

THE LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY FOR
THE AUSTRALIAN CAPITAL TERRITORY

TABLING STATEMENT

Standing Committee on Administration and
Procedure

Report No. 4, 2003

Inquiry into InTACT Service Provision in the ACT
Legislative Assembly

Tabled by
Jon Stanhope MLA
Chief Minister

March 2004

Government Response to Report No. 4, 2003, of the Standing Committee on Administration and Procedure - Inquiry into InTACT Service Provision in the ACT Legislative Assembly

Mr Speaker, I am pleased to present the Government's Response to Report No. 4, 2003, of the Standing Committee on Administration and Procedure on its Inquiry into InTACT Service Provision in the ACT Legislative Assembly.

The Government commends the Committee on its report and is generally supportive of the Committee's findings.

Clearly, the unauthorised diversion of a member's email, which ultimately led to this inquiry being conducted, was not acceptable. It is crucial that the electronic communication and data storage in the Legislative Assembly is secure and appropriately managed.

It is noteworthy that the Committee found that it is appropriate for the Assembly to continue using InTACT as its IT provider.

The Government notes the committee's views in relation to the establishment of the Legislative Assembly as a separate organisational unit and is generally supportive, subject to it being attainable within current resourcing.

The committee also calls for the development of a memorandum of understanding between the Assembly and the Executive; implementation of a service level agreement between InTACT and the Assembly; and the introduction of improved security provisions to separate the Assembly IT network from that of the ACT Executive. The Government notes the Committee's views on these matters and is not opposed to any of the issues raised by the Committee.

Mr Speaker, I commend the Government Response to the Assembly.

THE LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY FOR
THE AUSTRALIAN CAPITAL TERRITORY

GOVERNMENT RESPONSE

Standing Committee on Administration and
Procedure

Report No. 4, 2003

Inquiry into InTACT Service Provision in the ACT
Legislative Assembly

Tabled by
Jon Stanhope MLA
Chief Minister

4 March 2004

Government Response

Report No. 4, 2003, of the Standing Committee on Administration and Procedure - Inquiry into InTACT Service Provision in the ACT Legislative Assembly

Background

In 2002 the Assembly Select Committee on Privileges inquired into and reported on the "Unauthorised diversion and receipt of a Member's emails". The Committee tabled its report in November 2002 and, as part of its findings, recommended that "the role of InTACT as the Legislative Assembly's IT service provider be reviewed by the Standing Committee on Administration and Procedure".

The Standing Committee on Administration and Procedure examined and reported on: Governance issues; the adequacy of current IT security provisions; and a preferred service delivery model. The Committee tabled its report on 20 November 2003.

The Government's formal response to the Committee's recommendations is provided below.

Committee Recommendation 1

The committee recommends that the Assembly and the Government, where relevant, agree to the implementation of the IT service delivery model as identified in paragraph 2.33 of this report including:

- a) the establishment of the Legislative Assembly as a separate 'organisational unit' in the larger ACT Government network;
- b) the provision of the necessary human and financial resources to undertake the separation and consequent implementation of the model on a recurrent basis;
- c) that the Assembly Secretariat assume responsibility for account creation and management (both email accounts and user login accounts);
- d) migration of the Assembly's email system to a software solution that allows the Assembly to assume control over email account creation and management at the earliest possible opportunity; and
- e) the engagement of a dedicated technical officer (preferably sourced from InTACT) reporting directly to the Assembly IT Manager, and responsible for responding to staff requests and onsite troubleshooting.

Government Response

The Government notes the committee's views in relation to the establishment of the Legislative Assembly as a separate organisational unit and is generally supportive, subject to it being attainable within current resourcing.

