



**Government Response
Select Committee on Estimates
2006-2007**

Tabling Statement

August 2006

Jon Stanhope MLA
Treasurer

22/8/06

Mr Speaker, I present the Government Response to the report of the Select Committee on Estimates 2006-2007.

Mr Speaker, there is no doubt that the 2006-07 Budget presented many challenges for my Government. I have made that point clear on numerous occasions. In rising to these challenges the Government delivered a budget that addresses the real and serious issues facing the Territory right now, and that also provides capacity for the future to deal with known fiscal pressures and risks.

Despite the considerable pressures facing the Government – such as rising health care costs, the ageing population, and a declining land revenue base – the Government has presented a Budget that maintains the provision of core service commitments to the ACT community, while continuing to be financially responsible and responsive.

Mr Speaker, there is wide evidence to support the fact that the costs of general government services in the ACT are far greater than other jurisdictions. The decisions made as part of the budget recognise the need to reduce costs to be in line with benchmark comparatives.

This budget introduces a range of administrative reforms and structural changes. It also provides significant reinvestment and redirection of resources into areas of critical need, particularly within the education and health sectors.

Mr Speaker, in its consideration of the Budget, the Select Committee on Estimates discusses a wide range of issues, and has made 73 recommendations. The Government has responded to each. The Committee's Report also included a Part 2: Additional Comments and

Dissenting Report and the Government has broadly responded to this part of the Report.

I will not take the Assembly's time by working through each of the Select Committee's 73 recommendations. They are discussed in the response document. I will, nevertheless, touch on some of the more important issues.

Mr Speaker, the Committee has recommended the reversal or review of several major decisions applied in the budget, in particular the revised superannuation contribution arrangements.

It is imperative to reiterate in regard to superannuation that the ACT is the only jurisdiction that applies rates in line with its federal counterparts, even though 65% of the Commonwealth workforce resides and competes for employment outside of the ACT.

It is also important to note that the ACT Government does not compete with the Federal Government for a large part of its workforce, namely teachers, nurses, health professionals, child protection workers, fire fighters, bus drivers and rangers.

Mr Speaker, the Government's contribution to the superannuation entitlements of its employees is 139% above the national average; it was timely that the Government review these arrangements. If the Government had failed to address the issue now, the cost of public servants' superannuation would increase by 700% over the next 30 years.

Mr Speaker, the Committee has also recommended throughout its report that the Government improve and enhance the presentation of the Budget papers to ensure appropriate cross-referencing, indexation, comparative tables and

variance analysis is included in the publication. Several recommendations also called for the inclusion of additional information, particularly about staffing.

The Government is committed to the continual improvement in the presentation, quality and usability of information included in the Budget Papers. To this end, the Government has noted the committee's recommendations in this regard and we will explore the feasibility of further presentational improvements.

Mr Speaker, the dissenting report of Mr Pratt and Mr Smyth has some 90 recommendations.

There is much I could say about this dissenting report. In summary, it is in various places either wrong (for example with its calculations of staffing numbers and resulting bottom line adjustment), or seeks reversal of essential budget decisions with no supporting evidence. But the biggest disappointment of this dissenting report is its failure to provide any feasible alternatives, or policies to support the recommendations it puts forward. It takes a particularly short-sighted view to ongoing financial management.

Mr Speaker, as the Government's response to the dissenting report says:

The 2006-07 Budget provides measures necessary to build strong foundations for the future of the ACT's finances. Delaying projects or ignoring to address these issues now will not provide a sustainable fiscal platform, leaving compounded problems for the forthcoming governments to rectify.

Mr Speaker, in general, the recommendations raised by the Committee do not raise any serious issues that would prevent the passing of the Appropriation

Bill 2006-07. Rather, the report seeks more information and clarification on a range of issues. The Government's Response has provided this information where possible.

I thank the Committee for its consideration of these issues, and remind the Assembly that this is a Budget framed for not only today, but also the future.

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



**Government Response
to the Report of the
Select Committee on Estimates 2006-2007
Report on the Inquiry into the
Appropriation Bill 2006-2007**

August 2006

22/8/06

INTRODUCTION

The Select Committee on Estimates tabled its report on the Appropriation Bill 2006-2007 on Tuesday 15 August 2006.

The Committee made 73 Recommendations in its Report. The Government has responded to most of the Recommendations, however, the Government believes that Recommendations 1, 2, 28, 29 and 30 are matters for the Legislative Assembly and in particular the Select Committee on Estimates Secretariat.

The Committee also tabled Part 2: Additional comments and Dissenting Report. A Government response is included addressing broad themes of Part 2 is included in this response.

The Government thanks the Committee for its Report on the 2006-07 Appropriation Bill.

RESPONSE TO RECOMMENDATIONS

Recommendation 1

1.19 That Ministers be reminded, in future budget Estimates hearings, of their responsibility to the Committee to allow full and unfettered scrutiny of budget related issues and Government accountability without Ministers resorting to inappropriate personal attacks and other avoidance tactics.

Government Response

Noted.

Recommendation 2

1.20 That the Committee Chair in future hearings, issue a reminder at the commencement of Estimates hearings that the use by Ministers of inappropriate language, insults and other time wasting techniques employed in an attempt to deflect scrutiny and avoid questioning is unacceptable.

Government Response

Noted.

Recommendation 3

1.24 The Committee recommends that all answers to questions on notice not provided before the dissolution of the Committee be provided to the Speaker for tabling in the Assembly.

Government Response

Agreed.

Recommendation 4

1.33 The Committee recommends that all Government officers be made aware of their rights and obligations when appearing before any Committee of the Legislative Assembly and that the *Handbook for ACT Government Officials on Participation in Assembly and Other Inquiries* be widely publicised.

Government Response

Noted. This practice is already in place. The Government is committed to ensuring that Government officers are aware of their obligations when appearing before any Committee of the Legislative Assembly. The handbook is available on the Chief Minister's Department (CMD) website.

Recommendation 5

2.9 The Committee recommends that the Government review its decision to cut superannuation for Government employees from 15.4% to 9%, making the ACT Public service uncompetitive in light of the current skills shortage and in comparison to other jurisdictions.

Government Response

Not agreed. The superannuation arrangements for new employees to the ACT Public Service are superior to those of all other States of Australia and the Northern Territory, with the exception of Queensland. If a new employee from 1 July 2006 voluntarily contributes a minimum of 3 per cent towards retirement, the ACT Government will contribute 10 per cent on behalf of the employee.

