

STANDING COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION, TRAINING
AND YOUTH AFFAIRS

**Report on Annual and Financial Reports
2008–2009**

MAY 2010

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Resolution of Appointment

On 9 December 2008, the Legislative Assembly for the ACT resolved to establish a Standing Committee on Education, Training and Youth Affairs to examine matters related to early childhood education and care, primary, secondary, post secondary and tertiary education, non-government education, youth services, technology, arts and culture

Terms of Reference

On 13 October 2009, the following reports for the financial year 2008 – 2009 and the calendar year 2008 were referred by the Legislative Assembly for the ACT to the Standing Committee on Education, Training and Young People:

- ACT Building and Construction Industry Training Fund Authority Annual Report;
- ArtsACT as a subsumed report of the Chief Minister's Department Annual Report;
- Canberra Institute of Technology Annual Report;
- Cultural Facilities Corporation;
- Department of Education and Training Annual Report;
- Office for Children, Youth and Family Support, as a section of the Department of Disability, Housing and Community Services Annual Report;
- Official Visitor, as an annexed report in the Department of Disability, Housing and Community Services Annual Report; and
- The University of Canberra.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Committee Membership	i
Resolution of Appointment.....	ii
Terms of Reference.....	ii
Abbreviations used	v
RECOMMENDATIONS	VII
1 INTRODUCTION	1
Conduct of Inquiry	1
Acknowledgements	2
2 PURPOSE AND INTENT OF ANNUAL REPORTS	3
Reporting framework	4
Compliance with the Directions.....	5
3 EDUCATION PORTFOLIO	7
Class Sizes.....	7
Literacy and Numeracy	7
Curriculum.....	9
Year 12 completion rates	9
SMS Notify System	10
Indigenous Education.....	11
Jervis Bay	11
Stimulus Funding	12
Digital Education Revolution	12
Autism/Aspergers	14
College System and VET	15
Bradley Review	15
Canberra Institute of Technology	16
University of Canberra	17
Other education issues.....	18
4 CHILDREN AND YOUTH PORTFOLIO	21
Bimberi Youth Justice Centre	21

Care and Protection	23
Child and Family Centres	24
Childcare Centres - Exemptions	25
Family Support Program.....	26
Adolescent Day Unit.....	26
Other issues for children and young people	27
5 ARTS PORTFOLIO	29
Key Arts Organisations.....	29
Public Artwork.....	30
Indigenous Arts Officer	32
Ainslie Arts Centre.....	32
Centenary of Canberra	33
Canberra Symphony Orchestra.....	34
Other arts issues	34
6 ACT BUILDING AND CONSTRUCTION INDUSTRY TRAINING FUND AUTHORITY.....	37
Access and Equity program	37
Other issues	37
APPENDIX A: WITNESSES	40
APPENDIX B: QUESTIONS TAKEN ON NOTICE	44
APPENDIX C: SUPPLEMENTARY QUESTIONS	46

Abbreviations used

ACT – Australian Capital Territory

ACTBCITFA – ACT Building and Construction Industry Training Fund
Authority

AQTF – Australian Qualification Teaching Framework

CIT – Canberra Institute of Technology

CSO – Canberra Symphony Orchestra

DET – Department of Education and Training

DHCS – Department of Disability, Housing and Community Services

The Group – The Care and Protection Groups

The Office – Office of Children, Youth and Family Support

UC – University of Canberra

VET – Vocational education and training

STANDING COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION, TRAINING AND YOUTH
AFFAIRS

RECOMMENDATIONS

RECOMMENDATION 1

The Committee recommends that the impact of reducing average class size on student learning outcomes be reported on in future Department of Education and Training annual reports.

RECOMMENDATION 2

The Committee recommends that the Department of Education and Training investigate how parents without mobile telephones may achieve the same level of prompt awareness of student absences as those parents with mobile telephones.

RECOMMENDATION 3

The Committee recommends that the Department of Education and Training provide data on the effectiveness of the SMS Notify System on student absenteeism rates in the next annual report.

RECOMMENDATION 4

The Committee recommends that the Department of Education and Training identify and implement best practice options for recycling used ICT equipment.

RECOMMENDATION 5

The Committee recommends that the ACT Government implement a whole-of-government e-waste strategy with an aim of minimising the environmental impact of ACT Government ICT equipment.

RECOMMENDATION 6

The Committee recommends that, upon completion of industry consultation, the Minister report to the ACT Legislative Assembly on the ACT Government's proposal to address the weaknesses outlined in the review of the secondary college system.

RECOMMENDATION 7

The Committee recommends that the ACT Government quantifies the economic benefits to the ACT community of international students and monitor this benefit carefully against changes in the national higher education sector.

RECOMMENDATION 8

The Committee recommends that the Office for Children, Youth and Family Support investigate, in consultation with staff at the Bimberi Youth Justice Centre, what forms of staff training are required to reduce the incidences of force required to manage the behaviour of detainees.

RECOMMENDATION 9

The Committee recommends that the ACT Government review the resourcing to the Targeted Intervention Program, particularly to the Adolescent Day Unit, to ensure that quality services can be provided to all vulnerable students needing support.

RECOMMENDATION 10

The Committee recommends that the ACT Government report to the ACT Legislative Assembly on the outcomes of the review of arts organisation governance and the requirements that will be made regarding membership of the boards of arts organisations.

RECOMMENDATION 11

The Committee recommends that the ACT Government ensure that where possible the appropriate Community Council is consulted as a part of the selection and siting process for any public artwork.

RECOMMENDATION 12

The Committee recommends that the ACT Government explore the possibility of extending the Street Theatre premises to include permanent accommodation facilities for the Canberra Symphony Orchestra's administrative functions.

1 INTRODUCTION

- On 13 October 2009, the annual and financial reports of government agencies for the calendar year 2008 and the financial year 2008-2009 were referred to the relevant standing committees of the ACT Legislative Assembly.¹
- The following reports were referred to the Standing Committee on Education, Training and Youth Affairs:
 - ACT Building and Construction Industry Training Fund Authority;
 - Canberra Institute of Technology;
 - Chief Minister's Department (Arts);
 - Cultural Facilities Corporation;
 - Department of Education and Training;
 - Office of Children, Youth and Family Services section of the Department of Disability, Housing and Community Services Annual Report;
 - Official Visitor *Children and Youth People Act 2008*, a subsumed report in the Department of Disability, Housing and Community Services Annual Report; and
 - University of Canberra.

Conduct of Inquiry

- The Committee held three public hearings on 1, 4 and 15 December 2009. The Committee heard from Ministers and the departmental and agency officers and members of governing boards who accompanied them. Witnesses who appeared before the Committee are listed at **Appendix A**.
- Fifteen questions were taken on notice at the hearings. A list is provided at

¹ ACT Legislative Assembly, *Minutes of Proceedings* No. 36, 13 October 2009, pp 396-399; ACT Legislative Assembly, *Minutes of Proceedings* No. 39, 10 November 2009, pp 436-438.

Appendix B. Following the hearings, a total of 29 supplementary questions were forwarded to the respective Ministers. A list of these is provided at **Appendix C.** The Committee received responses to all 44 questions.

