

STANDING COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION, TRAINING  
AND YOUTH AFFAIRS  
**Report on Annual and Financial Reports 2007-2008**

MAY 2009

**Report 1**



## **Committee Membership**

Amanda Bresnan MLA (Chair)

Joy Burch MLA (Deputy Chair)

Jeremy Hanson MLA

## **Secretariat**

Secretary: Sandra Lilburn

Administration: Lydia Chung

## **Contact Information**

|           |                                                                                        |
|-----------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Telephone | 02 6205 0127                                                                           |
| Facsimile | 02 6205 0432                                                                           |
| Post      | GPO Box 1020, CANBERRA ACT 2601                                                        |
| Email     | <a href="mailto:committees@parliament.act.gov.au">committees@parliament.act.gov.au</a> |
| Website   | <a href="http://www.parliament.act.gov.au">www.parliament.act.gov.au</a>               |

## **Resolution of Appointment**

On the 9 December 2008, the Legislative Assembly for the ACT resolved to establish a Standing Committee on Education, Training and Youth Affairs to examine matters related to early childhood education and care, primary, secondary, post secondary and tertiary education, non-government education, youth services, technology, arts and culture

## **Terms of Reference**

On the 11 December 2008, the following reports for the financial year 2007 – 2008 and the calendar year 2008 were referred by the Legislative Assembly for the ACT to the Standing Committee on Education, Training and Young People:

- ACT Building and Construction Industry Training Fund Authority Annual Report;
- ArtsACT as a subsumed report of the Chief Minister's Department Annual Report;
- Canberra Institute of Technology Annual Report;
- Cultural Facilities Corporation;
- Department of Education and Training Annual Report;
- Office for Children, Youth and Family Support, as a section of the Department of Disability, Housing and Community Services Annual Report;
- Official Visitor, as an annexed report in the Department of Disability, Housing and Community Services Annual Report; and
- The University of Canberra.

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## RECOMMENDATIONS

### RECOMMENDATION 1

3.10 The Committee recommends that the ACT Building and Construction Industry Training Fund Authority provide comparative energy, waste and greenhouse gas data in each successive annual reports.

### RECOMMENDATION 2

4.27 The Committee recommends that the ACT Government advise the Assembly of all classes in all public schools where the individual class size is above 21 students.

### RECOMMENDATION 3

5.9 The Committee recommends that the Minister for Children and Young People advise the Assembly of the outcomes of the compliance review project once completed.

### RECOMMENDATION 4

5.14 The Committee recommends that the Office of Children, Youth and Family Support (OCYFS) provide details of the retention rates for staff recruited from overseas as a part of the human resource performance report within the Department of Disability, Housing and Community Services annual report.

### RECOMMENDATION 5

5.22 The Committee recommends that the Minister for Children and Young People report back to the Assembly on the progress made in the development of a Child and Family Centre in West Belconnen.

### RECOMMENDATION 6

5.32 The Committee recommends that the Office and Children, Youth and Family Services provides details in the next Department of Disability, Housing and Community Services annual report of all programs offered, including those specifically intended for Indigenous young offenders, and the organisations working within Bimberi.

STANDING COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION, TRAINING AND YOUTH  
AFFAIRS

# 1 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 On 11 December 2009, departmental and agency annual reports for 2007-2008 were referred to the Legislative Assembly's standing committees for inquiry and report.
- 1.2 The Standing Committee on Education, Training & Youth Affairs received the following reports:
  - ACT Building and Construction Industry Training Fund Authority Annual Report;
  - ArtsACT as a subsumed report of the Chief Minister's Department Annual Report;
  - Canberra Institute of Technology Annual Report;
  - Cultural Facilities Corporation;
  - Department of Education and Training Annual Report;
  - Office for Children, Youth and Family Support, as a section of the Department of Disability, Housing and Community Services Annual Report;
  - Official Visitor, as an annexed report in the Department of Disability, Housing and Community Services Annual Report; and
  - The University of Canberra.
- 1.3 The Committee resolved to not inquire into the reports of the Canberra Institute of Technology and the University of Canberra for this inquiry as they are calendar year reports. The Official Visitors were not able to appear on this occasion.
- 1.4 All other referred annual reports were discussed at public hearings held on 17 February 2009 and 3 March 2009 at which Mr Andrew Barr MLA, Minister for Education and Training and Minister for Children and Young People and officials from the relevant agencies appeared before the Committee (see Appendix A: Witnesses).
- 1.5 The schedule of hearings was posted on the Legislative Assembly website and the Committee Office issued a media alert advising of the forthcoming

hearings. All hearings were web streamed and transcripts are available on the Legislative Assembly website.

