



Matters of public importance—your Assembly @ work

Sitting week—30 to 31 March 2021

Issue 2/2021

Oath by Member

At the beginning of the sitting on 30 March 2021, the Speaker informed the Assembly that she had received a letter of resignation from Mr Coe resigning his office as a Member of the Legislative Assembly and that the Clerk had been notified by the Electoral Commissioner that Mr James Milligan had been elected in Mr Coe's place.

In the presence of the Honourable Justice Burns, Acting Chief Justice of the Supreme Court of the Australian Capital Territory, Mr Milligan took his oath before taking his seat as a Member of the Assembly.

Government Business

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

Bills introduced

[Domestic Animals Legislation Amendment Bill 2021](#) (*presented 31 March*)

Summary: This bill will amend legislation about domestic animals by introducing a requirement for dogs to be registered annually in the Territory from July 2021.

[Revenue Legislation Amendment Bill 2021](#) (*presented 31 March*)

Summary: This bill will amend a number of laws on the ACT statute book to improve the operation of tax laws. The bill includes the removal of the current expiry date of 30 June 2021 for the affordable community housing and land tax exemption. The bill will also provide for: a conveyance duty concession for pensioners with a disability purchasing residential shares in not-for-profit supportive housing properties; provide for the application of penalty tax provisions under the Taxation Administration Act to overdue and unpaid rates on land owned by corporations and trusts; and will also make a number of minor and technical amendments.

Bills debated

[Crimes Legislation Amendment Bill 2020](#)

Summary: This bill will amend a number of Territory laws including the *Confiscation of Criminal Assets Act 2003* to clarify legislation provisions that apply to applications for exclusion orders for property subject to an unexplained wealth restraining order.

The *Crimes (Sentencing Administration) Act 2005* will also be amended to create a clear mechanism to bring offenders before an appropriate court to consider whether to cancel an intensive correction order where an offender has committed and been convicted or found guilty of a new offence that is punishable by imprisonment.

Amendments to the *Criminal Code 2002* will be made to correct an anomaly in the definition of ‘threatening act’ for the offence of serious vilification and amendments to the *Magistrates Court Act 1930* will be made to allow defendants to appeal against conviction in the Magistrates Court up to 28 days after sentence.

Proceedings: Debate resumed on this bill on 31 March and the proposed legislation received the support of all parties. The bill was agreed to in principle. During the detail stage amendments moved by the Government were agreed to.

The amended bill was passed by the Assembly.

[Plastic Reduction Bill 2020](#)

Summary: This bill will enact policy to reduce the use of plastic in the Territory, particularly single-use plastic, by prohibiting the supply of identified single-use plastic items. The bill will also establish a framework for adding other products in the future, and absorbs the existing plastic shopping bag ban to streamline plastic-related regulation in the ACT.

Proceedings: Debate resumed on this bill on 30 March with all parties indicating support for the proposed legislation. The bill was agreed to in principle.

The bill was passed by the Assembly without amendment.

[Planning and Unit Titles Legislation Amendment Bill 2020](#)

Summary: This bill will amend a number of Territory laws that deal with planning and unit titles matters to improve the operation of those laws. The amendments will make changes to existing legislative provisions regarding unit titles and community concessional leases.

Proceedings: The bill received tri-partisan support when debate resumed on 31 March. The bill was agreed to in principle.

The bill was passed by the Assembly without amendment.

Motions debated

A motion concerning the Territory’s right to make laws with respect to voluntary assisted dying was the subject of a motion moved on 31 March. The motion was co-sponsored by the Minister for Human Rights, the Attorney-General and the Leader of the Opposition and included calling on the Federal Parliament to resolve that no Australian citizen should be disadvantaged or discriminated against with respect to their democratic or human rights on the basis of where they live. The motion also included calling on the Federal Parliament to introduce and debate a bill to remove relevant sections in the *Australian Capital Territory (Self-Government) Act 1988* by the end of 2021.

Following debate the motion received the support of all Members of the Assembly and was passed without amendment.

A motion in relation to the establishment of a royal commission into **Veterans' suicide** was moved by the Minister for Mental Health on 31 March. The motion included noting that both houses of the Federal Parliament had recently passed a motion calling on the current Australian Government to establish a royal commission into Veterans' suicide.

The motion also called on the Australian Government to urgently establish the royal commission, noting the Ministerial Advisory Council for Veterans and their Families had expressed a desire for a standing or rolling royal commission which would allow for actions while any inquiries were undertaken. During debate an amendment moved by the Opposition included noting that the Federal Government had announced the National Commissioner for Defence and Veteran Suicide Prevention which has the powers of a royal commission and the added benefit of being ongoing. The amendment also included calling on the Assembly to support the National Commissioner. The amendment was negated following a vote of the Assembly.

The motion was passed by the Assembly without amendment.

Ministerial statements

The Chief Minister made a ministerial statement on 30 March concerning the ACT Government's progress report on the recommendations of the **Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse**. During the statement the Chief Minister presented the Government's Third Annual Progress Report.

The **status of women and girls in the ACT** was the subject of a ministerial statement made by the Minister for Women on 30 March. During the statement the minister reflected on a number of the achievements made by the Government during 2020. Other members addressed the Assembly in relation to the ministerial statement.

