LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY FOR THE AUSTRALIAN CAPITAL TERRITORY

2024–2025–2026

MINUTES OF PROCEEDINGS

No 73

THURSDAY, 22 OCTOBER 2026

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1 The Assembly met at 10 am, pursuant to adjournment. The Speaker (Mr Hanson) took the Chair and made the following acknowledgement of country in the Ngunnawal language:

Dhawura nguna, dhawura Ngunnawal.
Yanggu ngalawiri dhunimanyin Ngunnawalwari dhawurawari.
Nginggada Dindi wanggiralidjinyin.

This is Ngunnawal country.
Today we are all meeting on Ngunnawal country.
We always pay respect to Elders, female and male.

The Speaker asked Members to stand in silence and pray or reflect on their responsibilities to the people of the Australian Capital Territory.

2 CONTINUING RESOLUTION 10—SUB JUDICE—STATEMENT BY SPEAKER

The Speaker made a statement concerning sub judice principles as stipulated in Continuing Resolution 10.

3 PETITION—PETITION NOTED

The Clerk announced that the following Member had lodged a petition for presentation:

Mr Braddock, from 744 residents, requesting that the Assembly call on the ACT Government to improve signage and surveillance for public safety and wildlife protection at Yerrabi Pond, including a review of a 22 August incident (e-Pet 081-26).

Pursuant to standing order 99A, this petition stands referred to the Standing Committee on Transport and City Services.

The Speaker proposed—That the petition so lodged be noted.

Debate ensued.

Question—put and passed.

4 CANBERRA ATTRACTION AND RETENTION STRATEGY—MINISTERIAL STATEMENT—PAPER NOTED

Mr Barr (Minister for Trade, Investment and the Knowledge Economy) made a ministerial statement concerning the Government's strategy to attract and retain talent in Canberra and presented the following paper:

Canberra attraction and retention strategy—Ministerial statement, 22 October 2026.

Mr Barr moved—That the Assembly take note of the paper.

Debate ensued.

Question—put and passed.

5 CYBER SECURITY ACTION MONTH—MINISTERIAL STATEMENT—PAPER NOTED

Ms Stephen-Smith (Minister for the Public Service) made a ministerial statement concerning Cyber Security Action Month and presented the following paper:

Cyber Security Action Month—Ministerial statement, 22 October 2026.

Ms Stephen-Smith moved—That the Assembly take note of the paper.

Question—put and passed.

6 OAKS ESTATE STRATEGIC PLAN—ASSEMBLY RESOLUTION OF 6 MAY 2025—GOVERNMENT RESPONSE—MINISTERIAL STATEMENT AND PAPER—PAPER NOTED

Ms Orr (Minister for Housing and Homelessness) made a ministerial statement concerning the 2026 progress report of the Oaks Estate Strategic Plan, in response to the Assembly resolution of 6 May 2025 relating to the strategic plan and presented the following papers:

Oaks Estate Strategic Plan—

2025-2030—2026 Progress Report, undated.

Assembly resolution of 6 May 2025—Government response—Ministerial statement, 22 October 2026.

Ms Orr moved—That the Assembly take note of the ministerial statement.

Debate ensued.

Question—put and passed.

7 CORONERS ACT—REPORT OF CORONER—INQUEST INTO THE DEATH OF MK—GOVERNMENT RESPONSE—MINISTERIAL STATEMENT AND PAPERS—PAPER NOTED

Dr Paterson (Minister for Health) made a ministerial statement concerning the Government response to the Coroner's report on the inquest into the death of MK and presented the following papers:

Coroners Act, pursuant to section 57—Report of Coroner—Inquest into the death of MK—

Report, dated 8 April 2026.

Government response, undated.

Government response—Ministerial statement, 22 October 2026.

Dr Paterson moved—That the Assembly take note of the ministerial statement.

Question—put and passed.

