



# Matters of public importance—your Assembly @ work

**Sitting week—19 to 23 April 2021**

**Issue 3/2021**

## Condolence statement

At the beginning of the sitting on 20 April, the Speaker made a statement in relation to the recent passing, on 9 April 2021, of **HRH Prince Philip, Duke of Edinburgh**.

At the conclusion of the statement all members stood in silence as a mark of respect.

## Appointment of ACT Integrity Commissioner

On 22 April, the Speaker moved a motion seeking the Assembly's approval of the appointment of the Hon Michael Adams QC to the position of **ACT Integrity Commissioner**.

As required by the *Integrity Commission Act 2018*, the motion was passed by a majority of at least two-thirds of members of the Assembly, with all Members in attendance signifying their approval in a vote.

## Government Business

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

### ***Bills introduced***

[Courts and Other Justice Legislation Amendment Bill 2021](#) *(presented 20 April)*

*Summary:* This bill will make a number of minor and technical amendments to Territory laws relating to the operations and procedures of ACT courts and tribunals. The bill also includes amendments to enhance access to justice for victims of financial abuse and proposes reforms to support the functions of the Public Trustee and Guardian and the ACT Judicial Council.

[Statute Law Amendment Bill 2021](#) *(presented 20 April)*

*Summary:* This bill will amend a number of laws and regulations and forms part of the technical amendments program for ACT legislation. The bill includes amendments to the *Controlled Sports Act 2019* to include the controlled sports registrar as someone who may be informed or advised about controlled sports issues by an advisory committee. The bill also proposes amendments to the *Mental Health Act 2014* to include a registered affected person as someone who may appear and give evidence at the hearing of certain proceedings. The bill also proposes a number of other minor and technical amendments to ACT legislation.

### [Utilities Amendment Bill 2021](#) (presented 20 April)

*Summary:* This bill will amend the *Utilities Act 2000* by introducing a required reference price framework to provide ACT consumers with a consistent benchmark to compare alternative offers and make informed choices regarding electricity contracts.

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

### [Appropriation Bill 2020-2021](#)

*Summary:* This bill will appropriate money for the purposes of the Territory for the financial year beginning on 1 July 2020.

*Proceedings:* Debate resumed on this bill on 20 April with the bill being agreed to in principle. Debate in the detail staged began on 20 April and continued on 21 and 22 April.

This bill was passed by the Assembly without amendment following a vote of the Assembly.

### [Appropriation \(Office of the Legislative Assembly\) Bill 2020-2021](#)

*Summary:* This bill will appropriate money for expenditure in relation to the Office of the Legislative Assembly and officers of the Assembly, including the Auditor-General, the Electoral Commissioner and the Integrity Commissioner for the financial year beginning on 1 July 2020.

*Proceedings:* This bill was debated together with the Appropriation Bill 2020-2021 and was agreed to in principle on 22 April.

The bill was passed by the Assembly without amendment.

#### ***Ministerial statement***

The Minister for Health provided the Assembly with an update on the Government's response to the **COVID-19 emergency** on 20 April. During the statement the Minister presented the Chief Health Officer's Report on the status of the public health emergency due to COVID-19, dated 14 April 2021.

The full text of the statement made by Minister can be accessed from the [Assembly Hansard](#) site.

## **Private Members' Business**

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

#### ***Bill introduced***

### [Crimes \(Stealth\) Amendment Bill 2021](#) (presented 22 April)

*Summary:* This bill will amend the *Crimes Act 1900* to define stealthing as a factor that would negate consent.

#### ***Motions debated***

**Policing numbers** was the subject of a motion moved by Mr Hanson MLA on 20 April. The motion included noting that the latest Report on Government Services from the Productivity Commission shows that the ACT has the lowest number of police per-capita in Australia and also included noting reports of criminal activity in Molonglo Valley and adjacent suburbs in Weston Creek.

The motion called on the Government to increase the number of police and to establish a permanent police station in Molonglo Valley by the end of 2022.