The ACT Government does not compete with the Australian Government for a large part of its workforce (for example, teachers, nurses, health professionals, child protection workers, fire fighters, bus drivers and rangers). It does compete for clerical staff, but differential superannuation arrangements have coexisted in other States, where approximately 65 per cent of Australian Government employees are based.

Recommendation 6

2.11 The Committee recommends that changes to employment conditions should occur within an enterprise bargaining process.

Government Response

Agreed in part. The Government is committed to negotiating wages and conditions through collective agreements made under the *Workplace Relations Act 1996 (Cth)*.

It should be noted, however, that employment conditions are not exclusively or comprehensively established through collective agreements. In the ACT, employment conditions are established through a combination of federal legislation, the *Public Sector Management Act 1994* and Standards made under this Act, collective agreements, and, in limited cases, individual agreements. In some circumstances, changes to employment conditions will continue to be made through changes to federal and Territory legislation and legislative instruments.

Recommendation 7

4.9 The Committee recommends that the Government clarify the apparent discrepancy between the figures provide by Mr Stanhope and Mr Harris of 500 and 318 respectively and report to the Legislative Assembly on the impact of the amended figure for the Budget.

Government Response

Noted. As previously advised to the Committee, a simple addition of all the departmental head counts in Budget Paper 4 shows an increase of 499 in staffing numbers across the service.

However, the 2005-06 estimated outcome for staffing for many of the departments does not include the authorities that are being rolled into departments from 1 July 2006. The numbers are therefore not comparable on a 'like-with-like' basis across the whole of government.

The staffing tables are a new feature of the Budget Papers. The aim was to provide information in individual agencies, not on the whole of government staffing profile.

Although it is unusual to 'backcast' budget information for administrative changes, the Government has calculated that when the 2005-06 estimated outcome figures are adjusted to include the abolished entities, and compared with the estimated staff numbers in 2006-07, there is a net reduction of 318 staff.

It should be noted that all of these staffing figures are broad planning assumptions for the purposes of developing budget estimates, and it will not be possible to provide definite numbers about staff changes to the Legislative Assembly until all departments have concluded their structural review processes.

Recommendation 8

4.10 The Committee recommends that the Stanhope Government provide to the Legislative Assembly, as soon as possible, a full reconciliation of both the changes in staff numbers (FTE and head-count) across all departments and agencies in the ACT Government and the estimated final numbers of staff in each department and agency.

Government Response

Agreed-in-principle. It will not be possible to provide this information until each department and agency has completed its structural review processes. At present, most departments and agencies are consulting with staff and unions as part of these processes.

Recommendation 9

4.11 The Committee recommends that future Budget documents contain staffing profiles on all units of the ACT Government and that these numbers be collated into a single table within the Budget documents comparing the previous year's numbers with those appearing for the Budget year. This table should include both full-time equivalents and head count.

Government Response

Noted. The Government will explore options for the inclusion of more detailed and consolidated staffing information in Budget Papers.

Recommendation 10

4.16 The Committee recommends that the Office of Sustainability remain within the Chief Minister's Department.

Government Response

Not Agreed. Excluding energy and water policy, which remains in CMD, sustainability policy and programs were transferred to the Department of the Territory and Municipal Services (TAMS) as of 1 July 2006. This retains sustainability in the same portfolio as a wider range of environment and land management policy and programs.

Additionally, there are considerable benefits to be gained by integrating the majority of the Office of Sustainability with Environment ACT, Parks and Places and ACT NOWaste in TAMS. The development of an organisational structure for TAMS has highlighted the synergies that are available and the efficiencies that can be obtained.

Recommendation 11

4.28 The Committee recommends that the Government detail:

- **how the Skills Commission would work;**
- **its terms of reference;**
- **the membership of the Commission;**
- **the reporting timeframes; and**
- **the review process to determine if the Commission has been successful.**

Government Response

The Government announced the establishment of the proposed ACT Skills Commission in the 2006-07 Budget Speech. As the Budget Speech noted, the Commission is likely to replace a number of advisory bodies and will be focussing on providing leadership and ensure coordination of effort on ACT skills issues.

At a broad level, it will provide strategic policy advice to Government on skills issues and strategies designed to meet ACT needs; it will consult widely with business and industry, across government, and with the community; and it will facilitate greater connections between education and training providers (both public and private, and tertiary, secondary and primary education providers) and their customers and stakeholders. A more detailed Terms of Reference is under development by the Government.

Membership and administrative arrangements for the new body are still being developed. However, it is expected the Commission will be supported by and report to Government, and have members bringing particular skills to the new body. These skills will be drawn from government, education providers, the community, business and employers, unions and employee peak bodies and other stakeholders.

CMD, and the Department of Education and Training (DET) are working closely together on this initiative. The broad timeline is to have the Commission in place by December 2006.

Recommendation 12

4.33 The Committee recommends that the Chief Minister explain in relation Chris 21, as these extra costs were incurred by some departments, what steps have been taken to recover the costs from the supplier for what is considered standard functionality.

Government Response

Noted. The costs identified to the Committee represent the costs of employing processing staff associated with the implementation of Chris 21 in particular agencies. These costs were always required to be met by agencies, and there is no scope to recover these costs from the supplier.

Nevertheless, the supplier is meeting the costs of system upgrades related to improving leave functionality. The Government is continuing to work cooperatively with the supplier to ensure that the system meets the needs of departments and agencies now and into the future, and that the supplier will provide the necessary support for the system over its expected lifespan.

Recommendation 13

4.39 The Committee recommends that the Chief Minister update the Legislative Assembly on negotiations concerning the ownership of the Googong Dam.

Government Response

There are ongoing discussions between the ACT and the Australian Government to give effect to an incorrectly implemented 1998 decision to transfer Googong Dam to the ACT. The ACT has NSW Government endorsement for the transfer and is now waiting for the next steps in the process from the Australian Government. In the meantime, the ACT Executive continues to exercise management control over the Dam.

Recommendation 14

5.7 The Committee recommends that the ACT Government should ensure the retention of its AAA rating as assessed by the credit rating agency Standard and Poor's.

Government Response

Agreed. Standard and Poor's said in their press release in relation to the 2006-07 Budget, that the "budget announced for the Australian Capital Territory is consistent with the 'AAA' rating assigned to the ACT" (6 June 2006).