8 PUBLIC HOUSING—DOCUMENTS—ORDER TO TABLE

Ms Vassarotti and Mr Emerson, pursuant to notice, moved—That, in accordance with standing order 213A, the Assembly orders the Government to:

(1) table the following documents from the Eleventh Assembly within 30 days:

(a) all briefs to ministers regarding:

(i) the Growing and Renewing Public Housing Program;

(ii) the Commonwealth Social Housing Accelerator Program and the Housing Australia Future Fund;

(iii) the program of work for repairs and maintenance of public housing properties;

(iv) Housing ACT's Total Facilities Management Agreement;

(v) the Public Housing Pipeline Program;

(vi) public housing vacancy rates, vacant property turnaround times and turnaround times for repairs and maintenance;

(vii) the Multi-Disciplinary Panel;

(viii) the public housing waitlist, including any policy work on the development of a new internal process to replace the Multi-Disciplinary Panel; and

(ix) Specialist Disability Accommodation;

(b) all briefs to ministers or to senior executives regarding actual and planned expenditure on public housing repairs and maintenance;

(c) all reports from Programmed Facility Management to Housing ACT regarding repairs and maintenance for the 2025-2026 and 2026-2027 financial years;

(d) all briefs to ministers and progress reports regarding Housing ACT's insourcing trials and work towards insourcing repairs and maintenance work;

(e) all documents outlining contracted key performance indicators for repairs and maintenance of public housing properties;

(f) all briefs to ministers and any correspondence from the Minister, the Minister's office, or government officials, regarding the "20 Homes by Christmas" initiative;

(g) all briefs to ministers and ministerial correspondence regarding the ACT's historic housing debt to the Commonwealth; and

(h) for the period 1 April to 30 June 2026, for all Housing ACT properties in the suburbs of Ainslie, Coombs, Fraser and Narrabundah, work orders provided by Programmed Facility Management to Housing ACT for repairs and maintenance work to these properties; and

(2) by every 1 February and 1 August until the end of the Eleventh Assembly, table aggregated summaries of the following data for the previous six months, aligned to financial years:

(a) monthly created, transferred and ended tenancies;

(b) monthly number of added and disposed public housing stock, broken down by property type, district and method of acquisition;

(c) monthly turnaround times for maintenance and repairs, including information regarding performance against key performance indicators stipulated in Housing ACT's service agreement with Programmed Facility Management;

(d) current number of vacant public housing properties, by vacancy type;

(e) the average, median, minimum and maximum number of days left vacant for these properties;

(f) the average, median, minimum and maximum number of days left vacant for properties requiring repairs and maintenance in each category:

(i) routine;

(ii) single upgrade;

(iii) multiple upgrades;

(iv) major works; and

(v) insurance; and

(g) information regarding properties that have been deemed "hard to let", including:

(i) district, number of offers provided, days left vacant for these properties and condition reports for those properties;

(ii) how many properties previously considered to be "hard to let" have been tenanted in the last six months; and

(iii) how many properties have been newly categorised as "hard to let" in the last six months.

Mr Emerson, by leave, moved the following amendment: Omit all text after "orders the Government to:", substitute:

"(1) table the following documents from the Eleventh Assembly within 60 days:

(a) all briefs to ministers regarding:

(i) the Growing and Renewing Public Housing Program;

(ii) the Commonwealth Social Housing Accelerator Program and the Housing Australia Future Fund;

(iii) the Public Housing Pipeline Program;

(iv) the program of work for repairs and maintenance of public housing properties;

(v) the ACT's Total Facilities Management Agreement;

(vi) the Multi-Disciplinary Panel;

(vii) Specialist Disability Accommodation;

(viii) public housing vacancy rates, vacant property turnaround times and the public housing waitlist; and

(ix) low-demand public housing complexes;

(b) all briefs to ministers and progress reports for the insourcing repairs and maintenance work, including insourcing trials;

(c) all briefs to ministers or to senior executives regarding actual and planned expenditure on public housing repairs and maintenance;

(d) a list of key performance indicators for repairs and maintenance under the Total Facilities Management Agreement;

(e) all reports from Programmed Facility Management (PFM) regarding repairs and maintenance for the 2025-2026 and 2026-2027 financial years;

(f) all briefs to ministers and ministerial correspondence regarding the ACT's historic housing debt to the Commonwealth;

