



Government Response

to the Report of the
Select Committee on Estimates
on the inquiry into the Appropriation
Bill 2003-2004 (No. 3)

Tabling Statement

May 2004

Ted Quinlan MLA
Treasurer

Mr Speaker, I present the Government's response to the report of the Select Committee on Estimates on the inquiry into the Appropriation Bill 2003-2004 (No.3).

I thank the Committee for the work they have done in examining this Bill, for the preparation of their report and for their support of the majority of the Bill.

Mr Speaker, this Appropriation Bill was very significant in both its size and the positive impact it will have on the lives of Canberrans'. The achievement of the joint Community and Government vision, documented within the Canberra Plan and its sub-plans, will receive the necessary kick-start, to see Canberra well on the way to a better future.

In addition, the appropriation allows the Government to fund wage negotiations that will place the ACT in a highly competitive position, for the labour resources within Canberra. This appropriation will provide for fair and reasonable employment conditions and finally address the inferior pay offered by the previous Government.

Mr Speaker, most importantly many disadvantaged Canberrans will significantly benefit from the additional services provided by the Appropriation, including those that are homeless; disabled and our youth.

Turning to the report, I note with regret that the Committee has recommended not to support the purchase of Phillip Oval.

Mr Speaker I was also surprised by the lack of commercial understanding and good government practice displayed by the Committee during proceeding and within the report, especially as that relates to commercial negotiations and the use of the various funding vehicles available to government. I have expanded on these comments in the Government's response.

I commend the Government Response to the Assembly.



AUSTRALIAN
CAPITAL TERRITORY

**GOVERNMENT RESPONSE TO THE
SELECT COMMITTEE ON THE INQUIRY INTO THE
APPROPRIATION BILL 2003-2004 (No.3)**

14 May 2004

INTRODUCTION

The Select Committee on Estimates tabled its report on the inquiry into the Appropriation Bill 2003-2004 (No.3) on Tuesday 4 May 2004.

The Government notes that the Committee has supported the Appropriation Bill with the exception of the purchase of Phillip Oval. The Government also notes that the Committee's report is not unanimous and includes a dissenting report.

The Government has responded to the recommendations individually, however, the Committee's comment "...had the Government budgeted more prudently, that the Bill would not have been required" needs particular response from the Government, and consideration by the Legislative Assembly.

It appears that the Committee has not clearly understood, the context of a number of appropriation proposals in this Bill, and more importantly, the role of Government.

Of the \$103m, approximately \$33m relates to the onpassing of funds to ACT Housing for public and community housing and \$30m relates to appropriation for wage increases. In respect of the payment to ACT Housing, the appropriation represents a funding mechanism to allow for the transfer of funds from the Homeloan Portfolio to the Department (via the Territory Public Account).

In respect of the appropriation for wages, the Committee was clearly advised that allowance for wage increases was provided for within the original budget, and that at the mid year review this was increased to represent current estimates. It would not have been prudent to include these appropriations in the original budget. This appropriation again represents a mechanism to allow the increase to be funded.

The Government stresses that, for the size and complexity of the ACT Budget, it is not unusual or uncommon for issues to emerge on the cost as well as revenue side. It is the responsibility of the Executive Government to address the cost pressures as they emerge. Equally, the Government considers it important to provide a dividend back to the community through projects that it considers a priority, if capacity has emerged through increased revenues.

The Government of course welcomes Committee's views, and the Assembly's input in determining such expenditure priorities.

RESPONSE TO RECOMMENDATIONS

Recommendation 1

The Committee recommends that in future budgets, proper allowance is made for known or expected wages growth.

Government Response

As noted at the Committee's inquiry, the Government made allowance for wage growth in the original budget and the Mid Year Review based on estimating assumptions at that point in time. It has been previously commented upon that the inclusion of more detailed information regarding the estimates, such as the inclusion of appropriation to individual agencies, would have undermined the Government's bargaining position.

Although provisions for the impact of future wage negotiations on the operating result were made, a supplementary appropriation bill was required to provide the authority to fund the increase. It also provides details of amounts provided to each agency for appropriation.

In relation to future budgets, this Government has indicated that the 2004-05 Budget, again, makes allowance for the impact of future budget negotiations on the operating result, and that this allowance is based again, on estimating assumptions at the time of preparation of the budget.