During debate an amendment was moved by the Government that included noting that the Government had worked closely with ACT Policing to reduce crime and ensure Canberra remains one of the safest cities in Australia. The amendment also included calling on the Government to invest in ACT Policing members, better facilities, and equipment to ensure ACT Policing remains well-resourced to keep Canberra safe. The Government's amendment was agreed to following a vote.

The amended motion was passed by the Assembly.

A motion was moved by Dr Paterson MLA on 20 April in relation to **Assisted Reproductive Technology** (ART) and included noting that the ACT currently does not have any specific regulatory arrangements for ART. The motion also included calling on the ACT Government to investigate and review comparable ART regulatory arrangements in other states and territories and consider establishing a regulatory framework for ART in the ACT. During debate both the ACT Greens and the Opposition indicated support for the motion.

The motion was passed by the Assembly without amendment.

Mr Davis MLA moved a motion on 22 April concerning **sport and active recreation** which included noting that participation in sport and active recreation should be accessible to all ACT community members. The motion also noted that the ACT Government's strategic long-term plan for sport and recreation, "Active 2020" plan, expires at the end of 2021. The motion included, among other things, calling on the Government to explore options to recognise a sport and recreation industry peak body to support the sector. The motion received the support of all parties in the Assembly.

The motion was passed without amendment.

Further motions debated during the sitting week related to:

**Endoscopy services waiting times**—Mrs Jones MLA

**Improved design and infrastructure for individuals with dementia**—Ms Lawder MLA

**Maintenance of public housing dwellings**—Mr Parton MLA

**Proposed small business ministerial advisory council**—Ms Castley MLA

**Yerrabi Pond**—Mr Pettersson

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

## Petitions

The following petitions were lodged—

- Yerrabi Pond—Proposed upgrade and maintenance of facilities—lodged by Mr Pettersson (20 April and 23 April)
- Chisholm Village—Proposed development—lodged by Ms Burch (20 April)

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 Speaker and the Manager of Government Business during the sitting week:

- ACT Electoral Commission—Report on the ACT Legislative Assembly Election 2020
- Auditor-General's Report 4/2021—ACT Government's vehicle emissions reduction activities
- Canberra Institute of Technology Annual Report 2020
- Coroner's Act—
  - Report of Coroner into the death of Dr Teresa Erika Focé
  - Government's response to Coroner's report into the death of Dr Teresa Erika Focé
- Report of a Review of a Critical Incident by the ACT Inspector of Correctional Services—Serious fire at the Alexander Maconochie Centre on 14 November 2020

## Committee Activities

### *Committee reports*

The following committee reports were presented on 20 April 2021:

#### **Economy and Gender and Economic Equality—Standing Committee**

[Report 2—Report on inquiries into Annual and Financial Reports 2019-20 and ACT Budget 2020-21](#)

#### **Education and Community Inclusion—Standing Committee**

[Report 1—Annual and Financial Reports 2019-2020 and Appropriation Bill 2020-2021](#)

#### **Environment, Climate Change and Biodiversity—Standing Committee**

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

#### **Health and Community Wellbeing—Standing Committee**

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

#### **Planning, Transport and City Services—Standing Committee**

[Estimates 2020-21 and Annual Reports 2019-20](#)

#### **Scrutiny Committee**

[Scrutiny Report 3](#)

This report contained the committee's comments on two bills, 57 pieces of subordinate legislation, three revised explanatory statements and one government response.

### *Committee statement*

#### **Administration and Procedure—Standing Committee**

The chair of the committee made a statement on 22 April 2021 informing the Assembly that the committee had resolved, on 8 April 2021, to undertake a review of the committee support function within the Office of the Legislative Assembly.

## ***Responses to committee reports***

### **Standing Committees**

Reports on 2020-21 ACT Budget and the Appropriation Bill 2020-2021 and the Appropriation (Office of the Legislative Assembly) Bill 2020-21—Government response

### **Public Accounts—Standing Committee**

Report 1—Annual and Financial Reports 2019-2020; Appropriation Bill 2020-2021 and Appropriation (Office of the Legislative Assembly) Bill 2020-2021—Speaker’s response to Recommendations 24 to 29

## **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, 11 May 2021.**

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