(g) all briefs to ministers and any correspondence from minister, officials and the Minister's office regarding the '20 Homes by Christmas' initiative; and

(h) for the period 1 April to 30 June 2026, for all Housing ACT properties in the suburbs of Ainslie, Coombs, Fraser and Narrabundah, de-identified information on work orders provided by PFM to the ACT Government for repairs and maintenance work to properties with redacted addresses;

(2) for the remainder of the 11th Assembly table, within 60 days of the period 1 January to 30 June and the period 1 July to 31 December each year, aggregated summaries relating to ACT public housing for the following:

(a) the total number of tenancies ceased;

(b) the total number of tenancies commenced;

(c) the number of tenancies commenced by tenants on the transfer list;

(d) the number of tenancies commenced by applicants on the waiting list;

(e) the total number of properties added to or removed from the public housing portfolio, including a breakdown by property type and method of addition or disposal;

(f) the number of vacant properties that have been available for allocation for more than 180 days, including a breakdown by property type;

(g) vacancy rates and the latest condition reports for each low-demand complex;

(h) the total number of vacant properties;

(i) the number of vacant properties undergoing:

(i) routine maintenance;

(ii) single upgrade;

(iii) multiple upgrades;

(iv) major works; and

(v) insurance claim; and

(j) monthly turnaround times for vacant properties handed to PFM for maintenance and repairs, including information regarding performance against PFM's key performance indicators;

(3) for paragraphs (2)(a) to (2)(h), provide information at district level; and

(4) for paragraphs (2)(h) to (2)(i), provide average, median, minimum and maximum days of vacancy for each category.".

Debate continued.

Amendment agreed to.

Ms Orr (Minister for Housing and Homelessness) moved the following amendment to the motion, as amended: After all text in paragraph (1), insert new paragraph:

"(2) for the items covered in paragraph (1), the following applies:

(a) all information identifying the location of public housing properties or individuals or individuals' personal circumstances is to be redacted; and

(b) meeting briefs, arrangement briefs, question time briefs, responses to questions on notice and questions taken on notice, and correspondence or replies to correspondence that have not been specifically requested are excluded;".

Amendment agreed to.

Debate continued.

Question—That the motion, as amended, viz:

"That, in accordance with standing order 213A, the Assembly orders the Government to:

(1) table the following documents from the Eleventh Assembly within 60 days:

(a) all briefs to ministers regarding:

(i) the Growing and Renewing Public Housing Program;

(ii) the Commonwealth Social Housing Accelerator Program and the Housing Australia Future Fund;

(iii) the Public Housing Pipeline Program;

(iv) the program of work for repairs and maintenance of public housing properties;

(v) the ACT's Total Facilities Management Agreement;

(vi) the Multi-Disciplinary Panel;

(vii) Specialist Disability Accommodation;

(viii) public housing vacancy rates, vacant property turnaround times and the public housing waitlist; and

(ix) low-demand public housing complexes;

(b) all briefs to ministers and progress reports for the insourcing repairs and maintenance work, including insourcing trials;

(c) all briefs to ministers or to senior executives regarding actual and planned expenditure on public housing repairs and maintenance;

(d) a list of key performance indicators for repairs and maintenance under the Total Facilities Management Agreement;

(e) all reports from Programmed Facility Management (PFM) regarding repairs and maintenance for the 2025-2026 and 2026-2027 financial years;

(f) all briefs to ministers and ministerial correspondence regarding the ACT's historic housing debt to the Commonwealth;

(g) all briefs to ministers and any correspondence from minister, officials and the Minister's office regarding the '20 Homes by Christmas' initiative; and

(h) for the period 1 April to 30 June 2026, for all Housing ACT properties in the suburbs of Ainslie, Coombs, Fraser and Narrabundah, de-identified information on work orders provided by PFM to the ACT Government for repairs and maintenance work to properties with redacted addresses;

(2) for the items covered in paragraph (1), the following applies:

(a) all information identifying the location of public housing properties or individuals or individuals' personal circumstances is to be redacted; and