Recommendation 2

The Committee recommends that the Government ensure that Wizard is compensated fairly for the services it has provided to the Territory in relation to the AIMS database in as short a timeframe as possible and in agreement with the independent arbitrator.

Government Response

The Government notes the Committee's recommendation. Work is continuing on the Wizard dispute.

Recommendation 3

The Committee recommends that the Minister at the first available opportunity explain to the Assembly why the Assembly was told that the Treasurer's advance was being used to fund additional services in child protection, when evidence received by the Committee indicated that the Treasurer's advance had not been used at that time.

Government Response

At the time that it was advised that Treasurer's Advance would be used to fund this issue, a supplementary appropriation bill was not being prepared. After the decision to introduce a supplementary appropriation bill, the Government decided, in the interests of openness and accountability, to include this amount in the supplementary Appropriation Bill.

Treasurer's Advance was still identified as a source of funding to provide for urgent expenditure if required. However, the Department has cash managed its resources to provide sufficient funding to date, thus making it unnecessary to call upon Treasurer's Advance. This is standard Government practice, to ensure prudent and efficient use of public resources.

The situation is currently being reviewed and it is more than likely that the delay in the debate of the Supplementary Appropriation may result in the Advance being accessed.

Recommendation 4

The Committee recommends that the Department of Education, Youth and Family Services review how it collects statistics in relation to substitute care, and assess the adequacy and effectiveness of the information collected with the aim of improving its service delivery and financial planning ability in this area.

Government Response

The Department of Education, Youth and Family Services accepts the Recommendation to "review how it collects statistics in relation to substitute care". Data collection will be reviewed following the review report from the Commissioner for Public Administration. It should be noted that the number of substitute care days used per quarter cannot be predicted as their use is not subject to the control of the department.

Recommendation 5

The Committee recommends that the Government improve the procurement processes of ACT Housing and be better able to explain how monies appropriated will be expended.

Government Response

The Department of Disability, Housing and Community Services is liaising with the ACT Procurement Board and Procurement Solutions regarding improvements to the procurement processes for dwelling construction for public housing.

Details of how the \$33.2m in appropriated funds will be expended, will be made public after consultations with the social housing sector have been finalised.

Recommendation 6

The Committee recommends that the Government post to a website, all transcripts of the coronial inquiry of the 2003 Bushfires immediately, as they become available.

Government Response

Access to, and distribution of, transcripts of the coronial inquiry into the 2003 Bushfires is a matter for the Coroner, under section 51 of the *Coroners Act 1997*. The responsible Coroner, Mrs Doogan, has declined to approve general dissemination of the transcripts, including by way of the internet or any intranet.

Recommendation 7

The Committee recommends that the Government carry out appropriate assessment before any further vegetation is removed.

Government Response

Government agencies involved in the implementation of the current Bush Fire Fuel Management Plan and additional works in response to the 2003 Bushfires have only removed vegetation after conducting appropriate assessments. Where works have been undertaken at sites adjoining residential areas this has included notification of householders.

These principles and processes will continue to be followed in the implementation of future Bush Fire Fuel Management Plans. As part of the development of the Bush Fire Fuel Management Plan 2004-2006 additional assessments are being undertaken in relation to fuel management at the urban edge.

Recommendation 8

The Committee recommends that the Minister for Planning present to the Legislative Assembly all the documents and correspondence relating to the proposed purchase of the Phillip Oval and, that the Assembly review the issue on receiving this information.

Government Response

There is a long history to the transfer or surrender of the lease for Football Park Phillip. A broad chronology outlining the extent of deliberations is attached for the Assembly's information. If required the Government will provide any documentation in relation to these matters as sought by the Assembly with the exception of commercial or cabinet in confidence documents.

The former Minister for Planning, Mr Smyth MLA, was briefed by the then PALM in a brief dated (July 2001) recommending that agreement not be given to transfer the lease to the Hellenic club for the same reasons and on a similar basis that this Government has proceeded to agree to accept the surrender of the lease.

Following the election of the Stanhope Government, ACTAFL had discussions with PALM and the Minister for Planning on the future of the oval in relation to the development of the Woden Town Centre Master Plan and also in respect to ACTAFL's capacity to manage the oval given the transfer of Australian Rules competition to Manuka Oval.