Recommendation 15

5.12 The Committee recommends that Government inform the Legislative Assembly of when triple bottom line reporting will be in operation in the ACT.

Government Response

The Government's approach to incorporating triple bottom line in Budget Papers was outlined in the 2004-05 Supplementary Paper *Framework for Future Budget Presentation*.

The Government sought input from the Members of the Legislative Assembly in progressing this framework. The 2005-06 and 2006-07 Budget papers were produced following that framework and included strategic indicators covering financial, social and environmental factors.

Recommendation 16

5.16 The Committee recommends that a table of data comparing Budget allocations with the previous years be provided and clearly cross-referenced throughout the Budget paper series.

Government Response

This information is already provided in the Budget Papers for each Department. The tables are referred to as the 'Changes to Appropriation' table and appear in each Departmental chapter. The tables reconcile budget allocations of previous years to current year allocations.

Recommendation 17

5.17 The Committee recommends that information explaining the cause of significant variations in the presentation of data from one financial year to the next should be provided and clearly cross-referenced throughout the Budget paper series.

Government Response

Budget Paper No. 4 includes a 'Notes to the Budget Statements' section following each agency's financial statements. These provide explanations for major variations for each account from the 2005-06 Annual Budget, 2005-06 Estimated Outcome and the 2006-07 Annual Budget.

Budget Paper No. 3 also discusses variations in the General Government Sector financial statements. Revenue and Forward Estimates are discussed in chapter 4, expenditure in chapter 5, and assets and liabilities in chapter 7.

Recommendation 18

5.19 The Committee recommends that in the future Budget papers include a more detailed index to assist users to identify key output areas.

Government Response

Noted. The Government strives to continually improve the quality and usability of information included in the Budget Papers. The Government will explore the feasibility of including an index for the next Budget.

Recommendation 19

5.24 The Committee recommends that full details of the Wage Price Index that will be used to index rates each year, including a trend analysis comparing the application of the Consumer Price Index with the application of the WPI, be provided.

Government Response

The Wage Price Index for the ACT is a measure of total hourly rates of pay for all employment sectors excluding bonuses.

The Government decided to index the rates revenue by WPI because this index better reflects the rate of increasing costs of service delivery.

The table below shows the estimated rates revenue outcome for 2005-06 (excluding General Government Sector rates) as published in the 2006-07 Budget. The table also shows the effect of indexing this base figure to the CPI and the WPI.

Table: Total Rates Revenue ^(a)

\$'000	2005-2006	2006-2007	2007-2008	2008-2009	2009-2010
WPI	140,819	146,499	151,942	157,593	163,435
CPI	140,819	144,682	148,196	151,798	155,468
WPI-CPI	0	1,817	3,746	5,795	7,968

^(a) These figures do not take into account the following factors:

- New property growth to the rates billing base;
- Interest revenue derived from the overdue rates liabilities.

Recommendation 20

5.25 The Committee recommends that Wage Price Index (WPI) year average percentage change forecasts and projections be included in the equivalent of table 1.1.2 which appears in the Budget each year.

Government Response

Agreed.

Recommendation 21

5.28 The Committee recommends that the ACT Government's financial systems should ensure its compliance with payments to small businesses within specified trading terms, and report on this compliance periodically to the Legislative Assembly.

Government Response

Noted. It is not possible to identify in the Government's financial systems those creditors which are small businesses. However, it is ACT Government policy that all creditors be paid in accordance with their trading terms so long as the invoice is valid and the service / goods have been provided as required.

Recommendation 22

5.29 The Committee recommends that the ACT Government should minimise the use of external contractors.

Government Response

Agreed-in-principle. The Government included a commitment to minimise the use of consultants, contractors and sub-contractors across the public service in the template certified agreement 2004 – 2007. This clause has been included in department and agency agreements operating across the service.

Whilst the policy of minimising the use of external contractors exists, it is sometimes necessary to use external contractors. For example, the use of contractors has been necessary when agencies experience difficulty in recruiting suitably qualified staff, given the tight job market in Canberra, or specific professional expertise is required on a short-term basis.

Recommendation 23

5.38 The Committee recommends that the Public Accounts Committee review the performance of the Shared Services Centre after it has been in operation for 12 months. In addition, there should be a review of the job losses in the ACT public service to determine if the promised savings have been achieved and to determine the impact on delivery of services.

Government Response

Noted.

Recommendation 24

5.39 The Committee recommends that InTACT's user charges be measured against private sector industry standards to justify the figures currently being set for ACT Government departments and agencies.

Government Response

InTACT is in the third year of a benchmarking contract with the Gartner Group, an independent, internationally based ICT research organisation. InTACT is benchmarked on a cost basis against peers who utilise similar technologies and are of a similar size and complexity. This peer group is comprised of both Australian government organisations and private sector organisations, the latter of which form

the majority of the peer group. In both the completed years of benchmarking, InTACT's costs have, on average, been less than the median costs of the peer group.

Recommendation 25

5.47 The Committee recommends that the government expedite negotiations with Exhibition Park Corporation to ensure block 751 Gungahlin becomes available to provide for growth and security for Exhibition Park in Canberra.

Government Response

Noted. A working party comprising representatives from the ACT Planning and Land Authority (ACTPLA), Land Development Agency (LDA), CMD and Treasury is being established to work with the Exhibition Park Corporation on its Master Plan, including the proposal to acquire Block 751 Gungahlin.

Recommendation 26

5.54 The Committee recommends that legal coverage equivalent to that enjoyed by Ministers be extended to Members of the Legislative Assembly.

Government Response

Agreed. The ACT Insurance Authority (ACTIA) has been working on this issue and can confirm that all MLAs now have the same coverage as Ministers. This means that they are included in the Government program for public liability and professional indemnity but only in regard to their activities as MLAs and not for other activities. There is no cover available for Directors and Officers insurance, which is consistent with the coverage available to Ministers.

Recommendation 27

5.55 The Committee recommends that all contractors, casual and temporary employees, and volunteers who work for Members of the Legislative Assembly, be covered by Legislative Assembly or ACT Government insurance policies.

Government Response

Supported in part. It is not currently possible to obtain insurance for MLA staff under the Government's current insurance arrangements. The Government supports work on investigating alternative insurance arrangements for staff, contractors and volunteers.

Insurance cover for consultants working for MLA's is not supported. This is consistent with the whole of government policy not to provide insurance for consultants.

Recommendation 28

6.10 The Committee recommends that out-of-office IT access be made available to all Members without additional cost to Members.