- The transcripts of the public hearings, as well as answers to questions taken on notice and supplementary questions received can be accessed via the Inquiry webpage.²

Acknowledgements

- The Committee appreciated the time and expertise of the Ministers and officials who attended the annual reports hearings.
- The Committee also acknowledges the contribution of departmental and agency officers who provided supplementary information to the Committee which assisted Member's understanding of the many issues considered.
- A range of issues were raised during the public hearings, some of which are expanded upon in the following chapters. Where possible, references are provided to the full transcript of public hearings which is available on the ACT Legislative Assembly website.³

² The webpage for the inquiry can be accessed at:

<<http://www.parliament.act.gov.au/committees/index1.asp?committee=116&inquiry=854>>

³ Transcripts from the public hearings can be accessed at:

<<http://www.hansard.act.gov.au/hansard/2009/comms/default.htm>>

2 PURPOSE AND INTENT OF ANNUAL REPORTS

- Accountability of the ACT Executive to the ACT Legislative Assembly is a key principle of responsible government. For that to be achieved, executive agencies must be fully committed to accountability and be willing to disclose of information in a straightforward manner. The provision of meaningful operational and financial information by government agencies to parliaments and the public is a fundamental component of the accountability process.⁴
- Annual reports are the principal way in which chief executives and chairpersons of these agencies account to the ACT Legislative Assembly and other stakeholders for the ways in which they have discharged their responsibilities and utilised public funds over the preceding twelve month period.⁵
- Annual reports are:
 - the principal way in which agencies account for management performance through Ministers to the ACT Legislative Assembly and the wider community;
 - tabled in the ACT Legislative Assembly and form a key part of the historical record of government and public administration decisions, actions and outcomes;
 - a source of information and reference about the performance of agencies and service providers for other stakeholders, educational and research institutions, the media and the public; and
 - key reference documents and documents for internal management.⁶
- The Committee notes that annual reports co-exist with other annual whole-of-government reporting to present an aggregated view of the performance of the ACT public sector as a whole.⁷

⁴ Public Accounts Committee, Legislative Assembly of Queensland, December 2001, Report No 59, *Annual Reporting in the Queensland Public Sector*, p 1

⁵ Auditor-General's Report No. 1 of 2003: *Effectiveness of Annual Reporting*, p 1

⁶ Chief Minister's Department, *Chief Minister's Annual Report Directions 2007-10*, p 3

⁷ Chief Minister's Department, *Chief Minister's Annual Report Directions 2007-10*, p 5

Reporting framework

- Annual and financial reports are prepared by reporting entities in accordance with the:
 - *Annual Reports (Government Agencies) Act 2004* (Annual Reports Act);
 - Chief Minister's Annual Report Directions 2007-10 (the Directions);⁸ and
 - *Financial Management Act 1996* (FMA).
- The Annual Reports Act sets the framework for annual reporting across the ACT public sector. This framework identifies which public bodies provide annual reports and outlines the timeframe for provision of reports.⁹
- The Directions are set out in the *Annual Report (Government Agencies) Notice 2009 (No 1)*¹⁰ which is issued under the Annual Reports Act.¹¹ The Directions apply consistent public accountability and statutory reporting requirements across the public sector and apply to all administrative units and public authorities. The Directions prescribe a framework for annual reports to ensure consistency in public accountability and statutory reporting requirements across the public sector.
- The ACT Audit Office audits the annual reports of all reporting entities for compliance with the Directions.¹²
- The FMA requires departments and public authorities with financial reporting obligations under the FMA to include audited financial and performance statements in their annual reports.¹³

⁸ As tabled in the ACT Legislative Assembly on 26 June 2008 and accessible at http://www.cmd.act.gov.au/data/assets/pdf_file/0003/2793/annual_report_directions07-10.pdf (accessed 27 January 2010)

⁹ ACT Legislative Assembly, *Week 9 Hansard*, 21 September 2006, p 3055

¹⁰ As tabled in the ACT Legislative Assembly on 18 June 2009 and accessible at <http://www.legislation.act.gov.au/ni/2009-283/current/pdf/2009-283.pdf> (accessed 1 March 2010)

¹¹ *Annual Reports (Government Agencies) Act 2004 (ACT)*, Part 2, Section 9

¹² Chief Minister's Department, *Chief Minister's Annual Report Directions 2007-10*, p 11

¹³ *Financial Management Act 1996 (ACT)*, Part 9, Division 9.6, Section 119, pp 103-105; Chief Minister's Department, *Chief Minister's Annual Report Directions 2007-10*, p 3

Compliance with the Directions

- The Committee considers that the reports of the referred agencies satisfactorily met the annual reporting requirements. The Auditor-General reported¹⁴ that all agencies submitted their annual reports to the ACT Legislative Assembly, and placed their annual reports on the relevant website, in a timely manner as required by the *Annual Reports (Government Agencies) Act 2004*.
- As a minor matter, however, the Committee notes that the Directions clearly state that annual reports should not use full colour photographs.¹⁵ The Department of Education and Training, Annual Report, 2008-2009 has full colour photographs on the front and back covers.

¹⁴ ACT Auditor-General's Office, Audit Report, 2008-2009 Financial Audits, Report No. 8/2009, p 5

¹⁵ Chief Minister's Department, *Chief Minister's Annual Report Directions 2007-10*, p 8

3 EDUCATION PORTFOLIO

- On 1 December 2009, the Minister for Education and Training appeared before the Committee with officials to discuss the *Department of Education and Training Annual Report 2008-2009* (DET Annual Report). This chapter provides an overview of some of the issues discussed during the public hearing.

Class Sizes

- The Committee sought an update from the Minister on the progress towards implementing the ACT Government's policy of reduced average class size for every year level in public schools.¹⁶ The Minister advised that an additional 70 teaching positions have been filled for commencement in the 2010 school year to meet this objective.¹⁷
- Asked for his views on research that suggested that class size is not always the most significant factor when providing quality education, the Minister agreed that there are several factors which can improve educational outcomes. In particular, he identified teacher quality. The Minister also noted that certain subjects can be taught successfully to larger groups while other subjects are best taught in smaller groups. As a result, the ACT Government is aiming to reduce the *average* class size as a way of maximising student learning in different teaching conditions.¹⁸

RECOMMENDATION 1

The Committee recommends that the impact of reducing average class size on student learning outcomes be reported on in future Department of Education and Training annual reports.

¹⁶ ACT Labor, *Education – Election Policies*, 2008, pp 8-9

<<http://www.actlabor.com.au/Documents/Policy/Education%20Policy.pdf>> at 31 March 2010

¹⁷ *Transcript of Evidence*, 1 December 2009, pp 3-4

¹⁸ *Transcript of Evidence*, 1 December 2009, pp 4-5

Literacy and Numeracy

- The DET Annual Report stated that:

the ACT had the highest or the equal highest percentage of students at or above the national minimum standard in Australia across reading, numeracy, writing, grammar and punctuation for years 3, 5, 7 and 9 and in spelling for years 7 and 9'.¹⁹
- The Committee asked whether there remained any areas of concern regarding student literacy and numeracy following these positive results. Officers from the Department explained that the focus had been on identifying the schools that are achieving well so that similar strategies could be applied in the schools that are not achieving at the highest level. DET was also responding to specific needs and the Committee was advised that:

it may be that there are issues in early literacy, and so we have an early literacy intervention strategy where we then work with the schools where that is a designated need.²⁰
- The Committee was interested in how, considering socioeconomic factors, ACT students were fairing comparatively across the nation. The Minister explained that it will be easier to benchmark students in similar socioeconomic circumstances once the My School website was launched.²¹ When the Committee inquired about the Minister's expectations of the results from the My School website, the Minister stated:

I think there will be some surprises and that some people's perceptions of which are the best schools in the ACT will be challenged. That will obviously see some extensive community interest in the relevant performances. But it will certainly give us, for the first time, information that is a proper comparison of like with like.²²

¹⁹ Department of Education and Training, *Annual Report 2008-2009*, p 11

²⁰ *Transcript of Evidence*, 1 December 2009, p 6

²¹ <www.myschool.edu.au> launched Thursday 28 January 2010

²² *Transcript of Evidence*, 1 December 2009, p 9

Curriculum

- Noting that the DET Annual Report lists a key priority for the next reporting period as the implementation of the Australian curriculum in English, Mathematics, Science and History,²³ the Committee sought an update. DET advised that a draft curriculum would be issued and a forum with a variety of stakeholders would be held before final versions of the curriculum were released during 2010.²⁴