The Minister for Health provided the Assembly with an update on the Government's response to the **COVID-19 emergency** on 30 March. During the statement the Minister presented two Chief Health Officer Reports on the status of the public health emergency due to COVID-19, dated 15 February and 15 March 2021.

On 30 March the Minister for Police and Emergency Services made a ministerial statement on the centenary of **Rotary**. During the statement the minister also highlighted the fact that the Rotary Clubs of the ACT have opened nominations for the 2021 ACT Rotary Emergency Community Services Awards which recognise emergency service personnel who have gone above and beyond the call of duty and epitomise the Rotary motto of "Service above Self". Other members addressed the Assembly in relation to the ministerial statement.

Other ministerial statements made during the sitting week related to:

Bush recovery and lessons learnt a year on—Minister for Police and Emergency Services

End of 2020-21 bushfire and storm season—Minister for Police and Emergency Services

Biannual update on the implementation of the recommendations of the final report: Independent review into workplace culture within ACT Public Health services—Minister for Health

The full text of the statements made by Ministers and Members can be accessed from the [Assembly Hansard](#) site.

Assembly Business

Includes any business relating to the establishment or membership of a committee or the proposed referral of a matter to a committee. It also includes business which proposes to amend, disallow, disapprove or declare void any instruments which are made under specific Acts agreed to by the Assembly. Assembly business also includes any notice or order of the day which deals with the administration of the Assembly or how the Assembly conducts its proceedings

Motion moved

On 30 March a motion was moved seeking that all Members of the Tenth Legislative Assembly reaffirm their commitment to the principles, obligations and aspirations of the recently adopted **Code of Conduct for All Members** of the Legislative Assembly.

The motion was passed by the Assembly.

The full terms of the above motion can be found in the [Minutes of Proceedings](#).

Private Members' Business

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

Motions debated

Review of the implementation of the **Family Violence Act 2016** was the subject of a motion moved by Ms Lee MLA on 30 March. The motion included condemning the Government for delaying the release of the review and calling on the Government to table a formal response, including what legislative reforms will be undertaken, by the last sitting day in June 2021. In speaking to the motion the Government outlined timeframes in relation to the release of the report and moved amendments that sought to omit the condemnation terms of the motion and also sought to extend the tabling of a formal response to August/September 2021. The Government's amendments were passed following a vote of the Assembly.

The amended motion was agreed to.

A motion was moved by Ms Orr MLA on 30 March in relation to **psychosocial hazards** in the workplace. The motion included, among other matters, calling on the Government to further improve the safety of workers in the ACT to include psychosocial hazards in relevant laws and regulations. The motion also included calling on the Government to adopt a number of reporting requirements on bullying and harassment, sexual harassment and gender-based violence incidents in the ACT Public Service. The motion received the support of all parties in the Assembly.

The motion was passed without amendment.

Mr Braddock MLA moved a motion on 31 March concerning **urban tree canopy coverage**. The motion included noting that all three parties of the Assembly support an increase in urban tree canopy to at least 30 percent and also included calling on the Government to present to the Assembly, by the end of 2021, detail on the estimated contribution actions within each objective of the strategy will make

towards achieving the canopy cover and to annually update the Assembly on all initiatives and their contributions towards targets. The motion received the support of all parties in the Assembly.

The motion was passed without amendment.

A further motion debated during the sitting week related to:

Canberra Rape Crisis Service—Mrs Jones MLA

The full debate on the above motions can be accessed from the Assembly [Hansard](#) site.

Petitions and responses

The following petitions were lodged—

- Resumption of French language tuition at Belconnen High School—lodged by Mrs Kikkert (*30 March 2021*)
- Proposed expansion of Kippax Fair—lodged by Mrs Kikkert (*30 March 2021*)

The following ministerial responses to petitions were lodged—

- Thoroughbred Park public funding (*Special Minister of State*) (*30 March 2021*)
- Future proposals for waste processing facilities in Fyshwick (*Minister for Transport and City Services*) (*30 March 2021*)

A copy of the petitions can be found on the Assembly [Hansard](#) site.

Papers Presented

The following are papers of interest that were presented by the Manager of Government Business during the sitting week:

- Administrative Arrangements 2021 (No 1) and Ministerial Appointment 2021 (No 1)
- Auditor-General's Reports—
 - 9/2020—2019-20 Financial Audits Overview and 10/2020—2019-20 Financial Audits—Financial Results and Audit Findings—Whole of Government response
 - 2/2021—Total Facilities Management Contract Implementation
 - 3/2021—Court Transport Unit Vehicle—Romeo 5
- Report of the Independent Reviewer for the period 11 September to 31 December 2020, presented pursuant to the Government Agencies (Campaign Advertising) Act
- Report of a Review of a Critical Incident by the ACT Inspector of Correctional Services—Riot and serious fires at the Alexander Maconochie Centre on 10 November 2020
- Remuneration Tribunal Determinations—
 - 14 of 2020—Canberra Economic Recovery Advisory Group
 - 15 of 2020—Members of the ACT Legislative Assembly
 - 16 of 2020—ACT Supreme Court Judicial Positions