Government Response

Noted. These recommendations are not related to matters that are the responsibility of the Government. This is a matter for the Speaker and the Clerk of the Legislative Assembly to consider.

Recommendation 29

6.12 That the secretariat be asked to explore and implement options to reduce the cost to community organisations of using the Legislative Assembly rooms.

Government Response

Noted. These recommendations are not related to matters that are the responsibility of the Government. This is a matter for the Speaker and the Clerk of the Legislative Assembly to consider.

Recommendation 30

6.16 The Committee recommends that additional resources be made available to the Committee Secretariat to increase its ability to provide support to the ACT Legislative Assembly's Committees.

Government Response

Noted. These recommendations are not related to matters that are the responsibility of the Government. This is a matter for the Speaker and the Clerk of the Legislative Assembly to consider.

Recommendation 31

7.11 The Committee recommends that a more effective program be embarked on to ensure the recovery of the \$21.8 million in outstanding fees and fines currently owing to the ACT Government.

Government Response

Noted. The ACT maintains relatively low levels of outstanding taxes, fees and fines comparative to total budgeted revenue. The majority of debt owed relates to rates and land tax accounts, and traffic and parking infringement notices.

In relation to rates and land tax accounts, this debt is a charge against the land and is a secured debt. As a result the risk associated with this outstanding debt is minimised. The ACT Revenue Office is pursuing outstanding taxes to reduce the debt levels further and the Government Solicitor's Office is assisting the ACT Revenue Office in enforcement of revenue collection for major cases that require court proceedings or liquidation action.

In relation to traffic and parking infringement notices, all jurisdictions find it difficult to recover a certain proportion of penalties imposed under infringement notice schemes, and the ACT's experience is comparable to what occurs interstate.

The ACT scheme, whereby non-payment of penalties results in licence or registration sanctions is generally effective in encouraging motorists to pay parking and traffic penalties.

Outstanding fines restrict the ability of ACT residents to transact further business with the Road Transport Authority until the fine is paid. The fine default system is significantly less expensive than alternatives such as prosecuting unpaid parking and traffic penalties through the court system. TAMS is currently investigating options of payment plans for infringement notice debts, however this work is at a very early stage.

Recommendation 32

7.17 The Committee recommends that the ACT court system collect, maintain and report on appropriate statistics relating to:

- **the number of offences;**
- **nature of offences;**
- **punishments conferred; and**
- **non identifying demographic statistics**

to enable better targeting of early intervention, police activity and rehabilitation programs.

Government Response

Agreed. The Courts received budget funding of \$0.290 million in 2006-07 and \$0.298 million in 2007-08 to undertake development on the Court's current case management system (MAX). The project will improve the usability and functionality of the case management system. The capacity to derive statistical information from the Courts' case management system will be upgraded which will allow case management information to be provided to assist in the improvement of Court processes.

As part of the 2006-07 budget funding, there was \$0.108 million allocated for the employment, on a twelve-month basis, of a Courts Performance Reporting Officer to be responsible for strategic performance analysis and reporting. This Officer will improve the level of collection and analysis provided to external organisations such as the Productivity Commission (ROGS) and Australian Bureau of Statistics as well as supporting the collection and analysis of internal Courts' case management information.

In relation to the Committee's comments in paragraphs 7.38 and 7.39, the Courts Governance Committee has been established which consists of the Attorney General, Chief Justice, President of the Court of Appeal, Chief Magistrate, Chief Executive Officer Department of Justice and Community Safety (JACS) and the Courts Administrator. This Committee has met twice since December 2005 and will be meeting again in October 2006. This Committee provides an opportunity for consultation and discussion on issues impacting on the Courts. As well the Chief Executive Officer meets regularly with the Chief Justice and Chief Magistrate to provide information and discuss matters of concern.

In relation to the Committee's comments in paragraph 7.40, in 2005-06 there was \$0.271 million spent on various areas of minor works to improve the functioning of the Supreme Court. These included work on the air conditioning system, replacement of courtroom furniture and cabling of all courtrooms. In addition work commenced on the upgrading of security alarms within offices and courtrooms.

Recommendation 33

7.20 The Committee recommends that the Government should allocate sufficient resources so that all the commissioners in the yet to be established Human Rights Commission can adequately perform their roles.

Government Response

Agreed-in-principle. The Government considers that the resources allocated will be adequate for the Commissioners to perform their roles.

Recommendation 34

7.27 The Committee recommends that the ICRC should remain an independent authority and not be placed under the administration of the Department of Justice and Community Safety.

Government Response

Agreed in part. The ICRC remains a statutory authority. It will continue to have statutory independence to perform its functions such as price directions, investigation of competitive neutrality complaints, and functions under the *Utilities Act 2000*.

The transfer of the Commission to JACS provides an opportunity to attain benefits from synergies of its licensing and regulatory activities with the functions of the Office of Regulatory Services. The Commission plays an important role in consumer protection, and there are potential benefits in drawing on its expertise. The transfer also allows for efficiencies to be achieved through the provision of administrative functions by JACS.

Recommendation 35

7.31 The Committee recommends that the health plan for the prison must take into account the special requirements of indigenous prisoners and prisoners with mental health issues, and should include a viable program to prevent transmission of blood borne viruses.

Government Response

Agreed. The Government is committed to ensuring an appropriate service is provided to indigenous prisoners, prisoners with mental health issues and preventing the transmission of blood borne viruses.

The Health Plan for the Alexander Maconochie Centre (AMC) is being prepared by ACT Health, in consultation with ACT Corrective Services and other key stakeholders.

The particular needs of Indigenous prisoners are being promoted by the Winnunga Nimmityjah Aboriginal Health Service, which has engaged a research officer to develop a model of best practice prison health services for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Island people. This work is proceeding in consultation with ACT Corrective Services and ACT Health.

A Crisis Support Unit (CSU) is provided for, in the design of the AMC, to accommodate and stabilise prisoners suffering acute episodes of mental illness.

Recommendation 36

7.34 The Committee recommends that further clarification of the economic case for an ACT prison be presented to the Legislative Assembly as soon as practicable.

Government Response

Not agreed. The economic case for an ACT prison has already been provided and is outlined in detail in the report titled Proposals for Future Correctional Facilities (May 2003). This report has been publicly available on the AMC website (www.cs.act.gov.au/amc) since August 2005 and the information remains consistent with current planning.