- 1.6      Answers to five questions taken on notice during the hearing were received and are listed at Appendix B. These answers are published on the Committee inquiry webpage.<sup>1</sup> A letter from the Director of artsACT (dated 2 March 2009) clarifying figures quoted at the hearing on 17 February 2009 is published on the webpage. A copy of the letter is appended to this report (Appendix C).

## **Purpose and intent of annual reports**

- 1.7      Agency reporting requirements are set out in the Chief Minister's Annual Reports Directions 2007-2010 (the *Directions*).<sup>2</sup> The *Directions* specify that annual reports should be 'an objective account, primarily to the Legislative Assembly, of how the entity has performed during the reporting year'.<sup>3</sup>
- 1.8      The Directions also specify that an effective annual report will:
- provide a clear picture of the agency's purpose, priorities, outputs and achievements;
  - focus on results and outcomes – communicate the success or otherwise, including shortfalls, of the agency's activities in achieving government policy outcomes in the reporting year, while accounting for the resources used in the process;
  - discuss results against expectations – provide sufficient information and analysis for the Assembly and community to make a fully informed judgement on agency performance;
  - clearly identify any changes to structures or functions of the agency in the reporting period and explain changes in performance over time;
  - report on agency financial and operational performance and clearly link with budgeted priorities and financial projections as set out in annual Budget Estimate Papers and the agency Statement of Intent and Corporate Plan;

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<sup>1</sup> <<http://www.parliament.act.gov.au/committees/index1.asp?committee=117&inquiry=756&category=15>>

<sup>2</sup> <[http://www.cmd.act.gov.au/\\_data/assets/pdf\\_file/0003/2793/annual\\_report\\_directions07-10.pdf](http://www.cmd.act.gov.au/_data/assets/pdf_file/0003/2793/annual_report_directions07-10.pdf)>

<sup>3</sup>, *Chief Minister's Annual Reports Directions 2007-2010*, ACT Government, Canberra: p. 7.

- provide performance information that is complete and informative, linking costs and results to provide evidence of value for money;
  - discuss risks and environmental factors affecting the agency's ability to achieve objectives including any strategies employed to manage these factors, and forecast future needs and expectations;
  - recognise the diverse needs and backgrounds of stakeholder groups and present information in a manner that is responsive to the maximum number of users while maintaining a suitable level of detail;
  - comply with any specific legislative reporting requirement; and
  - comply with the *Annual Reports (Government Agencies) Act 2004* and the Chief Minister's Annual Report Directions.<sup>4</sup>
- 1.9 The content of annual reports reflects the requirements of the *Directions* and is also influenced by comments provided by Legislative Assembly standing committees, the Institute of Public Administration's annual review of reports, the Auditor General's report on the effectiveness of annual reporting, as well as practices and publications from other jurisdictions.<sup>5</sup>
- 1.10 Each year, annual reports are assessed by the Institute of Public Administration (ACT Division) for their compliance with formal guidelines and requirements and against internationally recognised characteristics of good reporting.<sup>6</sup> After compliance, the Institute uses seven criteria to assess annual reports - coherence, accessibility, performance information, appearance, balance, learning and engagement.<sup>7</sup>
- 1.11 In considering the referred annual reports, the Committee agreed to adopt a broad approach to the conduct of the Inquiry, allowing Members to extend their knowledge and awareness of the portfolio areas. Consequently, the Committee's inquiry focused on general issues of program management and on the clear reporting of this management rather than on technical adherence

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<sup>4</sup> *Chief Minister's Annual Reports Directions 2007-2010*, ACT Government, Canberra: pp. 5-6.

<sup>5</sup> ACT Auditor General (2003) *The Effectiveness of Annual Reporting*, accessible at <[http://www.audit.act.gov.au/auditreports/reports2003/Rpt1\\_2003.pdf](http://www.audit.act.gov.au/auditreports/reports2003/Rpt1_2003.pdf)>

<sup>6</sup> See <<http://www.act.ipaa.org.au/>>

<sup>7</sup> IPPA Annual Reports Awards 2006/2007 Judges Report, p. 5; accessible at <<http://www.act.ipaa.org.au/docs/Judges%20report%202006%20-%202007.pdf>>

to reporting guidelines.

