

Government Agencies (Campaign Advertising) Act 2009

Report to the Legislative Assembly

for the period from 5 November 2024 to 31 December 2024

**Prepared by: Bill Campbell AO KC
Independent Reviewer
21 February 2025**

Government Agencies (Campaign Advertising) Act 2009
Report by the Independent Reviewer – Mr Bill Campbell AO KC
5 November 2024 to 31 December 2024

The *Government Agencies (Campaign Advertising) Act 2009* (the *Act*) requires in an election year that a report be prepared for the Legislative Assembly about government campaigns for the period beginning on 1 July and ending at the start of the pre-election period. That report was duly prepared and sent to the then Speaker.

This report is for the period 5 November 2024 to 31 December 2024 and includes the details of each of the campaigns referred to the Independent Reviewer during this period. This report summarises itemised campaign costs, the nature of the campaign, the result of each review, and the reason for each decision.

I note that *section 19(2)(b)(i)* of the *Act* requires the Independent Reviewer to report on “the campaign costs itemised by the kind of costs incurred...” I have taken this to require reporting on the budgeted costs for each campaign. In some instances, campaigns extend beyond a reporting period or are part of a bigger campaign and information about actual expenditure is not available until the campaign has been completed.

There were four campaigns reviewed from 5 November 2024 to 31 December 2024. I reviewed three campaigns and the Acting Independent Reviewer, Michael Manthorpe PSM FIPAA, reviewed one.

Section 21 of the *Act* deals with “sensitive information”. No campaign referred during this period has included information in this category.

The table below lists the campaigns, itemised costs, and the result of the review. The full review of each campaign is included the attached document.

Date approved	Campaign	Referring Directorate/Agency	Budget (with itemised costs)	Review decision and reasons	Full report at Attachment
10/11/2024	Festive Finds in the City	City Renewal Authority	Production: \$48,510 Total media costs: \$30,000 Total expenditure: \$78,510	Accepted – the campaign meets the requirements of the <i>Act</i> .	A
10/11/2024	MyWay+ phases 3 and 4 campaign	Transport Canberra and City Services	Campaign media buy: \$330,000 Total expenditure: \$330,000	Accepted – the campaign meets the requirements of the <i>Act</i> .	B

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Date approved	Campaign	Referring Directorate/Agency	Budget (with itemised costs)	Review decision and reasons	Full report at Attachment
15/11/2024	Our Canberra Monthly Newsletter: December 2024 edition	Chief Minister, Treasury and Economic Development Directorate	Printing: \$42,912.75 Distribution: \$41,498.77 Total expenditure: \$84,411.52	Accepted –the publication meets the requirements of the Act.	C
25/11/2024	Our Canberra Monthly Newsletter: December 2024 Easy English edition	Chief Minister, Treasury and Economic Development Directorate	Easy English production: \$693	Accepted –the publication meets the requirements of the Act.	D

Comments

There were no matters of significance raised by these campaigns other than as referred to in the individual reports.



Bill Campbell AO KC
 Independent Reviewer

21 February 2025



REVIEWER ASSESSMENT

Directorate/Agency: City Renewal Authority

Campaign: Festive Finds in the City Campaign.

Date received by Reviewer: 8 November 2024.

Comments: The objectives of the *Festive Finds in the City Campaign* are: to increase awareness of City Centre retail and hospitality offerings including specific local offers, promotions, events and experiences; encourage the target audience to visit the City Centre to shop and meet friends; and increase retail and hospitality expenditure with businesses in the City Centre. I am informed that past "Festive Finds in the City" campaigns generated great awareness, strong business engagement, and high consumer participation in redeeming offers. The creative assets forming part of the campaign will be displayed on a range of media channels.

I am informed that Ministers will not be featured in campaign materials. The required documentation will be completed should public servants be featured in video/photo shoots.

Craig Gillman, Chief Executive Officer of the City Renewal Authority, has certified that there is compliance with Guideline 5.31.

The *Festive Finds in the City Campaign* will be delivered between 10 November and 31 December 2024.

The Campaign raises no issues under the Act and Guidelines.

Budget

Creative/strategy development/production	\$48,510.00
Total media costs:	\$30,000.00
Total expenditure:	\$78,510.00

I, Bill Campbell, declare that the *Festive Finds in the City Campaign* meets the requirements of the *Government Agencies (Campaign Advertising) Act 2009*.

Signed

Bill Campbell AO KC
Independent Reviewer

10 November 2024



REVIEWER ASSESSMENT

Directorate/Agency: Transport Canberra and City Services.

Campaign: MyWay+ phases 3 and 4 campaign.

Date received by Reviewer: 8 November 2024.

Comments: Transport Canberra is changing the way the community pays for public transport, including how they plan their journey and receive real time passenger information. Transitioning from the current system, MyWay, to a new system, MyWay+, is expected to take place in November 2024. I am informed that clear and concise communication will be key to ensuring a smooth transition and to minimise disruption to passengers.

To support the communications efforts four key phases were identified to align with key development milestones within the project. The purpose of this review is to assess phases 3 and 4 of the MyWay+ campaign.