Recommendation 37

7.44 The Committee recommends that the ACT Government take appropriate action, including reviewing the employment contracts of relevant executives, to ensure that the Emergency Services Agency does not have to make further requests for funding from the Treasurer's Advance.

Government Response

Agreed. The Government has introduced a more streamlined structure for the delivery of emergency services, which is capable of delivering high quality and responsive services, while containing the considerable overheads associated with maintaining a separate statutory authority.

In addition, JACS has commenced a review of the Emergency Services Authority (ESA) expenditure in order to ensure that ESA will operate within its 2006-07 Budget targets.

Recommendation 38

7.45 The Committee recommends that the compliance of senior staff of the Emergency Services Agency, be verified for compliance with the Public Service Management Act and take appropriate action where any instances of non-compliance are identified.

Government Response

Agreed. Appropriate action would be taken if any instances of non-compliance with the *Public Sector Management Act 1994* were to arise.

Recommendation 39

7.46 The Committee recommends that the Auditor-General undertake an audit of all ESA communications projects since the 2003 bushfires.

Government Response

Noted. The Auditor-General is not subject to direction from the Executive or any Minister. JACS and ESA have commenced an internal review relating to the ESA's communications projects since the 2003 Bushfire.

Recommendation 40

7.49 The Committee recommends that the ACT Government put in place a protocol that clearly establishes where the lines of responsibility fall with respect to the management of emergencies in the ACT.

Government Response

Noted. Responsibility in relation to the management of emergencies is provided in the *Emergencies Act 2004* for the ESA, ACT Ambulance Service, ACT Fire Brigade, ACT Rural Fire Service and the ACT State Emergency Services.

The Chief Police Officer, the ESA Commissioner and the respective Chief Officers all have specific legislated responsibilities in relation to their services and the various incidents that they are responsible for. Through the Territory Crisis Centre, Police Operations Centre and the ESA operations rooms, appropriate governance arrangements for the Territory are, and will be, managed collaboratively across the emergency services.

Recommendation 41

7.52 The Committee recommends that the ACT Government investigate and identify strategies to recruit and retain volunteers to the Rural Fire Service and State Emergency Service willing to make a long term and high level commitment. The ACT Government should consult with Volunteering ACT and Volunteering Australia on this matter.

Government Response

Agreed. The ESA recognises the capability and cost benefit of recruiting volunteers who are prepared to make a long-term and high-level commitment.

Recruitment and retention of volunteers is recognised as an issue, Australia-wide. As a result, various volunteering organisations, and peak bodies such as the Australasian Fire Authorities Council, are undertaking research into improved strategies for the retention of volunteers. The ESA draws on this research and expertise.

The ESA already has strong links with Volunteering ACT and Volunteering Australia, as well as other volunteer organisations. This ensures the ESA receives up-to-date information on issues facing volunteer organisations.

Recommendation 42

7.65 The Committee recommends that the Minister for Police and Emergency Services table annually in the ACT Legislative Assembly a full list of the police policy priorities for the coming year.

Government Response

Agreed-in-principle. The Ministerial Direction issued by the Minister for Police and Emergency Services on 11 July 2006 sets out the Government's priorities and expectations for the AFP and the Chief Police Officer in respect of policing priorities. This direction will remain in force until withdrawn and/or a new Ministerial Direction is issued.

The annual Purchase Agreement for the provision of policing services to the ACT gives details of the policing services to be provided and the key performance indicators for measuring the effectiveness of those services.

The policing priorities for 2006-07 will also be addressed in the 2005-06 and subsequent Annual Reports, Part A - Outlook for the Coming Year.

Recommendation 43

8.12 The Committee recommends that matters relating to the sale of the EpiCentre site be referred to the Planning and Environment Committee for consideration.

Government Response

Noted. The Government considers the reference of matters an issue for the Select Committee to resolve.

Recommendation 44

8.26 The Committee recommends that the Minister for Planning table in the ACT Legislative Assembly a breakdown of employment within the Land Development Agency, detailing which staff as listed in the ACT Government Directory are

- full-time employees of the LDA;
- part-time employees of the LDA; and
- contractors for the LDA.

Government Response

Agreed-in-principle. The Minister for Planning will table in the Legislative Assembly the breakdown of staff employed within the LDA on the next available sitting day.

Recommendation 45

8.41 The Committee recommends that the Department of Territory and Municipal Services investigate and support opportunities for cooperation between the RSPCA and the Domestic Animal Services.

Government Response

Agreed. TAMS has a current project which is investigating an opportunity for greater cooperation between Domestic Animal Services and the RSPCA. This project is scheduled for completion by mid September 2006.

Recommendation 46

8.46 The Committee recommends that the Government strengthen its resolve to increase recycling of waste and set in place strategies to increase the likelihood that the Territory will reach NoWaste targets by 2010.

Government Response

Noted. The Government will continue to work to minimise waste going to landfill but will review the targets to ensure they are achievable. TAMS has recently commenced a review of these targets.

Recommendation 47

8.52 The Committee recommends that all future Budget documents contain a breakdown of funds that will be spent in the following portfolio areas:

- environment;
- sustainability;
- heritage; and
- forestry services.

Government Response

Not agreed. The decision to integrate the areas covering environment, sustainability, heritage and forestry services into the TAMS with Parks and Places, ACT NOWaste, and Sport and Recreation has provided an opportunity to develop an organisational structure that maximises the available synergies and take full advantage of the efficiencies that result.

Recommendation 48

8.63 The Committee recommends that the Government provide details to the ACT community of proposals to change the operating arrangements of ACTION services, and the impact of these changes on ACTION staff, the public, and changes to bus services.

Government Response

Noted. All areas and functions of ACTION are currently being examined for targeted savings through a negotiation process with ACTION staff and union representatives. This process incorporates ACTION's annual review of its network, which will include enhancements and efficiencies to services.

Recommendation 49

8.64 The Committee recommends that a detailed review be undertaken of the maintenance activities undertaken by ACTION to identify opportunities for changes to be made to those practices and for savings to be achieved.

Government Response

Noted. ACTION is currently reviewing its maintenance regime in view of targeted savings, taking into account the integrity of the maintenance system.

Recommendation 50

8.68 The Committee recommends that the Government detail in the ACT Legislative Assembly the effects of the Budget cuts on the 'Kids at Play' program.

Government Response

Noted. Since its inception in October 2004, Kids at Play has serviced over 38,800 children in the 2–12 years age group. The program provides physical activity outcomes for children in the ACT in a non-structured sporting environment, and encourages child and family interaction through play.