- 1.12    The Annual Reports Inquiry process and the public hearings in particular, provide Legislative Assembly members with an opportunity to seek clarification about the activities that have been undertaken by the ACT Government and to ascertain how agencies are managing their program performance from one year to the next.

## 2 ARTSACT AND CULTURAL FACILITIES CORPORATION

- 2.1 Located within the Chief Minister's Department, artsACT assists with the development and implementation of the Government's arts policy, provides support to the ACT Cultural Council and manages a range of cultural facilities and arts funding programs.<sup>8</sup>
- 2.2 The Cultural Facilities Corporation manages the facilities and the delivery of programs at the Canberra Theatre Centre and the ACT Museums and Galleries.<sup>9</sup>
- 2.3 On the 17 February 2009, the Committee meet with the Minister for Arts and Heritage and officials from artsACT and the Cultural Facilities Corporation (a list of witnesses is provided at Appendix A). Some of the issues discussed with the Committee are detailed below.

### Centenary of Canberra celebrations

- 2.4 The Committee was interested in the involvement of artsACT in the preparation for the Centenary of Canberra. Noting that the Annual Report for the Chief Minister's Department highlights a number of sporting events that have been secured during the centenary year, the Committee was interested to hear whether cultural institutions, such as the Canberra Museum and Gallery and the Canberra Theatre, would also be involved in the planning for the celebrations of Canberra's centenary in 2013.
- 2.5 The Chief Minister assured the Committee that 'artistic expression and the arts will be, we hope, a very significant feature of the celebrations in 2013.'<sup>10</sup>
- 2.6 The Chief Executive Officer from the Cultural Facilities Corporation confirmed

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<sup>8</sup> Chief Minister's Department Annual Report 2007-2008 volume 1, p. 39.

<sup>9</sup> Cultural Facilities Corporation Annual Report 2007-2008, pp. 8-9.

<sup>10</sup> Mr Stanhope, *Transcript of evidence*, 17 February 2009, p. 2.

that they have been involved with the interdepartmental committee which has been planning for the occasion.

- 2.7 Possible cultural projects included an exhibition focussing on Canberra's gold recipients and highlighting their stories.<sup>11</sup> The Corporation anticipated that the collection of Dawn Waterhouse would feature during the year. As a long standing citizen of Canberra; Dawn Waterhouse:

built up a collection of Canberra souvenirs and memorabilia which we were able to purchase with a special grant that the ACT government provided. We think that that collection will be an ideal focus for a number of activities and programs in the lead-up to the centenary.<sup>12</sup>

## Percent-for-Art scheme

- 2.8 Among the priority arts initiative during reporting year was the implementation of the Percent-for-Art Scheme. The Scheme was announced by the Minister for Arts and Heritage in May 2007, as an initiative which would require one percent of the capital works budget to be allocated towards the establishment and maintenance of a public art collection:

A portion of the 'Percent for Art Scheme' funds will go toward maintenance and promotion of the existing collection and the rest towards the purchase and commissioning of new works.<sup>13</sup>

- 2.9 The first year of implementation for the Percent-for-Art scheme occurred during the reporting period. During 2007-2008, \$670,000 of commissioned artworks was added to the Department's asset register.<sup>14</sup>
- 2.10 The Committee sought clarification on the funds allocated and expended as a part of the Scheme and was advised that a total of \$991,887 had been allocated from the Percent-for-Art Scheme in 2007–2008 financial year and \$2,300,000 in

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<sup>11</sup> Ms Elvin, *Transcript of evidence*, 17 February 2009, p. 2.

<sup>12</sup> Ms Elvin, *Transcript of evidence*, 17 February 2009, p. 2.

<sup>13</sup> Mr Jon Stanhope, Percent-For-Art Scheme a Highlight of Action Plan Media Release 248/07 10 May 2007

<sup>14</sup> *Chief Minister's Department Annual Report 2007-2008*, p. 93.

the 2008-2009 financial year.

