



**Legislative Assembly** for the  
**Australian Capital Territory**

Standing Committee on Transport  
and City Services

# Submission Cover Sheet

## Inquiry into the provision of municipal services in Canberra

Submission number: 016

Submitter: Canberra Business Chamber

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Standing Committee on Transport and City Services  
Legislative Assembly for the Australian Capital Territory  
196 London Circuit  
Canberra  
**ACT 2601**

## **SUBMISSION ON THE INQUIRY INTO THE PROVISION OF MUNICIPAL SERVICES IN THE AUSTRALIAN CAPITAL TERRITORY**

### **Introduction**

1. The Canberra Business Chamber is the peak body representing business in the ACT. Our membership is diverse, representing all parts of the private sector economy.
2. We wish to make a submission to the Committee's inquiry into the provision of municipal services, around the upkeep of public spaces, waste removal and graffiti.

### **Our concerns**

3. We have concerns about the current presentation of the city. These include:
  - graffiti on buildings, road signs and other infrastructure;
  - damaged poorly maintained road signs and markings;
  - damage to footpaths caused by tree roots, and trees overhanging road signs and roads;
  - dead animals that are frequently seen alongside roadways;
  - rubbish that is often seen as a result of fly-tipping around the city.
4. In themselves, every instance outlined above is small - however the cumulative impact of each of them is that the city overall has an air of decay and neglect about it. This is the opposite of the image that we should be projecting on the national and international stage.

**Canberra is a beautiful city - but we need to present it better**

5. We think it is important that Canberra is presented as a well-kept and beautiful city. This is important for three reasons, as outlined below:

6. First, better presentation would enable Canberra to serve as a great destination for visitors. The visitor economy is critical to the vibrancy and the future of our city - with around 5-6 million visitors each year contributing \$3-4 billion to the local economy each year.

7. Secondly, our aspiration is for Canberra to be the greatest place in Australia for business. We want to see the ACT private sector grow - and a factor supporting our ability to attract and grow private businesses is the urban environment. We think that a quality, clean and safe urban environment is important when businesses consider where they locate their operations. It is also important when people consider whether to relocate their families to Canberra for work or education.

8. Thirdly, we have feedback that the city centre, in particular, is sometimes seen as unsavoury and unsafe by both locals and visitors. This perception is aggravated by the points outlined above, and exacerbated by current extensive construction works around London Circuit. In order for the city centre to be vibrant and thrive, we need to see more people in and around the city, at all times of the day. While there is a broader conversation to be had around this, particularly around the densification and redevelopment of the city centre, the sense of neglect does not encourage visitation.

## **Graffiti**

9. Graffiti is an ongoing issue on privately-owned buildings, Government-owned buildings, fences, road signs and other infrastructure. It can be challenging and extremely costly for building owners to remove graffiti, especially when there is a high likelihood that further vandalism will occur.

## **Key recommendations**

9. We recommend that consideration be given to prioritising the look and feel of the city, including:

- the establishment of a dedicated taskforce to proactively identify and resolve issues such as vandalised street signs (or those that are weather-damaged and in need of renewal), footpaths that are dangerous or unsightly, trees that require pruning etc;
- enhanced monitoring of dead animals and rubbish along the roads;
- the provision of funding for repair of vandalism to private property, including the removal of graffiti.

10. More fundamentally, though, we also suggest that it is important to look at the root causes of the issues. This could include:

- a greater Police presence and monitoring of anti-social behaviour in the CBD, and a greater focus on property crime including vandalism such as graffiti;
- strong messaging and a campaign from the ACT Government that property crime is not acceptable, including graffiti.

11 We hope these comments are of assistance.

Yours faithfully

  
Greg Harford  
Chief Executive