The program will now be focussed on preschools and early childhood centres, and to selected community events. The target age group will now be children aged 2-6 years, this is in line with the program's current Phase 2 focus of educating the primary carers of children in the benefits of active play.

The outcome of Phase 2 will be the development of a resource and the delivery of 'playshops' to offer carers practical ideas to get children and families to be engaged in physical activity, and to provide information on healthy lifestyles for children.

A joint management committee has been formed with the program's partners, the Heart Foundation (ACT Division) and the University of Canberra, to ensure a collaborative approach to program delivery, and to ensure sustainable aspects of the program are developed.

Recommendation 51

8.74 The Committee recommends that the Government review the water extraction charges for all sporting bodies.

Government Response

Noted. The water abstraction charge offsets the costs incurred by the Territory and represents a sustainable price for water in the long-term. The increased water abstraction charge, applying from 1 July 2006 to licenses who take water from urban water supply, largely reflects a reassessment of the value of water by the Government. As water is a valuable resource of the Territory, it is essential that the price reflects this and will assist towards managing future demand. Therefore, the Government will not be looking to immediately review the water extraction charges for all sporting bodies. However, as the Minister for Sport and Recreation advised the Committee, discussions will be held with individual sporting bodies to determine their needs in responding to the increased water charges.

Recommendation 52

8.75 The Committee recommends that the Government work with ACTEW to expand the use of recycled water in public parks and sporting grounds.

Government Response

Noted. There are two groups actively pursuing opportunities for cooperation between ACTEW and the government in extending the use of recycled water for irrigation. These are the Senior Executives Water Coordination Group (SEWCG), which includes senior officers from Treasury, TAMS, Health, ACTPLA and ACTEW.

The second is the Chief Executives Water Coordination Group, which consists of chief executives of government departments with an involvement in water use and management, including Treasury and TAMS, along with the CEO of ACTEW.

Both of these groups have explored, and continue to explore, opportunities including the possibility of accessing Australian Government funding through the National Water Initiative. Projects involving the use of recycled water for irrigation generally have high capital costs and funding assistance is often critical in being able to progress their development.

Recommendation 53

8.80 The Committee recommends that the Government announce its intentions on the dragway as soon as possible.

Government Response

Noted. The Government has consistently advised that it supports the development and operation of a dragway in the ACT subject, to it being able to meet environmental, planning and budget requirements.

A community consultation paper released in February this year provides details on how the Government is proceeding with the evaluation of the project. Consistent with that paper various work is in train, including: the preparation and release of a draft Environmental Protection Policy (EPP - public consultation on this closed in June with approximately 200 submissions being received); detailed investigation on the financial costs of developing and operating a facility; and the first stage of a formal preliminary assessment under the *Land (Planning and Environment) Act 1991*.

Government expects to consider the various work undertaken to date in the next month or so and, if the outcome continues to suggest that environmental, planning and budget issues can be addressed, the EPP and Preliminary Assessment processes will be completed. Following this, the project would move to the development application stage.

Recommendation 54

8.84 The Committee recommends that funding for the Rally of Canberra continue for the 2007 event.

Government Response

Agreed-in-principle. The Rally of Canberra will remain a combined event of a round of the Asia Pacific Rally Championships and the Australian Rally Championships. The preliminary dates for the Rally in 2007 are set for 5-6 May.

Planning has commenced for the 2007 event. The tender for the Clerk of Course for the Rally is now in the market place. Australian Capital Tourism is actively seeking sponsorship for the event and discussions are currently taking place with a number of potential sponsors.

In order to have a viable as well as a successful event, it is proposed to simplify the format of the event and achieve savings in our marketing and promotional budgets.

Recommendation 55

8.85 The Committee recommends that the Department Territory and Municipal Services undertake a review of the tourism and financial benefits of the event with a view to moving the organisation of the Rally of Canberra to the Sport and Recreation portfolio in the next Budget.

Government Response

Noted. The Tourism portfolio is currently responsible for the Rally of Canberra and has built up considerable corporate knowledge and expertise about the event over the past decade. At the conclusion of the Rally each year, an independent review is undertaken to measure and discuss attendance at the event, visitor satisfaction (both local and interstate) and the economic impact.

The Rally of Canberra has been well managed by Tourism in previous years, which is the Government's sole provider of major events funding. Tourism manages the Rally in conjunction with several other events over the course of each year, allowing for the efficient use of staffing resources within the agency.

The Committee has offered no discussion on the perceived benefits of moving the event to the Sport and Recreation portfolio. Rather than improving management of the Rally, any such move is more likely to hinder the event in terms of losing valuable corporate knowledge and reduced workplace efficiency. As such, any review beyond the current annual terms of reference would be unwarranted.

Recommendation 56

8.89 The Committee recommends that the Minister ensures that the graves of ex-service personnel located in the ACT, which cannot be maintained by relatives, be appropriately maintained by the ACT Government and that an Australian flag be flown daily in the war graves section of the Woden Cemetery.

Government Response

Noted. The ACT Public Cemeteries Authority is currently working on perpetual care issues governing all cemeteries. Furthermore, other funding options are being explored, including the possibility of funding by way of Heritage grants, will be taken up with ACT Heritage.

The estimated cost each per annum to fly a flag for Gungahlin and Woden cemeteries ex-service areas would be \$3,900 and the practicality of this is being investigated.

Recommendation 57

9.11 The Committee recommends that the Government table the details of all research informing the decision to introduce paid parking, particularly with respect to the evidence about commuter and other parking misuse in the hospital precinct.

Government Response

Not agreed. This matter has been the subject of public discussion and consultation. Information has been made available to relevant stakeholders.

The introduction of pay parking is designed to better manage the availability of parking at the public hospitals. This is also an appropriate means of raising revenue

for the public health system and is in line with most other metropolitan hospitals in Australia. The availability of parking at the public hospitals has been eroded over time with the increase in the services provided and the numbers of staff and students based at the hospitals.

Pay parking will also discourage the use of hospital parking spaces by people who are not accessing hospital facilities, thereby maximising the amount of space for patients, visitors and staff.

Recommendation 58

9.12 The Committee recommends that pay parking at Canberra's public hospitals be reviewed by the Government following assessment of the documents.

Government Response

Not agreed. The introduction of paid parking will only be reviewed in relation to its impact on the supply of parking to ensure the system is effective and efficient.