2.11 The Committee was interested in the both the criteria used to select sites and appropriate public art pieces as well as any measures taken to capture public feedback on public art works once in situ.

2.12 The Director of artsACT advised the Committee that:

We do not have a formal mechanism after the fact of the works being installed, but in the process of selecting the sites, and also in some cases with the commissioning process, we do involve people from the community in that selection process.<sup>15</sup>

In general, however, the Public Art Advisory Council is responsible for the selection of public art works.<sup>16</sup>

2.13 The Committee was also advised that there was no formal process in place for gauging the public's view of new arts works once installed.

2.14 The Committee also sought further details on about a number of specific issues in this portfolio area including:

### **The Canberra Glassworks – attendance figures**

2.15 In response to a question taken on notice, the Minister for Arts and Heritage was able to advise the Committee that a total of 78,743 patrons had visited the facility during the reporting year. This figure included 1,542 participants in educational programs.<sup>17</sup>

### **Lanyon House and the location of the Nolan Collection**

2.16 The location of the Nolan Collection of artworks has continued to be the subject of discussion between the Government and Lady Mary Nolan. The Minister for Arts and Heritage indicated that:

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<sup>15</sup> Mr Whitney, *Transcript of evidence*, 17 February 2009, p. 6.

<sup>16</sup> The Committee wrote to the Minister on 23 March 2009 seeking further information about the formal guidelines or evaluative criteria used by the Public Art Advisory. The response, which outlines the commissioning process, was received just prior to finalising the report and is appended to the report (Appendix C).

<sup>17</sup> Question taken on notice ETYA 04-2009 published on the Committee's webpage  
<<http://www.parliament.act.gov.au/committees/index1.asp?committee=117&inquiry=756&category=15>>

at the end of the day the collection is the commonwealth's. The ACT government has maintained it on trust. I have sought to engage the commonwealth in a final decision around the collection...we are awaiting a formal commonwealth position on its view about how the collection might be best maintained and housed.<sup>18</sup>

**Canberra Theatre Centre – subscription rate for 2008 and parking study**

- 2.17 According to the Cultural Facilities Corporation, the Committee was advised that 2008 had been particularly successful for the subscription program with the highest number of subscription packages ever sold being recorded.<sup>19</sup> Figures were not as high for the current season, but it was still early in the year.
- 2.18 The Committee also heard that the Cultural Facilities Corporation has been carefully considering the long-term needs of theatre patrons. Research in this area has indicated that the theatre-going demographic values safe, convenient and accessible car parking. The Corporation has sought to ensure that these needs will be included into any planning for redevelopment of the current open car parking sites adjacent to the Canberra Theatre Centre.<sup>20</sup>

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<sup>18</sup> Mr Stanhope, *Transcript of evidence*, 17 February 2009, p. 9.

<sup>19</sup> Ms Elvin, *Transcript of evidence*, 17 February 2009, p. 8.

<sup>20</sup> Ms Elvin, *Transcript of evidence*, 17 February 2009, p. 9.

### 3 ACT BUILDING AND CONSTRUCTION INDUSTRY TRAINING FUND AUTHORITY

- 3.1 The ACT Building and Construction Industry Training Fund Authority (the Authority) is a statutory body which provides funding for the training of tradespeople particularly in areas of skills shortage identified by the industry. Income for the fund is based on a 0.2 per cent levy on each construction project undertaken in the Territory.<sup>21</sup>
- 3.2 At the public hearing held on 17 February 2009, the Committee heard from the Minister for Education and Training and officials from the Authority (a list of witnesses is provided in Appendix A).
- 3.3 The Committee asked a series of questions about issues detailed in the report and requested updates on a range of matters including the level of demand for training in environmentally sustainable retrofitting of old buildings, details of the identified skills shortage area and the level of access and equity initiatives pursued by the Authority.
- 3.4 On the latter issue, the Authority advised that there are approximately 15 women apprentices, including the current trainee of the year.<sup>22</sup> However, while the Authority will pay a subsidy to an employer training an apprentice with a disability, the Committee was advised in a response to a question taken on notice that there were no workers with an injury or disability funded as a part of the access and equity program in 2007-2008.<sup>23</sup>

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<sup>21</sup> *ACT Building and Construction Industry Training Fund Authority Annual Report 2007-2008*, p. 5.

<sup>22</sup> Mr Service, *Transcript of evidence*, 17 February 2009, p. 51.

