

2018

**THE LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY FOR THE
AUSTRALIAN CAPITAL TERRITORY**

**Response to the ACT Legislative Assembly Resolution of 11 April
2018 on Apollo 11 Mission – 50th Anniversary**

**Mr Mick Gentleman MLA
Minister Assisting the Chief Minister for Advanced Technology
and Space**

Madam Speaker, I am pleased to report on the Government's response to the Assembly Resolution on the Apollo 11 Mission – 50th Anniversary.

Since this motion was agreed to, I have had the pleasure of the Chief Minister expanding my portfolio responsibilities to include celebration of this momentous occasion.

The 21st of July 2019 is a special time for the world – 50 years since the humankind set foot on the moon. The significance of this occasion is something I have spoken about before on this place.

In an answer to a question from Ms Cody on 24 October, I advised the Assembly of our city's significant role in this ground-breaking achievement and measures the Government was looking at to celebrate this historic event.

Madam Speaker, the Apollo 11 mission lasted over 195 hours. At 109 hours and 42 minutes after launch, the Honeysuckle Creek tracking station in the Namadgi National Park, was geographically located with direct 'sight' to the lunar module and was responsible for receiving and broadcasting to the world, images and audio of Neil Armstrong's first steps on the moon and his famous quote *"that's one small step for a man, one giant leap for mankind"*.

A number of the staff involved in the early space missions launched by the USA and tracked by the stations at Tidbinbilla and Honeysuckle Creek where they were employed, continue to reside in Canberra. Through their technical expertise, these members of our community made a significant contribution to the first Moon landing and all six subsequent Apollo landings on the Moon. The group has formed the Apollo 11 50th Anniversary Committee.

Madam Speaker, to celebrate this 50th anniversary the ACT Government allocated funding in the 2018-19 ACT Budget for works at the former tracking station sites within the Namadgi National Park. Further funding has also been identified through the Better Infrastructure Fund for landscape and safety improvements at the sites so that they are looking their best in anticipation of the influx of visitors to the area.

To deliver these works, the ACT Parks and Conservation Service is currently working with the Apollo 11 50th Anniversary Committee to develop a commemorative piece at the site of the former Honeysuckle Creek Tracking Station, which today is a public campground. This work is ongoing.

Additionally funding will provide for a suite of elements complementary to existing interpretive signage at the three sites of the former NASA space stations in the Orroral Valley and at Honeysuckle Creek. A range of other works are also being considered.

Events ACT is also looking to augment existing events to incorporate activities that relate to the moon landing and showcase the ACT's historic involvement in the space industry, including opportunities provided through events such as Floriade.

Madam Speaker, as I have already announced, the theme of the 2019 annual Canberra and Region Heritage Festival held in April is 'Space'. This festival provides another opportunity for all Canberrans to learn and reflect on the first moon landings in the build up to the anniversary in July. I have already spoken in this place about the projects relating to the moon landing that are being funded through the Heritage Grants.

This Government, will continue to work with the Apollo11 50th Anniversary Committee, to recognise and celebrate the 50th Anniversary of the first Moon Landing in 2019. I look forward to continue sharing details of these and other ways that the moon landing will be celebrated with Canberrans our city's role in bringing to the world those iconic images and audio of Neil Armstrong on the moon.