Recommendation 59

9.16 The Committee recommends that incidents of bypass be included in the Health Statistics reports.

Government Response

Not agreed. Load sharing (which is often mistakenly referred to as 'bypass') is not a performance measure for the ACT public hospital system or other health systems around Australia.

Load sharing is a management tool that ensures that demand for emergency services at our public hospitals is managed in way to provide the greatest possible access to care and to maximise patient safety. It is not used as a measure to determine the effectiveness or efficiency of hospital services.

Recommendation 60

9.20 The Committee recommends that the Minister for Health undertake a mapping exercise of existing services and mental health need in the ACT and report to the Legislative Assembly in time to inform the next Budget.

Government Response

Agreed. ACT Health has engaged consultants to develop a Mental Health Services Plan and this is expected to be completed in early 2007.

The Mental Health Service Plan will:

- identify current and future mental health service needs in the ACT;
- propose service responses for patient/consumer services;
- identify workforce planning and development implications; and
- provide a framework for monitoring and implementation.

The plan should be available to inform the next Budget.

Recommendation 61

9.21 The Committee recommends that the Minister for Health develop a plan to increase Mental Health spending to at least eleven per cent of the Health budget by 2010 - 2011 Budget.

Government Response

Noted. The ACT Government has committed to an average 6 per cent per annum growth in the mental health budget in the published forward estimates and will consider this level of funding once the results of the Mental Health Services Plan are known.

Recommendation 62

9.24 The Committee recommends that the Minister for Health table in the Legislative Assembly all documents concerning the introduction of means tested fees in the Health portfolio.

Government Response

Agreed. The proposal to revise access and charges for community health services has not been finalised and public consultation on the proposals will be undertaken before a decision is finalised. A public discussion paper is being prepared to inform the consultation process and will be made available to the Assembly.

Recommendation 63

9.29 The Committee recommends that the integration of Healthpact into the ACT Health be reversed.

Government Response

Not agreed. The government considered the integration of HealthPACT into ACT Health at some length. It considered that the Government of the day should accept responsibility for the allocation of the considerable grant funds within the HealthPACT scheme and that the administration costs for the scheme had become unacceptably high. Integration of HealthPACT into ACT Health has addressed both these concerns.

It is important to emphasise that the grant programs and funding previously administered by HealthPACT will be maintained.

Recommendation 64

9.34 The Committee recommends that the Minister for Health outline to the Legislative Assembly further initiatives to retain staff within the ACT Health system given the high demand for health staff of all kind across all jurisdictions and indeed internationally.

Government Response

Noted. In addition to the workforce budget initiative in 2006-07 (\$1 million), the ACT Health Workforce Plan was launched in April 2006 and is available on the ACT Health web site.

ACT Health aims to ensure that it's overall conditions of service remain competitive and that employment agreements and other employment practices encourage flexibility both in employment of current staff and to attract new employees. Further, our partnerships with educational institutions with respect to curriculum delivery and clinical placements encourage an ongoing relationship with students as potential employees. Educational programs are also provided for bridging and refresher training for mature aged and overseas qualified nurses and midwives wishing to enter or re-enter the workforce. It should be noted that these strategies have been effective in both significantly reducing turnover and in reducing vacancy rates within ACT Health clinical ranks.

Recommendation 65

9.39 The Committee recommends a greater focus on early intervention and prevention strategies to assist in relieving the pressure on both the emergency department, hospital beds, and elective surgery waiting lists.

Government Response

Agreed. Early intervention and prevention are key approaches for maintaining health and reducing pressure on hospitals. ACT Health is developing strategies in this area including the ACT Primary Health Care Strategy and an ACT Chronic Disease strategy.

Initiatives announced in the 2006-07 budget, including Mental Health Promotion, Prevention and Early Intervention (\$0.758 million), Pandemic Influenza Plan Implementation (\$0.100 million), Food Safety Programs (\$0.210 million) and National Bowel Cancer Screening (\$0.150 million) will also contribute to the general health of the community.

In addition, the Access Improvement Program (\$0.750 million) will assist with access to appropriate health services.

Recommendation 66

10.4 The Committee recommends that the Standing Committee on Education, Training and Young People review the adequacy of the strategies and resources provided to deal with bullying in all school systems, both public and private.

Government Response

Noted. All ACT government and non-government schools are required to comply with the National Safe Schools Framework.

Recommendation 67

10.8 The Committee recommends that the Government undertake a comprehensive investigation into the drift from government schools to non-government schools and to report back to the Legislative Assembly by 30 November 2006.

Government Response

Not agreed. Significant research is already available on this issue.

Recommendation 68

10.16 The Committee recommends that the Government clarify its public announcement regarding its position on the sale of land from possible school closures to clear up this discrepancy.

Government Response

The *Towards 2020* proposal has not been based on any consideration of a possible future use of any of the sites and no decisions will be taken until the end of the consultation period.

Recommendation 69

10.33 The Committee recommends that there be no increase in Canberra Institute of Technology fees until the ACT Skills Commission has examined the impact of increasing fees on students undertaking trades where skills are in short supply in the ACT.

Government Response

Not Agreed. Fees at Canberra Institute of Technology (CIT) have not been increased since 1998 and that the budgeted increase only seeks to reflect fees at their same real level as in 1998. Fees for first year apprentices will not be affected by the general fee increase as they are capped at \$250 per annum (plus CITSA Services Fee) according to the DET guidelines.

CIT also has in place a generous fee concession policy which provides a 50 per cent reduction in program fees to students who receive particular social security benefits. CIT also offers scholarship and loans schemes to assist students.

Recommendation 70

11.7 The Committee recommends that all future Budget documents contain a breakdown of funds that will be spent in the following portfolio areas:

- **Multicultural affairs;**
- **Women; and**
- **Indigenous affairs.**

Government Response

Not Agreed. The funds for women and indigenous affairs transferred in total from CMD on 1 July 2006 and were not separately identified while in Community Affairs in CMD.

The Department of Disability, Housing and Community Services is now the lead agency for policy development in the areas of multicultural affairs, women, ageing and indigenous affairs. Program and service delivery to these groups involves most areas of government and the specific identification of funds for policy for the nominated portfolio areas would be misleading.

Recommendation 71

11.14 The Committee recommends the Minister for Housing provide details about the services that will be provided directly to its clients to ensure that direct services will continue to be provided in a manner that in no way impacts negatively on the provision of housing services.