In October 2002 ACTAFL sought Ministerial consent to transfer the lease to a potential purchaser (this was later advised as the Koundouris Group). This proposal involved a significant reduction in the recreation potential of the oval including aged care facilities on the oval and training facilities for a major sporting team. It provided for the retention of a Rugby Ground. The Government determined that the community benefit test that applies to dealings in concessional leases was not satisfied. It also determined that it was important to maintain an AFL ground on the site.

The proposal by Koundouris Group was raised at a meeting with the Woden Community Council. The parties were informed about the Government's position on Phillip Oval and that position. Negotiations were then initiated with ACTAFL to surrender its interest in accordance with the surrender provisions of its lease. Such surrender arrangements are a usual provision under such leases and there is a provision to compensate for lessee funded improvements. ACTAFL made it a requirement of the negotiations that there was agreement for the funding to be available in this financial year. Hence the appropriation was sought in the third appropriation. The Koundouris Group has put forward other options in subsequent discussions with the Government including retention of the oval. These discussions occurred after the Cabinet decision to accept surrender of the lease.

Earlier this year the Hellenic Club again put itself forward to the Government as a potential lessee of Phillip Oval seeking a transfer of the oval from ACTAFL to the

Club. At that point negotiations with ACTAFL on the surrender of its lease were well advanced. It is a matter of Government policy to negotiate with ACTAFL for a surrender of the lease and it is proceeding to do so.

Recommendation 9

The Committee recommends that the Minister for Planning apologise to the Legislative Assembly for withholding relevant information to the Select Committee on Estimates, in relation to the Phillip Oval matter.

Government Response

Not Agreed

In the Committee's enquiry, the Minister for Planning in response to a question from the chair advised that:

“ACTAFL originally sought my consent ...to sell the oval to a third party.”

As outlined in the attached chronology, ACTAFL initially approached the Minister for Planning to sell the lease to a third party in October 2002. The Hellenic Club's proposal was put to the Minister almost 18 months later and was not the third party referred to in the Minister's evidence to the Estimates Committee.

On Monday 3 May at 3:30 pm a letter was received from Mrs Cross in the Minister for Planning's office requesting correspondence in relation to the third party. At 4 pm on 3 May the Minister's office confirmed with the Committee Secretariat that this was the third party referred to in the hearing. That letter and the Minister's response providing that correspondence are attached. The Minister's response was provided at 5:15 approximately. The Committee tabled its report the next day in the Assembly.

The third party referred to in the estimates was the Koundouris Group. All correspondence with the Minister in respect to the third party approach from the Koundouris Group as requested by the Committee's Chair and clarified with the Secretariat, has been supplied to the Committee.

Recommendation 10

The Committee recommends that the Government allocate funds for the immediate purchase of a mobile humidicrib.

Government Response

The purchase of a mobile humidicrib has been achieved thanks to the generous support of the CFMEU.

Recommendation 11

The Committee recommends that the Government report back to the Legislative Assembly on the first sitting day in August 2004, as to how much of the \$103.330 million contained in the Bill was actually spent by 30 June 2004.

Government Response

The Government agrees to provide this information.

Recommendation 12

The Committee recommends that the Legislative Assembly pass Appropriation Bill 2003-2004 (No 3) with the omission of \$800,000 intended for the purchase of the lease over Phillip Oval.

Government Response

The lease for the oval is a concessional lease, which was issued to provide for management of, and to allow for the provision of lessee funded improvements to, the oval. Future development rights and the previously constructed improvements, such as the oval and other improvements, are Territory assets. There are also some assets funded by the lessee.

The surrender provisions of the lease entitles the lessee to payment for its improvements and \$800,000 is reasonable compensation given AVO's advice. Surrender of the lease will allow for recent years of neglect of the facility to be redressed and allow for the orderly implementation of short, medium and long term planning strategies that will involve consultation with the whole community. It will also allow AFL Canberra to get on with its core business associated with Manuka Oval and avoid further financial hardship for an important community organisation.

The valuation of land on the current lease, between the oval and Launceston Street, identified in the Draft Woden Master Plan for other possible uses is in the order of \$2m to \$3m. The replacement value of the Territory funded assets is \$5m. The community's equity in Phillip Oval is therefore \$8m and the Government has a responsibility to protect that interest.

The social and economic importance of Phillip Oval both now and in the future should not be underestimated and the Government believes it has a responsibility to properly deal with the community interest in this lease.