(b) meeting briefs, arrangement briefs, question time briefs, responses to questions on notice and questions taken on notice, and correspondence or replies to correspondence that have not been specifically requested are excluded;

(3) for the remainder of the 11th Assembly table, within 60 days of the period 1 January to 30 June and the period 1 July to 31 December each year, aggregated summaries relating to ACT public housing for the following:

(a) the total number of tenancies ceased;

(b) the total number of tenancies commenced;

(c) the number of tenancies commenced by tenants on the transfer list;

(d) the number of tenancies commenced by applicants on the waiting list;

(e) the total number of properties added to or removed from the public housing portfolio, including a breakdown by property type and method of addition or disposal;

(f) the number of vacant properties that have been available for allocation for more than 180 days, including a breakdown by property type;

(g) vacancy rates and the latest condition reports for each low-demand complex;

(h) the total number of vacant properties;

(i) the number of vacant properties undergoing:

(i) routine maintenance;

(ii) single upgrade;

(iii) multiple upgrades;

(iv) major works; and

(v) insurance claim; and

(j) monthly turnaround times for vacant properties handed to PFM for maintenance and repairs, including information regarding performance against PFM's key performance indicators;

(4) for paragraphs (2)(a) to (2)(h), provide information at district level; and

(5) for paragraphs (2)(h) to (2)(i), provide average, median, minimum and maximum days of vacancy for each category.".

be agreed to—put and passed.

9 POSTPONEMENT OF ORDER OF THE DAY

Ordered—That order of the day No 2, Assembly business, relating to the proposed amendment to standing order 74, be postponed until the next day of sitting.

10 SUSPENSION OF STANDING ORDERS—PRECEDENCE TO MOTION

Ms Cheyne (Manager of Government Business) moved—That so much of the standing orders be suspended as would prevent notice No 3, Assembly business being called on and debated forthwith.

Question—put and passed, with the concurrence of an absolute majority.

11 GAMBLING AND RACING CONTROL (CODE OF PRACTICE) AMENDMENT REGULATION 2026 (NO 1)—SUBORDINATE LAW SL2026-15—PROPOSED AMENDMENT

Ms Vassarotti, pursuant to notice, moved—That, in accordance with section 68 of the *Legislation Act 2001*, Subordinate Law SL2026-15, being the *Gambling and Racing Control (Code of Practice) Amendment Regulation 2026 (No 1)*, be amended as follows:

(1) in section 2, omit "1 July 2027" and substitute "1 March 2027"; and

(2) omit section 4 and substitute:

"*substitute*

1.27B Operating times of gaming machines

A licensee must not operate a gaming machine between 2 am and 10 am.".

Debate ensued.

Question—put.

The Assembly voted—

AYES, 6	NOES, 19	
Andrew Braddock	Andrew Barr	Deborah Morris
Fiona Carrick	Chiaka Barry	Suzanne Orr
Jo Clay	Yvette Berry	Mark Parton
Thomas Emerson	Peter Cain	Marisa Paterson
Laura Nuttall	Leanne Castley	Michael Pettersson
Rebecca Vassarotti	Tara Cheyne	Chris Steel
	Ed Cocks	Rachel Stephen-Smith
	Jeremy Hanson	Caitlin Tough
	Elizabeth Lee	Taimus Werner-Gibbings
	James Milligan	

And so it was negatived.

12 QUESTIONS

Questions without notice were asked.

13 PRESENTATION OF PAPERS

The Speaker presented the following papers:

Auditor-General Act, pursuant to section 17—Auditor-General's Report No 10/2026—Management of community facilities, dated 21 October 2026.

Continuing Resolution—

5AA—Commissioner for Standards—Annual Report 2025-2026, dated 9 July 2026.

6A—Ethics and Integrity Adviser for Members of the Legislative Assembly for the Australian Capital Territory—Report for the period 1 July 2025 to 30 June 2026, dated 2 July 2026.

14 PRESENTATION OF PAPERS

Ms Cheyne (Manager of Government Business), pursuant to standing order 211, presented the following papers:

Education Directorate Desktop Review of Tier 1 and 2 Education Capital Projects 2019-2026, dated October 2026.