Phase 3 is designed to inform the community that MyWay+ is coming, that the MyWay+ app is available to download and that people can set up a MyWay+ account through the app or an on-line portal. I am informed that it will help prepare the community by directing them to information on account creation and transitioning in the form of transferring balances from MyWay to MyWay+. Phase 4, being the final phase of the planned campaign, will announce that MyWay+ is here and live. It will also include a direct call to action to set up a new MyWay+ account and download the app.

The media and channels used for phases 3 and 4 will be a mixture of earned media, owned ACT Government and Transport Canberra channels and paid media. Phases 3 and 4 will include imagery of individuals representing the key demographics that MyWay+ will serve including business workers, students, hospitality workers, event commuters and customers with a disability and mobility challenges. ACT public servants will appear in the imagery, with necessary approvals having been obtained.

The Minister for Transport, Chris Steel MLA, has certified that there is compliance with Guideline 5.31.

The *MyWay+ phases 3 and 4 campaign* begins in November 2024 and ends on 28 February (with a break from 14 December 2024 -19 January 2025).

The Campaign raises no issues under the Act and Guidelines.

Budget

Campaign media buy	\$330,000.00
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Total expenditure:	\$330,000.00
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I, Bill Campbell, declare that the *MyWay+ phases 3 and 4 campaign* meets the requirements of the *Government Agencies (Campaign Advertising) Act 2009*.

Signed

Bill Campbell AO KC
Independent Reviewer

10 November 2024



REVIEWER ASSESSMENT

Directorate/Agency: Chief Minister, Treasury and Economic Development Directorate

Campaign: Our Canberra December 2024 editions

Date Received by Reviewer: 13/11/24

Comments:

Government research has found that 31% of Canberrans (as at April 2019) would prefer to receive Government information directly in their letterboxes.

With that in mind, a printed community newsletter, Our Canberra, is delivered directly into every Canberra letterbox each month. The next edition will be distributed in December 2024.

This edition of the newsletter contains a letter from the Chief Minister, as well as summer bushfire and storm safety information, Christmas events in the city and an update on the Big Canberra Battery.

Key articles from this edition will also be translated into Easy English to assist those who have difficulty reading and understanding written English. This work will be conducted by an external agency, Scope Australia, and sent separately with a separate cover sheet.

The Acting ACT Chief Minister, Yvette Berry MLA, has certified that there is compliance with Guideline 5.31.

The Newsletter will be distributed between 2-6 December 2024.

No issues arise under the *Government Agencies (Campaign Advertising) Act 2009* and Guidelines.

Budget:

Printing: \$42,912.75

Distribution: \$41,498.77

Total expenditure: \$84,411.52

I, Michael Manthorpe, declare that the *Our Canberra* December 2024 newsletter meets the requirements of the *Government Agencies (Campaign Advertising) Act 2009*.

Signed

Michael Manthorpe PSM FIPAA
Acting Independent Reviewer

Date: 15/11/24



REVIEWER ASSESSMENT

Directorate/Agency: Chief Minister, Treasury and Economic Development Directorate.

Campaign: *Our Canberra* Monthly Community Newsletter: December 2024 Edition – *Easy English* Version.

Date received by Reviewer: 25 November 2024.

Comments: The Acting Independent Reviewer previously reviewed the *Our Canberra* Monthly Community Newsletter: December 2024 Edition. Subsequent to that review, key articles from the December 2024 edition have been translated into an *Easy English* version to assist those who have difficulty reading and understanding written English. The translation is carried out in conjunction with an external agency, Scope Australia. That version has been sent separately to me for review.

Articles in the December 2024 *Easy English* edition of the Newsletter include information on supporting local businesses, the big Canberra battery, staying safe during summer, light rail to Woden, changes to the public transport payment system and government services opening hours during the holidays. The actual wording of the *Easy English* version differs substantially from that contained in the original October 2024 edition of *Our Canberra* though the core messages conveyed are essentially the same.

Section 17(3)(d) of the *Government Agencies (Campaign Advertising Act) 2009* (the Act) provides that ‘information in a government campaign must be presented in a way that is accessible and takes into account any special communication needs of particular people or groups.’ This requirement also is reflected in paragraph 20 of the *Government Agencies (Campaign Advertising) Guidelines 2010 (No 1)* (the Guidelines) which states in part that ‘[w]here appropriate, special attention should be paid to communicating with disadvantaged groups and individuals that are identified as being within the designated target audience’, with particular attention being paid to ‘those for whom English is not a first language in which to receive information.’

Bearing in mind those requirements, I have concluded that the campaign in the form of the *Easy English* version of the December 2024 edition of the *Our Canberra* Monthly Community Newsletter raises no issues under the Act and Guidelines.

The Chief Minister, Andrew Barr MLA, has certified that there is compliance with Guideline 5.31.

The Our Canberra *Easy English* December 2024 edition will be distributed online via ACT Government channels commencing December 2024.

Budget

The cost of the contribution made by Scope Australia to the *Easy English* version of the *Our Canberra* Monthly Community Newsletter December 2024 is \$693.00.

I, Bill Campbell, declare that the *Easy English* version of the *Our Canberra* Monthly Community Newsletter: December 2024 meets the requirements of the *Government Agencies (Campaign Advertising) Act 2009*.

Signed

Bill Campbell AO KC
Independent Reviewer

25 November 2024