The Government has been provided with advice that it will cost \$80,000 to maintain the oval per annum and offset by an estimated \$20,000 to \$30,000 revenue. The maintenance costs have been identified in the Territory's 2004/05 Budget

There will be a need to undertake rectification works to bring the oval up to the standard of an enclosed oval following deterioration of the asset under the current management. This work will be funded as priorities are identified in the Canberra Urban Parks and Places Budget.

The Government is committed to maintaining an enclosed oval for high level competition particularly suitable for Australian Rules Football. Other sports, such as cricket, will also be able to use the oval.

Analysis undertaken as part of the development of the Woden Master Plan has shown that the facility will provide an important competition venue in the future particularly given its ideal location. Initial assessments have shown that in the medium to longer term Manuka Oval is inadequate for AFL needs in Canberra and it is important for the future of the sport to ensure a top level facility is maintained. The future need for this facility has been enhanced by the proposed developments under the Spatial plan with proposed residential development of up to 50,000 population in Molonglo Valley.

When the concessional lease was issued, there was no intention that the Territory's assets be traded. The intention of the policy to lease these community facilities was to ensure that sporting organisations manage them to achieve the best sporting outcomes from the facility. It is appropriate, that if the lessees of these Government funded assets do not wish to manage them, then the asset should be returned to the Territory and not traded for profit.

Acting on the matter now will also avoid further deterioration of valuable Territory owned assets at Phillip Oval. If ACTAFL and the Territory agree to the terms of surrender of the lease the Government will then consider the best option for future management, recognising any agreement with ACTAFL and the policy position of maintaining the oval as an enclosed oval.

The Government sees an investment of \$800,000 to accept surrender of the lease is a good investment for the people of the Territory. The policy has the strong support of the Woden Valley Community Council. Members of this Assembly have received correspondence from the Woden Valley Community Council seeking to keep the facility in community management.

Recommendation 13

The Committee recommends that prior to the commencement of any or all Estimates committee hearings, Ministers should remember their responsibilities and obligations in the conduct of hearings, and if necessary, refresh their knowledge of Standing Orders; and further understand the difference between the Treasurer's Advance and a supplementary appropriation.

Government Response

The Government can assure the Committee, that Ministers are fully aware of their responsibilities and obligations in the conduct of hearings, and that they have

satisfactory knowledge and understanding of Standing Orders. The Government is also fully aware of the difference between Treasurer's Advance and a supplementary appropriation, and have consistently displayed a sound commitment to the appropriate use of both mechanisms to provide open, accountable, and responsible financial management.

The Government is also aware that the Estimates Committee process has been used by Committee members, and other MLAs who have taken part, as a forum to score political points or to enhance their public profile. The Government will treat the process with the respect that it deserves, but will also treat individual posturing with the respect that it, in turn, deserves.

**PHILLIP OVAL – KEY POINTS IN CHRONOLOGY LEADING TO
NEGOTIATIONS TO SURRENDER OF THE LEASE**

DATE	EVENT
2000	AFL Canberra combined its operations with ACT Cricket and relocated its headquarters from Phillip Oval to Manuka Oval. Relocation assisted by an \$8m capital works project funded by the ACT and Federal Governments.
January 2001	Advice from AVO that the current value of the lessee owned improvements was \$725,000.
March 2001	AFL Canberra publicly advertised for expressions of interest to take over its lease for Phillip Oval. Meeting between AFL Canberra and PALM to discuss the nature of the lease and the fact that it was granted to ACTAFL for a nominal land rent for the purpose of a social club and an Australian Rules field. ACTAFL had no 'development rights' to trade and transfer of the lease required Ministerial consent as it is a concessional lease.
August 2001	<p>PALM commissioned Macro Plan to prepare an analysis of the relative merits of Phillip Oval as a major sporting venue in Canberra. The findings of this report are that Phillip Oval has important attributes that are unique in Canberra. These attributes are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Central location • Best public transport in Canberra • Access to large areas of public parking • Close to ancillary activities such as hotel, clubs and restaurant
September 2001	The previous Government was aware of an application to transfer the Phillip Oval lease to the Hellenic Club but the matter was not resolved in that Government's term. ACTAFL advised that the Hellenic Club subsequently withdrew its interest in taking over the lease.
January 2002	Additional financial analysis undertaken by Ray Davis confirmed that public ownership of Phillip Oval was in the public interest.
October 2002	<p>Planning Minister met AFL Canberra who advised the Government of a \$1.3m offer to purchase Phillip Oval subject to:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Ministerial consent; and 2. Approval to deconcessionalise the lease <p>The name of the party was not advised but later (March 2003) information was provided that it was the Koundouris Group</p>
December 2002	The proposal fell short of meeting the planning objectives outlined in the Draft Woden Town Centre Master Plan and the projected future needs for major enclosed oval. The Planning Minister advised ACTAFL that he did not believe the community interest was served by either an ex gratia payment or agreeing to transfer as a deconcessionalised lease. The proposals were inconsistent with current Government policies.