<sup>23</sup> Question taken on notice ETYA 05-2009 and published on the Committee's webpage  
<<http://www.parliament.act.gov.au/committees/index1.asp?committee=117&inquiry=756&category=15>>

## Impact of economic downturn

- 3.5 A central issue of concern to the Committee in terms of potential impact on the training support provided by the Authority was the impact of the economic downturn. Raising this concern about the potential impact of the economic downturn on the Authority's capacity to meet demand for training, the Committee was advised that the projections for the next 12 months were very positive as the Authority 'has been quite meticulous in ensuring that it can in fact deal with difficult times.'<sup>24</sup> The Authority informed the Committee that it had established and maintained substantial reserves.
- 3.6 However, the other factor in the current economic scenario was the capacity of the industry to retain apprentices. The Committee was informed that this was essentially a question about the value of wages and that 'one of the great challenges which still remains over many years is just the amount that employers can afford to pay apprentices'.<sup>25</sup> The funds provided by the Authority to support the employment of apprentices in key trade areas are additional to the funding support provided by the ACT and Australian Governments.
- 3.7 However, looking back to a previous period of significant downturn, the Chair of the Authority advised:
- I was in the system in the 1970s where we terminated a lot of apprentices because there were problems in the industry and a downturn in the industry, and you will lose those people. So our intentions would be to get those people through their apprenticeship term, be it through accelerated training or simulator training or stuff like that. You certainly do not want to lose the apprentices that are currently in the system.<sup>26</sup>
- 3.8 In terms of planning for the coming year and the development of the 2010 Training Plan, the Authority considers that the consultation process will provide an opportunity for any changes in the circumstances and training

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<sup>24</sup> Mr Service, *Transcript of evidence*, 17 February 2009, p. 47.

<sup>25</sup> Mr Service, *Transcript of evidence*, 17 February 2009, p. 47.

<sup>26</sup> Mr Service, *Transcript of evidence*, 17 February 2009, p. 50.

needs of the industry to be articulated and accommodated.<sup>27</sup>

### **Ecologically sustainable development**

- 3.9 During the hearing, the Committee noted the comprehensive reporting of the Authority's energy, waste and greenhouse gas data using the online system for comprehensive activity reporting (OSCAR). The Committee indicated that a comparative representation of these figures from one year to the next in successive annual reports would be a useful way to monitor data changes over time.

### **RECOMMENDATION 1**

- 3.10 **The Committee recommends that the ACT Building and Construction Industry Training Fund Authority provide comparative energy, waste and greenhouse gas data in each successive annual reports.**

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<sup>27</sup> Mr Service, *Transcript of evidence*, 17 February 2009, p. 47.

**12**    STANDING COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION, TRAINING AND YOUTH  
AFFAIRS

## 4 DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION AND TRAINING

- 4.1 The services provided by the Department of Education and Training (DET) include 'the provision of early intervention education programs; public school education at primary school, high school and senior secondary college levels; registration of non-government schools and home education; and the planning and coordination of vocational education and training.'<sup>28</sup>
- 4.2 At the public hearing held on 17 February 2009, the Committee heard from the Minister for Education and Training and officials from the Department of Education and Training (a list of witnesses is provided in Appendix A). Discussion during the hearing ranged across the portfolio area but some of the issues of particular interest are discussed in more detail below.

### Responses to student equity indicators

- 4.3 The Committee was particularly interested in the indicators of student performance and the measures taken by DET to reduce differentials in the level of achievement. DET's Annual Report highlights that ACT students perform better than students in other jurisdictions in terms of international assessment results.<sup>29</sup> However, the Committee was interested to hear what measures had been taken to address low equity results in the ACT and the achievement gap between some students.
- 4.4 The Committee was advised that significant detail about the data was provided in the annual report, including an independent assessment by the Australian Council of Educational Research (ACER) conducted to address concerns about the education equity and student achievement indicators. This research is provided in overview in the Annual Report and offers a comparison of 2000, 2003 and 2006 Program for International Student

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<sup>28</sup> Department of Education and Training (2008) *Annual Report 2007-2008*, Canberra. p. 2.