Year 12 completion rates

- There was concern raised by the Committee about the statistics in the DET Annual Report²⁵ showing that in 2008, 2817 students enrolled in Year 12 public secondary colleges and achieved a Year 12 Certificate, yet only 1341 (49 percent) received a Tertiary Entrance Statement. The Minister explained that there are several pathways and academic packages for students in Year 11 and Year 12 in the ACT including tertiary courses, accredited courses and VET (vocational education and training) courses. The Minister advised that approximately 30 percent of students who complete Year 12 go on to university which is higher than anywhere else in the country (the comparable figures in other jurisdictions being between 15 and 20 percent).²⁶
- The Year 12 completion rate of 87 percent was noted and the Committee asked what action the Government was taking to increase the rate of completion. The Minister advised that the Youth Transitions, the National Partnership Agreement on Youth Attainment and the Youth Compact are all aimed at addressing this issue by providing options for students to complete high school through various education, training or employment pathways. DET informed the Committee that it had also been strengthening career advice at an earlier age and supporting all students to have an identified pathway as they approach the transition period at Year 10.²⁷
- The Committee was concerned that students engaged in alternative pathways may not be identified by DET if they discontinue training and their training

²³ Department of Education and Training, *Annual Report 2008-2009*, p 26

²⁴ *Supplementary Question # 21*, 20 January 2010

²⁵ Department of Education and Training, *Annual Report 2008-2009*, p 5

²⁶ *Transcript of Evidence*, 1 December 2009, pp 9-10

²⁷ *Transcript of Evidence*, 1 December 2009, pp 14-16

provider or employer fails to advise DET. DET informed the Committee that work was progressing on a Youth Commitment initiative which asks all stakeholders to be accountable for all young people until the age of 17.²⁸ The Youth Commitment initiative involved building and enhancing a strategic whole-of-community approach to improving educational outcomes. The main focus would be on students aged 15-17 as they approached Year 10.

SMS Notify System

- The Committee was interested in the feedback received by the Department from parents on the recently implemented SMS Notify System which records student attendance and notifies parents by SMS of student absenteeism. The Minister advised that most parents have been positive about the system although not all parents have been able to benefit from the system as they do not have mobile telephones.²⁹
- The Committee was also interested in whether the SMS notify system had resulted in any reductions in student absenteeism. The Committee was advised that statistics are not yet available but are expected to be available before the completion of the 2009-2010 Annual Report.³⁰

RECOMMENDATION 2

The Committee recommends that the Department of Education and Training investigate how parents without mobile telephones may achieve the same level of prompt awareness of student absences as those parents with mobile telephones.

RECOMMENDATION 3

The Committee recommends that the Department of Education and Training provide data on the effectiveness of the SMS Notify System on student absenteeism rates in the next annual report.

²⁸ *Transcript of Evidence*, 1 December 2009, p 15

²⁹ *Transcript of Evidence*, 1 December 2009, p 2

³⁰ *Transcript of Evidence*, 1 December 2009, p 3

Indigenous Education

- With regard to Indigenous students, the DET Annual Report indicated that 70 percent of Indigenous students complete Year 12 compared to 87 percent for non-Indigenous students. The Committee sought advice from the Minister on how the ACT Government intended to address this gap in completion rates.
- The Minister advised that, as a part of the response strategy, funding had been allocated for Indigenous scholarships, particularly in the teaching field. There were 17 applicants for ten scholarships and the feedback from Indigenous students had been positive.³¹
- The Minister further advised that heightened vulnerability for Indigenous students occurred during periods of transition. In 2007, \$3.5 million had been committed to addressing the key transition periods from primary school to high school, high school to college and then college to further study. The ACT Government had set a target of increasing Indigenous Year 12 attainment to 80 percent by 2020.³²
- The Committee looks forward to an update on the progress towards this goal in the next annual report.

Jervis Bay

- The Committee was interested in the type of support provided to students in Jervis Bay. DET delivers education services to Jervis Bay students at primary school level. Most students then attend surrounding high schools in NSW, most commonly Vincentia High School. The Committee heard that while DET has focused on providing support during the primary years, the pre-school program had been expanded, and attention had been given to establishing a transition program with Vincentia High School and the University of Wollongong.³³
- DET had provided additional staffing points to the Jervis Bay Primary School so that a full-time literacy and numeracy coordinator for Indigenous students could be appointed.³⁴

³¹ *Transcript of Evidence*, 1 December 2009, p 12

³² *Transcript of Evidence*, 1 December 2009, pp 10-11

³³ *Transcript of Evidence*, 1 December 2009, p 13

³⁴ *Transcript of Evidence*, 1 December 2009, pp 12-13

- While the Committee noted that this would not assist students who were not achieving at a NSW high school, officers from DET advised that 'our presence in Jervis Bay is basically the primary school but the other departments, and the NSW department, work very closely with the Jervis Bay community'.³⁵

Stimulus Funding

- The Committee sought an update on the 'Building the Education Revolution' stimulus funding. The Minister advised that many of the larger construction projects, such as libraries and school halls, have commenced and were designed by architects with input from school boards, principals and P&C Associations. At the time of the public hearing, over 50 of the 84 smaller National School Pride projects, such as classroom refurbishments, playground upgrades and erections of shade structures had been completed.³⁶ The Committee notes that on 30 March 2010 the Minister for Education and Training announced that that ACT public schools were the first in Australia to have all of their National School Pride projects completed with the final project being completed on 26 March 2010.³⁷

Digital Education Revolution

- The Committee heard that earlier rounds of the digital education revolution had commenced although round 3 was yet to begin. At the time of the public hearing, \$940,000 of the allocated \$1.37 million had been spent resulting in approximately 3600 new PCs or laptops for ACT schools.³⁸ This resulted in a student to computer ratio of approximately 1:4 with the goal of 1:2 to be reached by 2012.
- The Committee heard that the Federal Government provided funding to support new computers for four years but that commitment was not guaranteed beyond 2012.³⁹
- The Minister advised the Committee that:

³⁵ *Transcript of Evidence*, 1 December 2009, p 19

³⁶ *Transcript of Evidence*, 1 December 2009, p 20;

³⁷ Andrew Barr MLA, "ACT leads nation in the completion of school projects" (30 March 2010), Media Release, accessible at < <http://www.andrewbarr.com.au/act-leads-nation-completion-school-projects> > (accessed 27 April 2010)

³⁸ *Transcript of Evidence*, 1 December 2009, p 20

³⁹ *Transcript of Evidence*, 1 December 2009, pp 23-24

We would either maintain those machines beyond their four-year lifespan or we would be left with, if we were going to replace them all, that cost. That is a risk that all states and territories face that the commonwealth will after a four-year period withdraw their support for the program. But we have that funding guaranteed for four years. It has been made available and it is in our budget; so that is important and, that said, I am increasingly confident that we will see the program renewed as a result of the commitment of the current federal government.⁴⁰

- The Committee learned that the significant spending on technology infrastructure was improving outcomes for students by improving the teaching and learning spaces. The Minister said that:

Schools are...workplaces and places of learning; so higher quality environments, having access to new technology and having access to pleasant working environments makes a clear difference to staff morale, to student morale and then obviously that flows through to improved outcomes.⁴¹

E-waste

- The Committee was concerned that DET has not developed a clearly defined e-waste strategy for the large turnover of information technology and communications equipment. This issue was raised with the Minister who advised that:

There were a couple of free days where e-waste was able to be recycled. So we have taken advantage of those sorts of opportunities. But judging by the success of Charity Computers, there is an opportunity for other businesses to step in in that context. As well, I understand that the department has sought to utilise the best parts of the older computers.⁴²

- The Minister further advised that DET was looking to formalise the approach regarding the disposal of e-waste and was involved with the National Secondary School Computer Fund program regarding e-waste solutions.⁴³

⁴⁰ *Transcript of Evidence*, 1 December 2009, pp 24

⁴¹ *Transcript of Evidence*, 1 December 2009, pp 26-27

⁴² *Transcript of Evidence*, 1 December 2009, p 25

⁴³ *Transcript of Evidence*, 1 December 2009, p 25

RECOMMENDATION 4

The Committee recommends that the Department of Education and Training identify and implement best practice options for recycling used ICT equipment.

RECOMMENDATION 5

The Committee recommends that the ACT Government implement a whole-of-government e-waste strategy with an aim of minimising the environmental impact of ACT Government ICT equipment.