DATE	EVENT
March 2003	<p>Koundouris Group met with ACTPLA and advised of its proposal for the oval which included aged care accommodations and training facilities for the Brumbies.</p> <p>The proposal did not include retention of an enclosed oval suitable for AFL use and did not comply with the proposals in the developing Draft Woden Master Plan</p>
March 2003	Koundouris Group met with the Minister for Planning and presented same concept
June 2003	<p>Woden Valley Community Council presented its investigations into Phillip Oval to a public meeting. The well attended public meeting opposed the proposals to develop the site for aged care. Opposed trading in this concessional lease and wanted oval maintained as football oval sufficient in size for Australian Rules future needs. Wrote to Government advising of their position to maintain in community ownership and opposing trading in the lease.</p>
September 2003	<p>Advice from AVO that \$700,000 - \$800,000 represents the current value for negotiation purposes of the Crown lessee's improvements relative to their condition and respective usable lives over the balance of the existing lease term.</p>
November 2003	<p>The Planning Minister wrote to Mr James Kondouris to confirm advice that he did not agree to deconcessionalise the lease for Football Park Phillip.</p>
December 2003	Government agreed to accept surrender of the lease.
December 2003	<p>ACTPLA met with AFL to outline breaches in the management of the current lease and to outline the Government's offer for surrender of the lease. ACTAFL indicated it would consider the offer with conditions.</p>
January 2004	<p>ACTAFL advised positive response from members (informal) for surrender of lease and seeking further information on conditions</p>
February 2004	<p>ACTPLA Wrote to ACTAFL advising of Canberra Urban Parks and Places responses to conditions for surrender</p>
February/ March 2004	<p>The Hellenic Club outlined to the Government a renewed interest in Phillip Oval. The Territory was progressing its negotiations with ACTAFL.</p>
March 2004	<p>ACTAFL sought advice from the Planning Minister on the Hellenic Club proposal to transfer the lease to the Club</p>
March 2004	<p>Planning Minister wrote to ACTAFL responding to previous meetings and correspondence including letter re Hellenic Club proposal. The advice that he believed that there had been an agreement to proceed to negotiate a surrender of the lease and that the Government's position was quiet clear:</p> <p>If ACTAFL no longer wishes to operate the lease, then it should be surrendered to the Territory. He advised that Government considers these facilities are assets which should be managed for the benefit of the people of the Territory and not to be traded for financial gain of individual lessees.</p>
March 2004	<p>ACTAFL wrote advising that it is willing to surrender the lease providing some concerns of the club can be satisfied</p>

DATE	EVENT
March 2004	<p>Woden Valley Community Council wrote to Chief Minister reiterating previous advice in relation to the proposed lease transfer and stating that the Government should</p> <p><i>..be strongly advised to accept a lease surrender from ACTAFL in the current circumstances.</i></p>
April 2004	<p>Chief Minister replied to Council advising that if the oval lease is surrendered it:</p> <p><i>..would be managed in a similar way to other enclosed ovals in that it would be hired to sporting organisations including Australian Football league for competition fixtures.</i></p>
April 2004	<p>The Territory drafted response and proposed Deed of surrender with a view to responding to ACTAFL's letter offering to surrender the lease.</p>

3:30. 7

Issued. #



Attachment B

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY FOR THE AUSTRALIAN CAPITAL TERRITORY

SELECT COMMITTEE ON ESTIMATES NO 3

Mrs Helen Cross MLA (Chair), Ms Karin MacDonald MLA (Deputy Chair), Mr Brendan Smyth MLA

Mr Simon Corbell, MLA
Minister for Planning


Dear Minister

Request for correspondence in relation to the proposed purchase of the lease over Phillip Oval

On behalf of the Select Committee on Estimates' inquiry into the Appropriation Bill 2003-2004 (No 3), I am requesting copies of the correspondence between yourself, ACTAFL and the third party involved in relation to the proposed purchase of the lease over Phillip Oval.