15 BEES AND OTHER POLLINATORS—SUPPORT

Mr Werner-Gibbings, pursuant to notice, moved—That this Assembly:

(1) notes:

(a) the vital role that bees and other pollinators play in supporting the ACT's biodiversity, food production, ecosystem health and environmental resilience;

(b) that many native and introduced pollinator species face pressures from habitat loss, climate change, pests and diseases;

(c) the valuable contribution of Canberra's beekeepers, community groups, schools and environmental organisations in supporting pollinator health and education;

(d) that at the 2024 election, ACT Labor committed to support pollinators by developing a community information and education program to help bees and pollinators thrive, including awareness-raising activities and planting guides to encourage pollinator-friendly gardens;

(e) that five local community gardens are being supported through the latest round of the Community Garden Grants Program, including Koala Playschool in Cook which will create a native, pollinator-friendly community garden and gathering space featuring plantings, seating and a street library; and

(f) the ongoing biosecurity risks posed by the Varroa mite and the importance of preparedness and monitoring measures to protect bee populations; and

(2) calls on the Government to:

(a) continue supporting local beekeepers in responding to the ongoing biosecurity risks associated with Varroa mite;

(b) identify opportunities to promote bee and pollinator-friendly plant species as part of ongoing work on environmental restoration;

(c) consider how bee and pollinator-friendly planting can be further supported through the review of the Municipal Infrastructure Standards (MIS);

(d) provide opportunities under the ACT Environment Grants Program to support projects that promote bee and pollinator-friendly activities;

(e) develop and publish practical guidance for households, schools, community groups and gardeners on actions they can take to support bees and other pollinators; and

(f) report to the Assembly on progress by the last sitting day in 2027.

Debate ensued.

Ms Clay, by leave, moved the following amendments together:

1. After all text in paragraph (1)(f), insert:

"(g) the importance of considering the city as a whole and planting for biodiversity and complex ecosystems so that bees and pollinators have food year-round to ensure their survival and ours;".

2. After all text in paragraph (2)(e), insert:

"(f) consider how landscape planning, urban development and environmental restoration activities under the ACT Landscape Plan and final Nature Conservation Strategy can support habitat connectivity and incorporate bee and pollinator-friendly plant species, including opportunities to provide year-round pollinator food; and".

Debate continued.

Amendments agreed to.

Question—That the motion, as amended, viz:

"That this Assembly:

(1) notes:

(a) the vital role that bees and other pollinators play in supporting the ACT's biodiversity, food production, ecosystem health and environmental resilience;

(b) that many native and introduced pollinator species face pressures from habitat loss, climate change, pests and diseases;

(c) the valuable contribution of Canberra's beekeepers, community groups, schools and environmental organisations in supporting pollinator health and education;

(d) that at the 2024 election, ACT Labor committed to support pollinators by developing a community information and education program to help bees and pollinators thrive, including awareness-raising activities and planting guides to encourage pollinator-friendly gardens;

(e) that five local community gardens are being supported through the latest round of the Community Garden Grants Program, including Koala Playschool in Cook which will create a native, pollinator-friendly community garden and gathering space featuring plantings, seating and a street library;

(f) the ongoing biosecurity risks posed by the Varroa mite and the importance of preparedness and monitoring measures to protect bee populations; and

(g) the importance of considering the city as a whole and planting for biodiversity and complex ecosystems so that bees and pollinators have food year-round to ensure their survival and ours; and

(2) calls on the Government to:

(a) continue supporting local beekeepers in responding to the ongoing biosecurity risks associated with Varroa mite;

(b) identify opportunities to promote bee and pollinator-friendly plant species as part of ongoing work on environmental restoration;

(c) consider how bee and pollinator-friendly planting can be further supported through the review of the Municipal Infrastructure Standards (MIS);

(d) provide opportunities under the ACT Environment Grants Program to support projects that promote bee and pollinator-friendly activities;

(e) develop and publish practical guidance for households, schools, community groups and gardeners on actions they can take to support bees and other pollinators;

(f) consider how landscape planning, urban development and environmental restoration activities under the ACT Landscape Plan and final Nature Conservation Strategy can support habitat connectivity and incorporate bee and pollinator-friendly plant species, including opportunities to provide year-round pollinator food; and

(g) report to the Assembly on progress by the last sitting day in 2027."—

be agreed to—put and passed.