Autism/Aspergers

- The Committee inquired about the multidisciplinary approach to care for children with Autism. Members of the ACT Legislative Assembly have received representations from parents of students with Autism and Aspergers Syndrome who are dissatisfied with the present system. The Director of Student Services and International Education advised that he would welcome the opportunity to speak with any parents who are dissatisfied to identify how they can be more appropriately supported.⁴⁴
- Responding to a question about the shortage of teachers trained in special education, the Minister acknowledged that there are recruitment challenges in special education across Australia and that DET continues to work with universities to provide training to current teachers. There has also been a focus on getting undergraduate teaching students placed in a specialist setting during their undergraduate years.⁴⁵

⁴⁴ *Transcript of Evidence*, 1 December 2009, p 35

⁴⁵ *Transcript of Evidence*, 1 December 2009, pp 44-45

College System and VET

- The Minister advised that the Review of the ACT Secondary Colleges completed in 2005 had identified some structural weaknesses within the college system and some concerns about the quality of vocational education and training courses on offer.⁴⁶ There were challenges delivering high quality VET courses at eight different sites including resourcing each site with qualified teachers, machinery and technology. DET intends to engage the vocational industry sector during 2010 to discuss how the government can respond to the issues identified by the review.⁴⁷

RECOMMENDATION 6

The Committee recommends that, upon completion of industry consultation, the Minister report to the ACT Legislative Assembly on the ACT Government's proposal to address the weaknesses outlined in the review of the secondary college system.

Bradley Review

- The Minister advised the Committee that following the Bradley Review (or the *Review of Australian Higher Education Final Report*⁴⁸) and the deregulation of educational institutions in 2012, he anticipated that there will be a dramatic change to the higher education landscape in Australia. The ACT Government's strategic approach would be to encourage a collaborative approach between higher education institutions with the objective of attracting more students into the ACT. The Minister said:

Once you have got a student to the ACT, the opportunities for that student to then continue study at another ACT institution are very

⁴⁶ *Transcript of Evidence*, 1 December 2009, pp 37; see Atelier Solutions (December 2005) *Report of the Review of Government Secondary Colleges on behalf of the ACT Department of Education and Training*, accessible at <http://www.det.act.gov.au/__data/assets/pdf_file/0007/17953/27-01-06_Colleges_Report.pdf> (accessed 27 April, 2010)

⁴⁷ *Transcript of Evidence*, 1 December 2009, pp 36-40

⁴⁸ For further details see Emeritus Professor Denise Bradley, et al (2008), *Review of Australian Higher Education: Final Report*, accessible at <<http://www.deewr.gov.au/HigherEducation/Review/Pages/ReviewofAustralianHigherEducationReport.aspx>> (accessed 27 April 2010)

strong. It is getting someone here in the first place that is the great challenge.⁴⁹

- The Committee inquired about how the CIT intends to respond to the increased demands on its resources. The Chief Executive of the CIT advised that there will be close monitoring of all the programs with resources shifted accordingly. He said:

At the moment we are feeling very comfortable about what we are delivering, our capacity to handle what has been an increased enrolment pattern in the vocational college, but we will monitor that closely during the course of next year and the year beyond.⁵⁰

- The Committee learned that the University of Canberra (UC) and the Canberra Institute of Technology (CIT) have agreed pathways by which students taking a course at CIT may get credits for a range of UC courses, and vice versa.⁵¹

Canberra Institute of Technology

- The Committee was advised by the Minister that:
the institute marked its 80th year of delivery of vocational education and training in 2008. It was awarded the training excellence gold under the Australian qualifications training framework excellence criteria. CIT student Rachael Keiley won the Australian apprentice of the year award. CIT was a national finalist for the large registered training organisation of the year award and CIT was in the first year of operation of its new organisational structure in 2008.⁵²

⁴⁹ *Transcript of Evidence*, 4 December 2009, pp 87-88

⁵⁰ *Transcript of Evidence*, 4 December 2009, p 84

⁵¹ *Transcript of Evidence*, 4 December 2009, p 100

⁵² *Transcript of Evidence*, 4 December 2009, p 82

International students

- The Committee was interested in the profile of CIT's international student population and was advised that international students come from approximately 80 countries with the majority arriving from Asia, including China, Taipei, Hong Kong and Vietnam. While English language training was a priority course for these students tourism, hotel management and hairdressing also had high enrolment levels. As at November 2009 there were 2290 international student enrolments. That was a 41 percent increase on 2007 and that number is expected to continue to increase in 2010.⁵³
- The Committee was interested in the economic benefits of full fee paying international students to the ACT economy. The Chief Executive of the CIT advised:

Our revenue from international students is getting up to \$8 million or \$9 million. It will go close to \$10 million. That is just direct revenue from their fees, let alone the multiplier effects. And normal multipliers are three, four or fivefold.⁵⁴

RECOMMENDATION 7

The Committee recommends that the ACT Government quantifies the economic benefits to the ACT community of international students and monitor this benefit carefully against changes in the national higher education sector.

University of Canberra

- Under the *University of Canberra Act 1989*, the University of Canberra is required to provide an annual report to the Minister for presentation to the Legislative Assembly for each calendar year⁵⁵ This was, however, the first time UC had been invited to meet with the Committee as part of their annual reports inquiry.
- The Committee learned that, to meet the needs of the changing profile of students, UC had instituted a range of support programs. These programs included a disability service, Indigenous centre, buddy systems for older

⁵³ *Transcript of Evidence*, 4 December 2009, pp 84-85

⁵⁴ *Transcript of Evidence*, 4 December 2009, p 86

⁵⁵ *Transcript of Evidence*, 4 December 2009, p 93; *University of Canberra Act 1989*, Part 3, Section 36

students and mentors for international students. The university was also looking to expand supports provided for students from low socioeconomic backgrounds.⁵⁶

- The Committee was pleased to learn of the new courses being offered in a range of areas including conservation, information studies, urban and regional planning, social and justice studies, midwifery, communications and media, civil and mechanical engineering, exercise physiology, water management and international revenue administration.⁵⁷
- The Committee was interested to learn that UC is seeking to give an opportunity to every student to do some course work on sustainability issues, either as a minor or a major, and that the number of enrolments are up for the Bachelor of Environmental Science.⁵⁸
- There was discussion regarding the Gap Plus program which gives students credit for experience gained during their gap year. The credits, and assessment types, are negotiated with the Faculty of Education and the work they submit was subjected to assessment in the usual manner.⁵⁹ The Committee considered that the approach was a good example of innovative ways to encourage students to return to tertiary education and added to the appeal of the ACT as an education destination.

Other education issues

- At the hearing, the following matters were also discussed:
- Quality Teaching Program;⁶⁰
- Efficiency Dividend;⁶¹
- Early Childhood Schools;⁶²
- Universal Access;⁶³
- VET management system;⁶⁴

⁵⁶ *Transcript of Evidence*, 4 December 2009, pp 96-97

⁵⁷ *Transcript of Evidence*, 4 December 2009, p 100

⁵⁸ *Transcript of Evidence*, 4 December 2009, pp 95-96

⁵⁹ *Transcript of Evidence*, 4 December 2009, p 96

⁶⁰ *Transcript of Evidence*, 1 December 2009, p 6

⁶¹ *Transcript of Evidence*, 1 December 2009, p 28

⁶² *Transcript of Evidence*, 1 December 2009, pp 28-29

⁶³ *Transcript of Evidence*, 1 December 2009, p 33

- VET support and community consultation;⁶⁵
- Australian early development index – 2009 data;⁶⁶
- New schools;⁶⁷
- CIT student hubs and website;⁶⁸
- Professional standards and staffing numbers;⁶⁹
- University of Canberra – increase in enrolments;⁷⁰
- Bachelor of Urban Planning;⁷¹
- Out of Trade Register;⁷²
- Birrigai and Tidbinbilla amalgamation;⁷³
- Minister’s Physical Activity Challenge;⁷⁴
- Language programs;⁷⁵ and
- Skill shortages.⁷⁶

