



**LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY**  
**FOR THE AUSTRALIAN CAPITAL TERRITORY**

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STANDING COMMITTEE ON ENVIRONMENT AND TRANSPORT AND CITY SERVICES  
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## Submission Cover Sheet

Inquiry into a Proposal for a Mammal Emblem for the ACT

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## **Inquiry into a Proposal for a Mammal Emblem for the ACT**

**Submission by Steven Squires**

As a proud Canberran, I strongly consider the move to adopt an ACT mammal emblem to be a positive and great move for the territory. As the only State/Territory in Australia in Australia that does not have a mammal emblem, this is a great opportunity to fix an anomaly in our symbols.

Whichever mammal is chosen, whether it be the bettong, rock wallaby, echidna, or other, this will provide a great symbol and deepen Canberra's knowledge and respect for our local animals.

As the ACT begins the journey to having our own mammal emblem, the ACT Government has a golden opportunity to provide a fitting symbol for Canberra's next century as a city. This is a great opportunity to open the public conversation into ensuring that our symbols are comprehensive and fully reflect the ideals and values of Canberrans.

While the ACT is currently the only State/Territory without an official mammal emblem, it is also the only one without an official coat of arms. This would be a great time for the ACT Government to rectify this by initiating a process of public engagement to design an ACT Emblem/Coat of Arms.

The ACT Government is currently using the Coat of Arms of the City of Canberra, a purpose for which it was not designed. Replacing the Canberran Coat of Arms with an ACT Coat of Arms would correct this anomaly that has meant the ACT is the only major jurisdiction in the Commonwealth that does not have a coat of arms.

The Canberran Coat of Arms uses very little local symbolism, and does not include the ACT floral or bird emblems. And unless a portcullis is declared the mammal emblem, it will not have the future mammal emblem either.



This is also a great opportunity to include the new mammal emblem into these symbols. In the same way that Canberra's bird emblem, the Gang-Gang Cockatoo and floral emblem, the Royal Bluebell have both become ACT icons, incorporating the new mammal emblem into our Territory symbols is a great opportunity to showcase the new emblem.



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Given that the ACT voted strongly in favour of a republic in the 1999 Republic Referendum, having an ACT Emblem that uses our new mammal emblem will be far more embraced by the Canberra public, compared to the City of Canberra arms that the ACT Government currently uses. Does the motto "For the Queen, the Law, and the People" on the Canberra Coat of Arms, a portcullis or a castle symbols for that matter, really represent the ideas and aspirations of ACT residents today?

The ACT Government has implicitly acknowledged this, using the "CBR" brand more and more, rather than the coat of arms itself. This is in effect saying that the Coat of Arms is an inadequate symbol for the territory.

An ACT Emblem would provide a great opportunity to use relevant and meaningful symbolism for the ACT, and could use the bird emblem, floral emblem and the new mammal emblem together. It would be a great statement of pride in our Territory, and put our unique culture and environment at the forefront of our symbols.

The Northern Territory Coat of Arms (pictured), created in 1978 has an impressive coat of arms, which uses indigenous themes and incorporates every territory emblem (the Sturt's Desert Rose, the Red Kangaroo and the Wedge-Tailed Eagle).



One could imagine future schoolteachers teaching children about our civic emblems by showing the ACT Emblem and saying "here is the Royal Bluebell, our floral emblem, here is the Gang-Gang Cockatoo, our bird emblem..." and so on.

The introduction of a mammal emblem will be a praiseworthy move by the ACT Assembly, giving people a greater opportunity to learn and appreciate the Territory's natural heritage and wildlife. This will also be a great step in the ongoing journey towards having a set of symbols that will represent and be cherished by the ACT people.

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