16 WEARABLE TECHNOLOGY AND AI REGULATION

Mr Cain and Ms Barry, pursuant to notice, moved—That this Assembly:

(1) notes that:

(a) camera and Artificial Intelligence (AI) enabled smart glasses and other wearable devices capable of discreetly recording or livestreaming audio, images and video are becoming increasingly accessible;

(b) the eSafety Commissioner has identified risks including covert recording, image-based abuse and cyber abuse, while smart glasses can also provide important disability, accessibility and assistive-technology benefits;

(c) governments across Australia are responding to these emerging risks, including:

(i) the Commonwealth seeking advice on their use in Australian Public Service workplaces;

(ii) Western Australia prohibiting smart glasses in public schools from 12 October 2026, subject to medical, accessibility, assistive-technology and educational exemptions;

(iii) Victoria extending student personal-device restrictions to wearable technology from 28 January 2027;

(iv) South Australia reviewing the adequacy of its laws and raising nationally consistent regulation; and

(v) local governments introducing or considering restrictions in sensitive facilities including pools, change rooms, libraries, childcare and community facilities;

(d) the *Listening Devices Act 1992*, while amended since its enactment, has an underlying framework that predates smartphones, social media, livestreaming, contemporary wearable cameras and AI, and unlike legislation in a number of other Australian jurisdictions, does not provide a comprehensive framework regulating optical surveillance devices; and

(e) section 12 of the *Human Rights Act 2004* protects against unlawful or arbitrary interference with privacy;

(2) further notes that any ACT response should:

(a) be proportionate and focused on inappropriate conduct and environments presenting heightened privacy, safety or security risks, rather than imposing an indiscriminate prohibition on wearable technology; and

(b) protect legitimate disability, accessibility, medical, assistive-technology and educational uses; and

(3) calls on the Government to:

(a) prohibit the use of camera and AI-enabled smart glasses and other wearable recording devices in ACT Government workplaces and sensitive facilities, including public schools, swimming pools, change rooms, early childhood settings and Access Canberra service centres, but with exceptions for legitimate disability, accessibility, medical, assistive-technology and educational uses; and

(b) report to the Assembly by the first sitting week in 2027.

Debate ensued.

Question—put and passed.

17 PAPERS PRESENTED ON 22 OCTOBER 2026—PAPERS NOTED

The Speaker, pursuant to standing order 211A, proposed—That the papers presented under standing order 211 during the presentation of papers in the routine of business today be noted.

Debate ensued.

Question—put and passed.

18 UTILITIES LEGISLATION AMENDMENT BILL 2026

Ms Orr (Minister for Climate Change, Environment, Energy and Water), pursuant to notice, presented a Bill for an Act to amend legislation about utilities.

Paper: Ms Orr presented the following paper:

Explanatory statement to the Bill, incorporating a compatibility statement, pursuant to section 37 of the *Human Rights Act 2004*.

Title read by Clerk.

Ms Orr moved—That this Bill be agreed to in principle.

Debate adjourned (Ms Lee) and the resumption of the debate made an order of the day for the next sitting.

19 MEMBERS' STATEMENTS

Five Members' statements were made.

20 ADJOURNMENT

Ms Tough (Minister for Human Rights) moved—That the Assembly do now adjourn.

Debate ensued.

Suspension of standing orders—Extension of adjournment debate: Miss Nuttall moved—That so much of the standing orders be suspended as would prevent the adjournment debate for today continuing for up to an hour.

Question—put and passed, with the concurrence of an absolute majority.

Debate continued.

Question—put and passed.

And then the Assembly, at 5.31 pm adjourned until Tuesday, 27 October 2026 at 10 am.

MEMBERS' ATTENDANCE: All Members were present at some time during the sitting.

Hamish Finlay
Clerk of the Legislative Assembly