⁶⁴ *Transcript of Evidence*, 1 December 2009, p 35

⁶⁵ *Transcript of Evidence*, 1 December 2009, p 42

⁶⁶ *Transcript of Evidence*, 1 December 2009, pp 42-43

⁶⁷ *Transcript of Evidence*, 1 December 2009, p 44; *Supplementary Question # 23*, 20 January 2010

⁶⁸ *Transcript of Evidence*, 4 December 2009, p 89

⁶⁹ *Transcript of Evidence*, 4 December 2009, pp 90-92

⁷⁰ *Transcript of Evidence*, 4 December 2009, p 95

⁷¹ *Transcript of Evidence*, 4 December 2009, p 98

⁷² *Supplementary Question # 22*, 20 January 2010

⁷³ *Supplementary Question # 20*, 20 January 2010

⁷⁴ *Supplementary Question # 18*, 20 January 2010

⁷⁵ *Supplementary Question # 17*, 20 January 2010

⁷⁶ *Supplementary Question # 16*, 20 January 2010

20 STANDING COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION, TRAINING AND YOUTH
AFFAIRS

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4 CHILDREN AND YOUTH PORTFOLIO

- On 4 December 2009, the Committee met with the Minister for Children and Young People and with officials from the Office of Children, Youth and Family Support (the Office). The activities of the Office are outlined in the annual report of the Department of Disability, Housing and Community Services, as Output Class 4. This chapter provides information on some of the more significant issues discussed during the public hearing.

Bimberi Youth Justice Centre

- The Bimberi Youth Justice Centre (Bimberi) is the ACT's new youth custodial facility and replaces the former Quamby Detention Centre (Quamby).⁷⁷ The Minister for Disability, Housing and Community Services advised the Committee that, following the completion of Bimberi in August 2008, there was a successful transition of the young people from Quamby. Bimberi is the first human rights compliant youth justice facility in Australia.⁷⁸

Indigenous population

- The Committee was concerned that, at the time of the hearing, over half of the young people in Bimberi identified as being of Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander background. The Committee heard that, as a consequence of the high numbers of Indigenous young people within the Bimberi population, Bimberi had an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Officer and an Indigenous Liaison Officer who had been engaged to assist these young people with their educational needs.⁷⁹

Transition Supports

- The Committee inquired about what programs and systems have been put in place to develop the skills of young people so that they can successfully transition back into the community. The Committee was advised that every young person in remand is assigned to a case worker who was able to

⁷⁷ Department of Disability, Housing and Community Services, Bimberi Youth Justice Centre webpage <<http://www.dhcs.act.gov.au/ocyfs/bimberi>> at 12 April 2010

⁷⁸ *Transcript of Evidence*, 4 December 2009, p 55

⁷⁹ *Transcript of Evidence*, 4 December 2009, p 65

consider the young person's needs and circumstances and direct them towards appropriate programs.

- The Department of Education and Training is operating the Murrumbidgee Education and Training Centre within Bimberi, in close partnership with CIT. The Centre was established to provide vocational education as well as literacy and numeracy tutoring. Other programs were rehabilitation orientated or focused on sport and recreation activities. A part-time mental health worker had also been employed to support young people with this aspect of their health and wellbeing.
- The employment service, Caloola, attended the Centre weekly to assist the young people to consider future employment options⁸⁰ and ACT Housing assisted with transition option for those young people who may be unable to return to their homes following release.⁸¹
- The Committee understands that the average stay for a young person in Bimberi is 11 days for a remandee and 101 days for someone who has been sentenced to detention.⁸² Accordingly, the Committee was advised that it can be difficult to successfully support a remandee in any sort of positive transition program considering their short period of stay.⁸³ The Committee was advised that:

A lot of the young people in there are in there very briefly and it is quite difficult to start that planning process with them. That is not to say we do not try to do that. But one of the key things always in terms of working with these young people is stabilising them in the first place.⁸⁴

Recidivism

- The Committee inquired about recidivism rates and whether any comparison could be made between Quamby and Brimberi. The Chief Executive of the Department of Disability, Housing and Community Services (DHCS) stated that it would be two to three years before any indicative figures would be available and even then it would be difficult to isolate any one causal factor (such as the changed institution).⁸⁵

⁸⁰ *Transcript of Evidence*, 4 December 2009, pp 65-66

⁸¹ *Transcript of Evidence*, 4 December 2009, pp 69-70

⁸² Mrs Vicki Dunne MLA, *Question Taken on Notice # 1*, 4 December 2009

⁸³ *Transcript of Evidence*, 4 December 2009, pp 66-68

⁸⁴ *Transcript of Evidence*, 4 December 2009, p 66

⁸⁵ *Transcript of Evidence*, 4 December 2009, p 66

Discipline

- During the hearing, the Office was asked how many young people had been strip-searched and/or restrained during the year. The question was taken on notice and the Minister subsequently responded that 139 strip searches were conducted during 2009 and there were 44 incidents of force being used on 24 young detainees during 2008-2009.⁸⁶
- The Committee was also interested in whether 'de-escalation and the use of force-type training'⁸⁷ was a strategy used by the Office to reduce the need for such behaviour management measures for the relatively small population of young people at Bimberi. It was not clear from the responses provided to the Committee whether factors such as staff training might have a positive influence on the number of disciplinary incidents which arise at the Centre.⁸⁸

RECOMMENDATION 8

The Committee recommends that the Office for Children, Youth and Family Support investigate, in consultation with staff at the Bimberi Youth Justice Centre, what forms of staff training are required to reduce the incidences of force required to manage the behaviour of detainees.

Care and Protection

- The Committee was interested in the staff and workload management strategies for the Care and Protection Group (the Group). The Minister advised the Committee that that:

Care and Protection work with around 1,400 families and children, both in statutory and in non-statutory capacities. Care and Protection has also introduced a demand management strategy to identify and manage workload pressures.⁸⁹

⁸⁶ Responses to questions taken on notice and supplementary questions can viewed on the Inquiry website, accessible at

<<http://www.parliament.act.gov.au/committees/index1.asp?committee=117&inquiry=855&category=15>>

⁸⁷ *Transcript of Evidence*, 4 December 2009, p 63

⁸⁸ Ms Meredith Hunter MLA, *Question Taken on Notice # 15*, 4 December 2009. See transcript of evidence, p 63

⁸⁹ *Transcript of Evidence*, 4 December 2009, p 54

Overseas Recruitment Program

- The Committee sought an update on the outcomes of the second overseas recruitment program from the United Kingdom which was conducted following the first successful recruitment campaign in 2005. The campaigns were introduced to fill a large number of vacancies within the Care and Protection Group and the Committee was advised that the Group now has a near full complement of staff. As a consequence the focus will return to local recruitment.⁹⁰
- The Committee heard that thirty-six people were recruited from the 2008 campaign with all of them still working in the ACT. Only 45% remain from the 2005 campaign.⁹¹
- The Committee inquired about the feedback received following the campaigns. Departmental officers advised that the majority of the feedback from the recruited officers had been positive although homesickness was the most common concern. The community feedback had also been positive, with regard to skill and experience, although there had been some adjustment to cultural differences. The Committee heard that the Office intended to consider how it can address these transition issues as part of the induction, and on-going, training should future campaigns occur.⁹²

Child and Family Centres

Gungahlin and Tuggeranong Child and Family Centre

- The Committee was interested in the types of services being delivered out of the Gungahlin and Tuggeranong Child and Family Centres. The Minister, and Departmental officers, advised of a range of maternal and child health services, parenting programs as well as counselling and mental health services. The Committee also heard that private providers, such as The Smith Family, are welcome to deliver services which are in keeping with the objectives of the centres.⁹³

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⁹⁰ *Transcript of Evidence*, 4 December 2009, pp 55-57