Given that the Committee is reporting to the Assembly tomorrow, it would greatly appreciate receiving the documents requested by close of business today.

Yours sincerely



Helen Cross, MLA
Chair

3 May 2004

**Simon Corbell** MLA

MINISTER FOR HEALTH MINISTER FOR PLANNING

MEMBER FOR MOLONGLO

Mrs Helen Cross
Chair Select Committee on Estimates No 3
ACT Legislative Assembly
London Crt
CANBERRA ACT 2601

Dear Mrs Cross

I refer to your letter received in my office this afternoon at 3:30 pm requesting copies of correspondence between myself, ACTAFL and the third party in relation to the "proposed purchase of Phillip Oval". My office clarified with the Committee Secretary, Ms Stephanie Mikac that the third party referred to was the one referred to in my statement to the Committee hearing as follows "ACTAFL initially sought my consentto sell the oval to a third party. The only correspondence between that party and myself is attached.

Yours sincerely

Simon Corbell MLA
Minister for Planning

3.5.04.

ACT LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY

London Circuit, Canberra ACT 2601 GPO Box 1020, Canberra ACT 2601

Phone (02) 6205 0000 Fax (02) 6205 0535



**Simon Corbell MLA****MINISTER FOR HEALTH****MINISTER FOR PLANNING****MEMBER FOR MOLONGLO**

**Mr James Koundouris
Koundouris Group
161 London Crt
Canberra City ACT 2601**

Dear Mr Koundouris

I refer to meetings held with you and your agent concerning proposals to develop Football Park Phillip. I am writing to confirm verbal advice, provided to Mr Eric Kondouris, by my Planning Adviser Ms Pinkas last week, that I do not agree to deconcessionalise the lease for Football Park Phillip.

As Ms Pinkas advised, I had previously written to Mr Allan McKinnon from Australian Football League (NSW/ACT) on 28 November 2002 advising him of my position in relation to the oval and my decision not to deconcessionalise the lease.

The oval and its adjacent land is a significant asset for the Territory. To replace such an asset would cost in excess of \$4m without considering the land value. The concessional lease was initially given to ACTAFL in order to maintain this asset for the people of the Territory. This action was consistent with the then policy for the management of enclosed ovals constructed by the Government. Sporting Associations were given the responsibility of maintaining the asset for use by sporting and other community groups.

The Minister for Urban Services, Mr Bill Wood MLA, who has portfolio responsibility for sportsgrounds, has confirmed that he requires the oval to be retained as an enclosed oval for both competition and training facilities. He has also confirmed that he does not agree that the oval be converted into a training ground for one code or aged care facilities. He has advised that there are other facilities which have been made available for training facilities and which can be further developed if required.

The Draft Woden-Master Plan confirms the retention of the oval. This is based on consultation which confirms the importance of the oval in the area. I have received representations from the Woden Community Council which also believe that it is important to retain the facility as a sports ground. The recently announced Draft Spatial Plan also provides for further urban development in the vicinity of Woden in the Molonglo Valley and I believe that, as urban growth and renewal occurs in this area, demand for the facility will increase.

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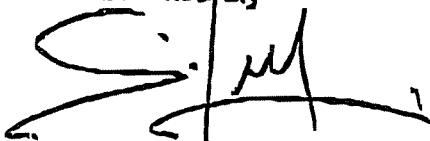
+61262050535

You would be aware that an enclosed oval is an important Territory asset and is different from an undeveloped piece of land. Public municipal sports facilities should be retained where required for sporting use. There are other possible sites in the area which could be used for such facilities and, as discussed by Ms Pinkas, Anne Skews from the Land Development Agency and Mr Neil Savery from the ACT Planning Authority could discuss such options with you. If you wish to follow this suggestion further, please contact Ms Pinkas on 62050030 to assist in arranging a meeting.

I appreciate that the current lessee does not wish to continue leasing the oval and I propose to bring forward a proposal to Government to consider options to address this matter. I hope you will appreciate that this decision is based on the need to protect the Territory's sporting assets and equity in the facility.

The Government believes that the longer term interests of sport and the Territory are maintained by retaining this asset. I had clearly explained this position to ACTAFL and I confirm that this position has not changed. I regret that I was unable to assist you in this matter.

Yours sincerely



Simon Corbell MLA
Minister for Planning

6-11-03

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