Committee Activities

Committee reports

Administration and Procedure—Standing Committee

[Report 3—Review of Members' Code of Conduct and the Declaration of Members Interests Form](#)

[Report 4—Review of standing orders for the Tenth Assembly](#)

Justice and Community Safety—Standing Committee

[Report 1—Annual and Financial Reports 2019-20 and ACT Budget 2020-21](#)

Public Accounts—Standing Committee

[Report 1—Annual and Financial Reports 2019-2020; Appropriation Bill 2021 and Appropriation \(Office of the Legislative Assembly\) Bill 2020-2021](#)

Scrutiny Committee

[Scrutiny Report 2](#)

This report contained the committee's comments on four bills, 15 pieces of subordinate legislation, four government responses and proposed amendments to the Crimes Legislation Amendment Bill 2020.

Committee statements

Drugs of Dependence (Personal Use) Amendment Bill 2021—Select Committee

The chair of the committee made a statement on 30 March informing the Assembly that the committee will, in addition to an examination of the Drugs of Dependence (Personal Use) Amendment Bill 2021, also inquire into broader programs and practices in relation to drug harm reduction.

Education and Community Inclusion—Standing Committee

The chair of the committee made a statement on 30 March concerning the committee's consideration of statutory appointments for the period 1 July to 31 December 2020.

Environment, Climate Change and Biodiversity—Standing Committee

The chair of the committee made a statement on 30 March informing the Assembly that the committee will conduct an inquiry into renewable energy innovation in the ACT.

Health and Wellbeing—Standing Committee

The chair of the committee made a statement on 30 March informing the Assembly that the committee will conduct an inquiry into health screening and services for children and young people.

The chair also informed the Assembly that the committee would not continue its inquiry into tobacco, alcohol and drug programs due to the establishment of the Select Committee on the Drugs of Dependence (Personal Use) Amendment Bill 2021, as it would result in considerable overlap and cause confusion for those wishing to make submissions and/or contribute to the processes.

Justice and Community Safety—Standing Committee

The chair of the committee made a statement on 30 March concerning the committee's consideration of statutory appointments for the period 1 July to 31 December 2020.

Planning, Transport and City Services—Standing Committee

The chair of the committee made a statement on 30 March informing the Assembly that the committee will conduct inquiries into the development of the Giralang shops and Draft Variation to the Territory Plan 365 concerning the Giralang shops.

Public Accounts—Standing Committee

The chair of the committee made a statement on 31 March concerning the committee's consideration of statutory appointments for the period 1 July to 31 December 2020.

Responses to committee reports

Administration and Procedure—Standing Committee

Report 17—Inquiry into possible structures of the committee system for the 10th Legislative Assembly for the Australian Capital Territory—Recommendation 9: Use of Zoom for Committee Public Hearings—Government response (*presented 30 March*)

Justice and Community Safety—Standing Committee (Ninth Assembly)

Report 9—Inquiry in the Form of an Evaluation of Current ACT Policing Arrangements—Government response (*presented 30 March*)

Health, Ageing and Community Services—Standing Committee (Ninth Assembly)

Report 10—Inquiry into Maternity Services in the ACT—Recommendation 2: Implementation plan for Woman-created care—Strategic directions for Australian maternity services (the National Maternity Strategy)—Government response (*presented 31 March*)

Paper presented

Schedule of government responses to committees in the Ninth Assembly as at 25 March 2021
(*presented 30 March 2021*)

Committee membership

The following committee membership changes were agreed to by the Assembly on 30 March:

Public Accounts—Standing Committee—Mr Coe discharged from the committee and Mrs Kikkert appointed in his place.

Health and Community Wellbeing—Standing Committee—Mrs Kikkert discharged from the committee and Mr Milligan appointed in her place.

Members of the Legislative Assembly for the ACT

Electorate of Brindabella

Ms Joy Burch (Australian Labor Party)
Mr Johnathan Davis (ACT Greens)
Mr Mick Gentleman (Australian Labor Party)
Ms Nicole Lawder (Canberra Liberals)
Mr Mark Parton (Canberra Liberals)

Electorate of Ginninderra

Ms Yvette Berry (Australian Labor Party)
Mr Peter Cain (Canberra Liberals)
Ms Tara Cheyne (Australian Labor Party)
Ms Jo Clay (ACT Greens)
Mrs Elizabeth Kikkert (Canberra Liberals)

Electorate of Kurrajong

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

Electorate of Murrumbidgee

Emma Davidson (ACT Greens)
Mr Jeremy Hanson CSC (Canberra Liberals)
Mrs Giulia Jones (Canberra Liberals)
Dr Marisa Paterson (Australian Labor Party)
Mr Chris Steel (Australian Labor Party)

Electorate of Yerrabi

Mr Andrew Braddock (ACT Greens)
Ms Leanne Castley (Canberra Liberals)
Mr James Milligan (Canberra Liberals)
Ms Suzanne Orr (Australian Labor Party)
Mr Michael Pettersson (Australian Labor Party)

Next Sitting

Tuesday, 20 April 2021.

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