⁹¹ *Transcript of Evidence*, 4 December 2009, pp 56-57

⁹² *Transcript of Evidence*, 4 December 2009, p 59

⁹³ *Transcript of Evidence*, 4 December 2009, pp 70-71

- The Committee heard that the Centres undertake outreach activities:
So everything is not delivered from the centre; there is a lot of outreach as well. Folk from the centre will go to other agencies and work with them to, say, run a targeted playgroup. So there are all sorts of different models to allow access into the community and the community to access the services.⁹⁴
- It was also of interest to the Committee that the centres have developed a Father Inclusive Practice identifying opportunities to engage more with fathers. The results are steadily showing an increased uptake for fathers attending the sessions and the feedback from the fathers has been positive.⁹⁵

West Belconnen Child and Family Centre

- The Minister advised the Committee that over \$8 million will be invested, over five years, for a new child and family centre. That will include some capital funding of approximately \$4 million, for the construction of the centre, and operational costs of \$3 million.⁹⁶
- The new centre will have a particularly strong focus on engaging with, and building relationships with, the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community. The Committee heard that Ngunnawal elders, and the community, have been involved in the design concept and will continue to be invited to be involved throughout the construction.⁹⁷

Childcare Centres - Exemptions

- An enquiry was made about childcare centres needing to obtain exemptions under the *Children and Young People Act 2008*. This Act provides for exemptions to childcare standards for childcare centres in certain circumstances.⁹⁸ These exemptions cover a range of issues, such as refurbishments, short-term staffing shortages and staff training. They are also time limited and conditional on the centre identifying a plan to address the issue at hand. Exemptions may be granted for up to 12 months. At the time of

⁹⁴ *Transcript of Evidence*, 4 December 2009, p 72

⁹⁵ Department of Disability, Housing and Community Services, *Annual Report 2008-09, Volume 1*, p 41; *Transcript of Evidence*, 4 December 2009, p 73

⁹⁶ *Transcript of Evidence*, 4 December 2009, p 59

⁹⁷ *Transcript of Evidence*, 4 December 2009, p 59

⁹⁸ *Children and Young People Act 2008*, Part 20.4, Section 749-2

the hearing there were 26 temporary standard exemptions in place, with 21 of the 26 relating to staffing issues.⁹⁹

Family Support Program

- The Committee inquired about the funding for the Family Support Program which, according to the *Department of Disability, Housing and Community Services, Annual Report 2008-09, Volume 1*, will end in June 2010.¹⁰⁰ Departmental officers advised that the department is currently considering how to better integrate the Family Support Program and the Youth Services Program. Accordingly, a discussion paper is being developed which will be discussed during a series of workshops throughout 2010. After the workshops, a service delivery platform, and a further discussion paper, will be launched. At that time, broader consultation will be undertaken. With regard to the funding, the advice was that funding will continue until this project is finalised.¹⁰¹

Adolescent Day Unit

- Through the Targeted Intervention Program, the Adolescent Day Unit supports young people aged 12-15 years to work towards returning to school or vocational education programs. The Committee inquired as to why fewer children were supported through this program with only 421 receiving support in 2008-09 compared to 536 in 2007-08. The response was:

We are seeing an increase in complexity of the young people accessing those services. Given that complexity, we are having to spend more time working with them. That clearly impacts on the throughput, which impacts on the total numbers that we are going to see in any particular year.¹⁰²

⁹⁹ *Transcript of Evidence*, 4 December 2009, pp 74-75

¹⁰⁰ Department of Disability, Housing and Community Services, *Annual Report 2008-09, Volume 1*, p 46; *Transcript of Evidence*, 4 December 2009, p 55

¹⁰¹ *Transcript of Evidence*, 4 December 2009, pp 55-56; pp79-80

¹⁰² Department of Disability, Housing and Community Services, *Annual Report 2008-09, Volume 2*, p 126; *Transcript of Evidence*, 4 December 2009, pp 78-79

- Whilst the Committee commends the approach to quality, the decrease in quantity, as a result of the added complexities, was a concern. In light of the Government's "learn or earn" policy¹⁰³, which has implications for young people up to the age of 17, the Committee considered that targeted intervention programs for young students could make a significant difference to student progression through high school.

RECOMMENDATION 9

The Committee recommends that the ACT Government review the resourcing to the Targeted Intervention Program, particularly to the Adolescent Day Unit, to ensure that quality services can be provided to all vulnerable students needing support.

Other issues for children and young people

- The Committee also inquired about matters regarding:
- Children and Young People Act 2008;¹⁰⁴
- Growing Healthy Families project;¹⁰⁵
- Transitioning people out of Quamby – research;¹⁰⁶
- Parole framework for young offenders;¹⁰⁷ and
- No fees childcare diploma and HECS-free university places¹⁰⁸

¹⁰³ As outlined in the *Education (Participation) Amendment Act 2009* accessible at <http://www.legislation.act.gov.au/a/2009-40/20100101-41373/pdf/2009-40.pdf> (accessed 30 April 2010)

¹⁰⁴ *Transcript of Evidence*, 4 December 2009, p 54

¹⁰⁵ *Transcript of Evidence*, 4 December 2009, p 60

¹⁰⁶ *Transcript of Evidence*, 4 December 2009, p 63

¹⁰⁷ *Transcript of Evidence*, 4 December 2009, pp 61-62

¹⁰⁸ *Transcript of Evidence*, 4 December 2009, pp 76-77

5 ARTS PORTFOLIO

- On 15 December 2009, the Committee met with the Minister for Arts and Heritage and with officials from artsACT and the Cultural Facilities Corporation. This chapter provides information on some of the more significant issues discussed during the public hearing.

Key Arts Organisations

- The Committee was advised that there are 22 key arts organisations which are funded by the Cultural Council. The Committee was also advised that artsACT introduced a new category for key arts organisations, the *program category*, which simplifies the reporting requirements for those key arts organisations which only present one activity per year, such as the International Music Festival.¹⁰⁹
- The Committee was advised that the funding agreements for most key arts organisations moved to a five-year arrangement. The longer term created greater stability by providing funding security for program, staffing and business planning.¹¹⁰
- The Director of artsACT advised that, although a five-year plan suits most organisations, there is opportunity for flexibility in the terms based on the needs of the organisation.¹¹¹

Conflict of Interest

- The Committee was aware of concerns raised in the arts community about restricting anyone who received a benefit from the organisation from membership of that organisation's board. The Committee was advised by artACT that this is understood as a conflict of interest issue and that normal practice required that a conflict of interest should be declared and, subsequently, the person in question should remove themselves from any discussions about related issues.¹¹²

¹⁰⁹ *Transcript of Evidence*, 15 December 2009, pp 102-103

¹¹⁰ *Transcript of Evidence*, 15 December 2009, p 111

¹¹¹ *Transcript of Evidence*, 15 December 2009, p 111

¹¹² *Transcript of Evidence*, 15 December 2009, p 112

- The Director of artsACT advised that there would be a review of this governance matter in liaison with the Australian Business and Arts Foundation, the Association of Company Directors, the Government Solicitor's Office and the Australia Council. At the time of the hearings, the review timeframe was yet to be finalised.¹¹³

RECOMMENDATION 10

The Committee recommends that the ACT Government report to the ACT Legislative Assembly on the outcomes of the review of arts organisation governance and the requirements that will be made regarding membership of the boards of arts organisations.