Committee Recommendation 2

The committee recommends that a memorandum of understanding be developed between the ACT Executive, through the relevant Minister (at the present time, the Treasurer), and the Legislative Assembly, through the Speaker, which clearly affirms that:

- a) there is distinct separation of the roles and functions of the executive and legislative arms in the ACT's system of Government, requiring that the Assembly have managerial and institutional autonomy with regard to the operation of its IT network and data storage;
- b) in terms of InTACT's development, servicing and maintenance of the Legislative Assembly's IT network and data storage, InTACT reports not to the ACT Executive but to the Speaker via the Clerk of the Assembly;
- c) the ACT Executive undertake not to interfere in the administration and operation of the Assembly's IT network and data storage; and
- d) information stored on and communicated via the Assembly's network will not be passed on to personnel operating under the direction of the ACT Executive (ie InTACT and departmental officials) without the specific agreement of the Clerk and having regard to matters of parliamentary privilege.

Government Response:

The Government is not opposed to the development of a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) around the general principles proposed, but the details of the MOU will need to appropriately recognise practical needs and issues around ensuring network infrastructure consistency and staff reporting and accountability.

Committee Recommendation 3

The committee recommends that the Assembly Secretariat develop and implement a service level agreement or contract for service between InTACT and the Assembly that:

- a) includes timeliness standards (including response and resolution timeliness standards);
- b) includes billing policies and procedures;
- c) includes quality standards;
- d) includes remedies for poor service against standards;
- e) requires that all InTACT staff involved in servicing the Assembly's IT needs be made aware of, and understand, the memorandum of understanding between the Speaker and the Minister responsible for InTACT;
- f) affirms that the Legislative Assembly, through the Assembly IT Manager, is responsible for account creation and management on the Assembly IT network (both email and user login accounts);
- g) affirms that the dedicated InTACT officer (seconded) reports to the Assembly IT Manager and not InTACT;
- h) acknowledges the need for the Assembly to have the capacity for Members, their staff and Secretariat staff to achieve a degree of customisation on their desktop computers such as the use of software for digital cameras (where such customisation does not present security or copyright issues);
- i) stipulates that the integrity of the Assembly's data is protected to a high degree (in the event of a systems failure) through adequate backup and storage provisions; and
- j) stipulates the Assembly policy on the creation and management of email and user login accounts.

Government Response:

Details in an agreement will need to be subject to negotiation between the parties, recognising practical needs and issues. Operating standards and practices for the proposed dedicated technical officer, for example, would need to be consistent, where practical, with whole of government operating standards and practices as established by ACT Information Management and InTACT (ie, InTACT security practices), and the officer would need to be subject to InTACT oversight and auditing in a similar way as any other person with system administration responsibilities. Also, in relation to (h) above, any customisation of desktops would need to occur within the security and privacy provisions being established for the Legislative Assembly as a whole.

It is understood that there have been some discussions on the development of an agreement between the Legislative Assembly's Departmental Information Officer and InTACT's Customer Agreements Manager.

Committee Recommendation 4

The committee recommends that, as a matter of urgency:

- a) the Assembly Secretariat develop and implement an IT security policy and associated procedures for all staff, outlining responsibilities and the broader IT security arrangements and procedures (including procedures setting out the circumstances under which email and user login accounts can be created, removed and managed as well as how regular maintenance should be undertaken by technicians, having regard to the need to gain consent from the relevant Member or their delegate to create, remove or perform maintenance on an account); and**
- b) the Assembly Secretariat develop and implement an education and awareness program on the IT security policy as well as on general IT security issues, for delivery to all non-Executive Members, their staff and Secretariat staff.**

Government Response

Noted: The InTACT Security Section may be of assistance to the Legislative Assembly Secretariat in the development of Security Awareness education sessions and developing a secure operating environment.

Committee Recommendation 5

The committee recommends that Government make provisions for the Assembly to be given increased opportunities for consultation and providing input on whole-of-government IT issues, by way of involvement on the Chief Information Officer forum, where those issues potentially have an impact on service delivery for the Assembly.

Government Response

Noted: A Legislative Assembly nomination can be provided to the Director, ACT Information Management, Chief Minister's Department who is the chair of the Information Management Consultative Committee (IMCC).