Government Response

Noted. Housing Manager numbers are not affected in the reduction of staff within Housing and Community Services. Current tenancy services will be maintained and opportunities to engage with tenants in a variety of different and innovative environments will continue to be explored.

With regard to Shopfront services, clients will continue to have access to the present transactional arrangements provided at Canberra Connect. Regular outreach arrangements with Housing ACT staff interacting and providing information and support to clients in a variety of locations will be established to ensure a high level of client service is delivered.

Recommendation 72

11.49 The Committee recommends that the Minister for Disability and Community Services produce evidence of such a shortfall in the capacity of occupation of SAAP services and shows what the government is doing to bolster capacity to meet demand.

Government Response

Noted. The capacity of Homelessness Accommodation Services in the 2005 calendar year averaged 80 per cent, with some services operating at capacity as low as 37 per cent. The data is derived from the Jan-June 2005 and July-Dec 2005 Output and Performance reports provided by agencies to the Department as part of their contractual reporting requirements.

Throughout 2006-07 the Government will increase the number of transitional supported accommodation options through the provision of 20 additional properties to which clients already in crisis accommodation can transition to before moving to independent living. The provision of an additional 20 properties will assist more than 80 clients per year as those accommodated will transition to independent accommodation within 3 to 4 months.

In providing these additional properties, the Government will increase the availability of crisis beds in existing services, creating improved exit points for people transitioning from homelessness.

Recommendation 73

11.62 The Committee recommends that Ministerial Advisory Committee on Multicultural Affairs (MACMA) be re established.

Government Response

Not Agreed. The Minister finds the opportunity to receive advice directly from democratically elected members of a significant number of multicultural community groups much more valuable than from the limited source of advice that would be available from an advisory committee comprising a handful of people.

Under the current arrangements, representatives from Canberra's multicultural community groups will have the opportunity to provide direct advice to the Minister at six consultative forums that have been organised in 2006-07.

In addition to this, the Muslim Advisory Council provides advice to the Minister on issues of concern specifically to the local Muslim community.



**Government Response
to the Dissenting Report of the
Select Committee on Estimates 2006-2007
by Steve Pratt and Brendan Smyth**

August 2006

The Dissenting Report of Mr Pratt and Mr Smyth has failed to address some very important aspects of the 2006-07 Budget, most importantly, the overall fiscal responsibility of the Government.

In presenting the 2006-07 Budget, the Government had stressed that the budget is framed for the future. The Government has taken the important step of identifying and addressing issues now to provide capacity for the future to deal with fiscal pressures such as the ageing population and health care costs.

The 2006-07 Budget provides measures necessary to build strong foundations for the future of the ACT's finances. Delaying projects or ignoring to address these issues now will not provide a sustainable fiscal platform, leaving compounded problems for the forthcoming governments to rectify.

The failure of Messrs Pratt and Smyth to provide the Government, through their dissenting report, with feasible alternative or policies to address the future pressures, including the increasing costs of health care, reduction of the land revenue base and the ageing population, is concerning.

Exhaustive and thorough analysis was undertaken in the development of the 2006-07 Budget. The Government has endeavoured to provide extensive information to the Assembly and the community. The 2006-07 Budget included additional budget papers detailing the economic and financial outlook for the ACT, and the background and detail of the reform measures. In relation to schools, the Government has published the 'Towards 2020' Education Paper. Additional facts sheets detailing the budgetary measures and reforms were also made available.

This Government has recognised the need for change and made the decisions necessary to reduce the cost of government services and return costs back into line with those generally incurred in other jurisdictions.

Not only has the Government introduced a range of administrative reforms and structural changes, but it has also provided significant reinvestment and redirection of resources into areas of critical need, namely within the education and health sectors.

This Government has accepted its responsibility to concentrate on the long-term financial sustainability of the Territory and put in place measures to ensure future generations continue to inherit the quality of services and infrastructure currently enjoyed.

Finally, while the Government recognises that it is up to the Committee members to disagree with specific budget measures, it is disappointing that Messrs Pratt and Smyth have not provided any alternatives to achieve the additional revenue and expenditure savings proposed in the Budget.

Specific Issues

The Canberra Plan

Messrs Pratt and Smyth claim “the intentions of the Economic White Paper have been demolished and the Social Plan abandoned.”¹ On the contrary, the Government remains committed to the long-term vision for the city articulated in *The Canberra Plan*. Recent Budget decisions support the vision and themes of *The Canberra Plan*. *The Canberra Plan* is an evolving document. We said we would “strive to make a lasting difference in the quality of life and well being for current and future Canberrans. *The Canberra Plan* will constantly look for better ways of doing things. To do that we need to consider, at the same time, the long-term health of our economy, environment and our people.”²

In relation to the *Economic White Paper*, *The Canberra Spatial Plan* and *The Canberra Social Plan* it is appropriate and timely to review the actions to ensure government services continue to meet the needs of the Canberra community into the future. Some of the goals and targets we set ourselves in *The Canberra Plan* may not be reached as swiftly as the Government would have liked. Some of our aspirations may remain beyond our reach in the short-term, but the values remain intact.

Tabling of the Functional Review

In relation to tabling of the report of the Strategic and Functional Review of the ACT Public Sector and Services, the Government again reiterates, the Report was prepared for Cabinet consideration in the preparation of the 2006-07 Budget. There are well-established protocols relating to advice to Cabinet.

In announcing the Review, it was made clear that the report was being prepared for Cabinet and not for general release. Cabinet documents are not written for a public audience; they are written to allow full and frank discussion by Ministers. Our system of government depends on Cabinet being able to debate issues in confidence.

Consistent with the Government’s commitment to accountability, the financial implications and decisions in the Budget have been reported transparently in the Budget Papers and a range of other documents.

Staffing Numbers

It is correct the government broadly estimated a reduction in the public service resulting from structural and administrative reforms of approximately 500 staff, however, when offset by an increase in staffing through the introduction of new initiatives (primarily in the Health sector where total funding is actually increasing), the result is an estimated **net** reduction of 318 staff. There is no need for an \$18m adjustment to the Budget.

It is also the case that these are broad planning assumptions made for the Budget. The actual number will depend on decision taken over the course of the year by Agency Heads in order to implement their budgets.

¹ Select Committee on Estimates 2006-2007 – Appropriation Bill 2006-2007 Part 2: Additional comments and dissenting report, p 40.

² *The Canberra Plan at a glance...*