Public Artwork

Budget

- The Committee was interested in how much of the 2008-2009 ACT Budget was spent on public artwork during the year. The Director of artsACT advised that, in regard to the public artwork collection managed, \$2.3 million had been allocated for public artwork¹¹⁴ of which \$8,214 was spent on the maintenance of 22 works and \$15,096 on the restoration of seven damaged artworks.¹¹⁵

Percent-for-art scheme

- The Minister was asked about the decision to conclude the Percent-for-art scheme which committed an amount equivalent to 1 percent of the new capital works program in a financial year to public art projects¹¹⁶. The ACT Government has now capped the figure for public art to \$1.2 million per annum for 2008/2009 and 2009/2010.¹¹⁷
- The Chief Minister advised that this was a budget decision made by Cabinet and that a formal consultation process on the decision was not undertaken. The Committee understood from the Chief Minister's comments that this

¹¹³ *Transcript of Evidence*, 15 December 2009, p 112

¹¹⁴ *Transcript of Evidence*, 15 December 2009, p 103

¹¹⁵ *Question Taken on Notice # 8*, 15 December 2009

¹¹⁶ artsACT, *Action Statement for Public Art*, p 9

¹¹⁷ *Transcript of Evidence*, 15 December 2009, p 104

decision may be reconsidered beyond the 2009/2010 financial year.¹¹⁸

- The Committee noted the scheme was abandoned despite the Chief Minister's comments that one of the outcomes of the scheme was the growing engagement by the private sector to public art.¹¹⁹

Public Art Panel

- The responsibility for decisions regarding public art purchases and placement was also a matter of interest to the Committee. The Chief Minister advised that the Public Art Panel is responsible for determining where public art should be installed and liaising with artists. The Public Art Panel then considers the submissions from artists and makes a recommendation to the Chief Minister.¹²⁰ The Chief Minister advised the Committee that the Panel would make recommendations and he was inclined to accept their advice on such matters.¹²¹

Procurement process

- The Committee was advised that capital work may be secured in various ways (consistent with the procurement guidelines) and that some works may be purchased 'off the shelf' or commissioned.¹²² Feedback has been provided to artsACT that some of the more highly regarded artists within the Canberra community are less likely to respond to an open tender or expression of interest process with some artists conveying a preference for a single-select process. The Committee understands that artsACT is exploring the different commissioning methods for public art.
- The Committee noted the present method of inviting up to five artists to lodge an expression of interest which narrows the field whilst maintaining a level of selection. The artists are short-listed based on their previous works.¹²³

¹¹⁸ *Transcript of Evidence*, 15 December 2009, p 104

¹¹⁹ *Transcript of Evidence*, 15 December 2009, pp 109-110

¹²⁰ *Transcript of Evidence*, 15 December 2009, p 104

¹²¹ *Transcript of Evidence*, 15 December 2009, p 106

¹²² *Transcript of Evidence*, 15 December 2009, p 105

¹²³ *Transcript of Evidence*, 15 December 2009, pp 104-107

Community consultation

- The Committee noted that efforts are made ‘more often than not’ to invite members of the local Community Councils to be involved in the decision-making process regarding public art in their area. The Committee believes it would be beneficial if this practice was mandatory for all public artworks.

RECOMMENDATION 11

The Committee recommends that the ACT Government ensure that where possible the appropriate Community Council is consulted as a part of the selection and siting process for any public artwork.

Indigenous Arts Officer

- The Committee sought clarification on the ACT Community Arts Office and the current work programs of the Indigenous Arts Officer and the Multicultural Arts Officer. The Indigenous Arts Officer and the Multicultural Arts Officer undertake a range of activities including assisting the Indigenous and Multicultural communities with developing, planning, implementing, promoting, funding and evaluating their arts projects. These officers also provide information to assist key arts organisations that wish to undertake Indigenous and Multicultural arts activities. The ACT Community Arts Office also includes a Disability Arts Officer.¹²⁴

Ainslie Arts Centre

- The management arrangements for the Ainslie Arts Centre were changed during the 2008/2009 financial year and the Committee sought further information about the reason for the change and the process for awarding a new management contract. The previous management service was provided by Canberra Youth Music, and following advice that they no longer wished to continue performing that function, expressions of interest were called from other arts organisations to manage the Centre. The Committee was informed that two organisations submitted an expression of interest and, after considering the services and strengths of those organisations, the Gorman House Arts Centre was selected to manage the Ainslie Arts Centre.¹²⁵

¹²⁴ Question Taken on Notice # 12, 15 December 2009

¹²⁵ Transcript of Evidence, 15 December 2009, p 116; Question Taken on Notice # 10, 15 December 2009

Centenary of Canberra

- The Chief Executive of the Chief Minister's Department (CMD) advised that it was anticipated that the Centenary of Canberra celebrations would include a strong arts focus. He also informed the Committee that the program was still in its formative stage as the Creative Director of the Centenary of Canberra program, Ms Robyn Archer AO, was still undertaking consultations with the Canberra community.¹²⁶
- The Committee was also advised there is a strict budget for the Centenary with the majority of expenditure was expected to be closer to 2013. While some aspects of the program have been identified, such as the Women's Golf Open, much of the program was still being formulated.¹²⁷

Canberra Museum and Gallery

- The Committee sought information on the role of the Canberra Museum and Gallery (CMAG) in the Centenary of Canberra celebrations. The Chief Executive Officer of the Cultural Facilities Corporation, advised that a number of specific exhibitions are planned in the lead up to the centenary including *Canberra Gold, We Built This City* and *Cotter Heritage*.
- Wider themes, such as a broad history of the visual arts in Canberra, a history of the Indigenous habitation in the Canberra region, and an exhibition focussing on King O'Malley's contributions to the establishment of Canberra, were still being developed. There has also been collaboration with the Department of Education and Training to develop history teaching kits for ACT schools in the lead up to 2013.¹²⁸

¹²⁶ *Transcript of Evidence*, 15 December 2009, pp 113-114

¹²⁷ *Transcript of Evidence*, 15 December 2009, p 114

¹²⁸ *Transcript of Evidence*, 15 December 2009, p 115

Canberra Symphony Orchestra

- Asked about funding for the Canberra Symphony Orchestra (CSO), the Chief Minister observed that while the Federal Government provided \$77 million to support orchestras across Australia, the CSO only received \$100,000 of these funds. The ACT Government provided approximately \$400,000 worth of assistance, in various forms, to the CSO.
- The Committee asked whether the Chief Minister might consider lobbying the Federal Government on the matter of CSO funding. The Chief Minister advised that 'we have tried' and that 'it is a matter of enormous frustration'.¹²⁹
- The Committee inquired about whether there was a possibility for the CSO office to be allocated a permanent venue. The Chief Minister advised that the ACT Government may have a capacity to assist the CSO to find permanent accommodation for its administrative functions and reflected that an extension to the Street Theatre facilities may be a viable option.¹³⁰

RECOMMENDATION 12

The Committee recommends that the ACT Government explore the possibility of extending the Street Theatre premises to include permanent accommodation facilities for the Canberra Symphony Orchestra's administrative functions.

Other arts issues

- The Committee also inquired about matters regarding:
- Live events;¹³¹
- Insurance costs;¹³²
- Government arts coordination¹³³ and support for artists;¹³⁴
- Dance space;¹³⁵

¹²⁹ *Transcript of Evidence*, 15 December 2009, p 119

¹³⁰ *Transcript of Evidence*, 15 December 2009, pp 119-120

¹³¹ *Supplementary Question # 24*, 20 January 2010

¹³² *Supplementary Question # 26*, 20 January 2010

¹³³ *Supplementary Question # 25*, 20 January 2010

¹³⁴ *Supplementary Question # 27*, 20 January 2010

- ScreenACT;¹³⁶
- Canberra Theatre audience numbers;¹³⁷
- Canberra Glassworks;¹³⁸
- Arts Fund¹³⁹ and the ACT Arts Fund Annual Evaluation;¹⁴⁰
- Canberra Arts Marketing;¹⁴¹
- ANU Faculty of Arts;¹⁴²
- Belconnen Arts Centre,¹⁴³ Watson Arts Centre¹⁴⁴ and the Manuka Arts Centre;¹⁴⁵ and
- Contemporary Music Inter-Departmental Committee.¹⁴⁶

¹³⁵ *Supplementary Question # 28*, 20 January 2010

¹³⁶ *Transcript of Evidence*, 15 December 2009, p 103; *Question Taken on Notice # 13*, 15 December 2009

¹³⁷ *Supplementary Question # 35*, 20 January 2010

¹³⁸ *Supplementary Question # 34*, 20 January 2010

¹³⁹ *Transcript of Evidence*, 15 December 2009, p 109

¹⁴⁰ *Supplementary Question # 38*, 20 January 2010

¹⁴¹ *Transcript of Evidence*, 15 December 2009, p 115

¹⁴² *Supplementary Question # 40*, 20 January 2010

¹⁴³ *Supplementary Question # 33*, 20 January 2010

¹⁴⁴ *Supplementary Question #37*, 20 January 2010

¹⁴⁵ *Supplementary Question # 42*, 20 January 2010

¹⁴⁶ *Supplementary Question # 43*, 20 January 2010

6 ACT BUILDING AND CONSTRUCTION INDUSTRY TRAINING FUND AUTHORITY

- The Committee inquired about the increase in funding for the access and equity program from \$30,158 in 2007/2008 to \$98,101 in 2008/2009 and whether this had resulted in any particular outcomes for Indigenous people or disadvantaged people being able to access industry training. The Chairman of the Board advised that the Women in Trades program was aiming to broaden the appeal of the construction industry for women and had resulted in a marked increase in enquiries and a greater number of women entering into construction apprenticeships.

