 'International Wetland City' branding;
- b. Kudos of being the first Australian City to attain International Wetland City status;
- c. A branding tool to raise profile of water quality and wetland awareness; and
- d. A recognition of investment in wetlands in Canberra and the relevance of volunteer groups that care for our wetlands.

ACT Healthy Waterway Program will consider this matter further and engage with other government officials to test the merit of making a formal nomination.

Out of scope

Sustainable Business Program

The Sustainable Business Program is working in partnership with the Strategic Programs Water team to deliver water audits for local businesses. The audit assessments will support the ACT businesses to improve water efficiency and become more resilient to future droughts.

Selected businesses will receive:

- a. An onsite assessment from an experienced water assessor;
- b. An evaluation of water use across fittings, appliances, and infrastructure;
- c. Inspection of any stormwater management systems;
- d. Identification of leaks and inefficiencies; and
- e. A tailored report with practical recommendations to improve water efficiency.

These assessments are being conducted as part of a broader sample of 100 different ACT water users, including businesses, households and schools. The results will be used to inform the development business case initiatives under the Water Efficiency Program.

21 Canberra businesses have signed up to take part in the audit program so far. Their enthusiasm highlights a strong interest in the support available to help improve water efficiency across their operations.

Out of scope

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