The authority acknowledged that there still remained challenges Access and Equity program

- to increasing the numbers of Indigenous peoples and those from disadvantaged backgrounds involved in the industry despite additional training incentives provided for under-represented groups.¹⁴⁷

Other issues

- The Committee also inquired about matters regarding:
- the global financial crisis;¹⁴⁸
- skills shortages;¹⁴⁹ and
- stimulus funding.¹⁵⁰
-
-
- Amanda Bresnan MLA
- Chair

¹⁴⁷ *Transcript of Evidence*, 1 December 2009, pp 46-48

¹⁴⁸ *Transcript of Evidence*, 1 December 2009, p 49

¹⁴⁹ *Transcript of Evidence*, 1 December 2009, p 49 and p 51

¹⁵⁰ *Transcript of Evidence*, 1 December 2009, p 49

38 STANDING COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION, TRAINING AND YOUTH
AFFAIRS

- 29 April 2010

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APPENDIX A: Witnesses

Tuesday 1 December 2009

Mr Andrew Barr MLA

**Minister for Education and Training, Minister for Planning, Minister for Tourism,
Sport and Recreation, Minister for Gaming and Racing**

Dr Jim Watterston, Chief Executive, Department of Education and Training

Ms Jocelyn Vasey, Executive Director, Department of Education and Training

Ms Trish Wilks, Director, Curriculum Support and Professional Learning,
Department of Education and Training

Ms Helen Strauch, Office of Board of Senior Secondary Studies, Department of
Education and Training

Ms Kathy Melsom, Director, Indigenous Education and Early Years Learning,
Department of Education and Training

Mr Wayne Chandler, Director, Schools – Northern Canberra, Department of
Education and Training

Dr Kaaren Blom, Director, Training and Tertiary Education, Department of
Education and Training

Mr Phil Tardif, Executive Director, Business Improvement Services, Department of
Education and Training

Mr Rodney Bray, Director, Schools Capital Works, Department of Education and
Training

Mr Mark Whybrow, Director, Finance and Corporate Support, Department of
Education and Training

Ms Ann Ellis, Acting Director, Human Resources, Department of Education and
Training

(Tuesday 1 December 2009 – continued)

Dr Mark Collis, Director, Student Services and International Education, Department of Education and Training

Ms Sally Webster, Acting Senior Project Manager, Education ICT, InTACT

Mr James Services AO, Chairman, Building and Construction Industry Training Fund Authority

Mr Ray Stowers, Industry Liaison Officer, Building and Construction Industry Training Fund Authority

Friday 4 December 2009

Ms Joy Burch MLA

Minister for Disability, Housing and Community Services, Minister for Ageing, Minister for Multicultural Affairs, Minister for Women

Mr Martin Hehir, Chief Executive, Department of Disability, Housing and Community Services

Ms Megan Mitchell, Executive Director, Office for Children, Youth and Family Support, Department of Disability, Housing and Community Services

Mr Frank Duggan, Senior Director, Office for Children, Youth and Family Support, Department of Disability, Housing and Community Services

Ms Helen Pappas, Senior Manager, Office for Children, Youth and Family Support, Department of Disability, Housing and Community Services

Mr Michael Reid, Director, Office for Children, Youth and Family Support, Department of Disability, Housing and Community Services

Mr David Collett, Director, Asset Management, Department of Disability, Housing and Community Services

Tuesday 15 December 2009

Mr Jon Stanhope MLA

Chief Minister, Minister for Transport, Minister for Territory and Municipal Services, Minister for Business and Economic Development, Minister for Land and Property Services, Minister for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Affairs, Minister for the Arts and Heritage

Mr Andrew Cappie-Wood, Chief Executive, Chief Minister's Department

Mr David Whitney, Director, artsACT, Arts, Communications, Events and Protocol, Chief Minister's Department

Ms Carol Cartwright, Executive Director, Arts, Communications, Events and Protocol, Chief Minister's Department

Ms Kate Naser, Chief Finance Officer, Strategic Finance, Policy Division, Chief Minister's Department

Ms Harriet Elvin, Chief Executive Officer, Cultural Facilities Corporation

Mr Andrew Knight, Chief Financial Officer, Cultural Facilities Corporation

APPENDIX B: Questions Taken on Notice

Responses to questions taken on notice can be accessed via the inquiry web page:

<<http://www.parliament.act.gov.au/committees/index1.asp?committee=117&inquiry=855&category=15>>

Question No	To	Subject
1	Minister for Children and Young People	Bimberi – average stay of a remandee
2	Minister for Children and Young People	Number of Category 2 incidents
3	Minister for Children and Young People	Parole framework
4	Minister for Children and Young People	Consultant review
5	Minister for Education and Training	SMS Notify System
6	Minister for Education and Training	Comparative performance of Year 12 students
7	Minister for Education and Training	CIT and contestability
8	Minister for Arts and Heritage	Public art expenditure and delivery
9	Minister for Arts and Heritage	Groovin' in the City
10	Minister for Arts and Heritage	Ainslie Arts Centre - management
11	Minister for Arts and Heritage	Ainslie Arts Centre - budget
12	Minister for Arts and Heritage	Indigenous Arts Officer - projects
13	Minister for Arts and Heritage	ScreenACT - structure
14	Minister for Children and Young People	Homeless children
15	Minister for Children and Young People	Search of young people at Bimberi

APPENDIX C: Supplementary Questions

Responses to supplementary questions can be accessed via the inquiry web page:

<<http://www.parliament.act.gov.au/committees/index1.asp?committee=117&inquiry=855&category=15>>

Question #	To	Subject
16	Minister for Education and Training	VET – skills shortages
17	Minister for Education and Training	Language curriculum
18	Minister for Education and Training	Student health and wellbeing
19	Minister for Education and Training	School based management
20	Minister for Education and Training	Birrigai and Jerrabomberra Wetlands
21	Minister for Education and Training	Australian curriculum
22	Minister for Education and Training	VET – Out of Trade Register
23	Minister for Education and Training	Capital works – new schools
24	Minister for Arts and Heritage	Live events
25	Minister for Arts and Heritage	Promotion of Arts in Canberra
26	Minister for Arts and Heritage	Arts organisation insurance
27	Minister for Arts and Heritage	Artist stipends
28	Minister for Arts and Heritage	Dance venues
29	Minister for Arts and Heritage	Professional theatre/dance companies
30	Minister for Arts and Heritage	ScreenACT Board membership
31	Minister for Arts and Heritage	Indigenous Arts Officer
32	Minister for Arts and Heritage	Ministerial attendance at Arts events
33	Minister for Arts and Heritage	Belconnen Arts Centre
34	Minister for Arts and Heritage	Glassworks
35	Minister for Arts and Heritage	Arts advocacy
36	Minister for Arts and Heritage	Cultural Facilities Corporation
37	Minister for Arts and Heritage	Watson Arts Centre
38	Minister for Arts and Heritage	ACT Arts Fund Annual Evaluation
39	Minister for Arts and Heritage	Public Arts expenditure

Question #	To	Subject
40	Minister for Arts and Heritage	ANU Faculty of Arts funding
41	Minister for Arts and Heritage	Arts – facilities maintenance and repair
42	Minister for Arts and Heritage	Manuka Arts Centre
43	Minister for Arts and Heritage	Contemporary Music Interdepartmental Committee
44	Minister for Arts and Heritage	Payment for outputs