<sup>29</sup> Department of Education and Training (2008) *Annual Report 2007-2008*, Canberra. pp 4 and 106-10

Assessment (PISA) and an assessment of Australian students' performance against international comparisons.<sup>30</sup> The comparative analysis confirmed that:

- The ACT performed consistently well in these assessments.
- There was no significant difference in reading literacy results between ACT students at the lower end of the scale in the PISA results for 2000, 2003 and 2006.
- In 2006, there was no statistically significant difference in the score range between the 5<sup>th</sup> and 25<sup>th</sup> percentile compared with the national or OECD scores.

- 4.5 At the hearing, DET also advised that the PISA figures need to be interpreted in the ACT context where the bottom quartile is not comparable to the bottom quartile in other jurisdictions:

There are some small issues in terms of low SES in the bottom quartile but we have got to remember that in PISA the low SES group is defined as the bottom 25 per cent or the bottom quartile for each jurisdiction. So our low SES group is not comparable to the low SES group of New South Wales, Victoria or other jurisdictions.<sup>31</sup>

- 4.6 After analysing this and other data, DET had identified writing and spelling as issues requiring additional attention but not of a nature that is inconsistent with other jurisdictions in the country. The analysis also indicated that 'it is our Indigenous student results where we need to actually focus our attention'.<sup>32</sup>

- 4.7 Asked about the measure taken to address such differentials in achievement, the Chief Executive informed the Committee of the efforts to ensure that appropriate measures are in place to maximise the retention of Indigenous students and ensure that the appropriate supports were provided in school settings. This includes ensuring that schools are trying to connect with Indigenous students' parents and their communities and that the leadership of principals within the school is being developed. DET also considers that

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<sup>30</sup> Department of Education and Training (2008) *Annual Report 2007-2008*, Canberra p 109.

<sup>31</sup> Ms Davy, *Transcript of evidence*, 17 February 2009, p. 13.

<sup>32</sup> Ms Davy, *Transcript of evidence*, 17 February 2009, p. 13.

quality teaching is effective in improving the educational outcomes of all students.<sup>33</sup>

- 4.8 A specific strategy in place is the K-4 Indigenous literacy and numeracy strategy which seeks to provide Indigenous students with intensive support. A dedicated team of five provides specialist support to teachers and individual students within a number of schools.<sup>34</sup>

## Early childhood centres and school enrolments

- 4.9 The Minister was asked to provide details of the enrolments at the four early childhood centres in Isabella Plains, Lyons, Narrabundah and Southern Cross Primary Schools and advised that:

Southern Cross in Scullin has 42 in the preschool, 13 in kinder, 10 in year 1 and eight in year 2. Narrabundah has 48 in their preschool, eight in kinder, four in year 1 and two in year 2. Lyons has 28 in their preschool and seven in their kindergarten. Isabella Plains has 57 in their preschool, 13 in kinder, 10 in year 1 and three in year 2.<sup>35</sup>

- 4.10 It was anticipated that enrolments to upper levels would flow through from early years with the aim of accommodating approximately 170 students in total. The Minister informed the Committee that the schools appeal most to young families with children in the zero to five years old group as 'it then means they can avoid the double drop-off, if they can have childcare and that early childhood education on the one site. So that is its most appealing aspect for younger families'.<sup>36</sup>
- 4.11 DET did not consider there was any risk the Centres would not be operating at capacity after the first year and had accommodated lower year two numbers by combining these students into the year one classes.<sup>37</sup>

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<sup>33</sup> Ms Davy, *Transcript of evidence*, 17 February 2009, pp. 13-14.

<sup>34</sup> Ms Davy, *Transcript of evidence*, 17 February 2009, p. 14.

<sup>35</sup> Mr Barr, *Transcript of evidence*, 17 February 2009, p. 16.

<sup>36</sup> Mr Barr, *Transcript of evidence*, 17 February 2009, p. 17.

<sup>37</sup> Ms Davy, *Transcript of evidence*, 17 February 2009, p. 17.

- 4.12     The Committee queried whether these enrolment figures were included in the total school enrolment figures listed in the annual report<sup>38</sup> and was advised that the most significant growth has occurred in preschool enrolments which had risen five per cent and then six per cent over two successive calendar years.<sup>39</sup> The increased enrolment reflected an increase in the number of hours of free preschool provided following Territory and Commonwealth funding allocations.

## **School refurbishments – sustainable schools**

- 4.13     The Committee was interested to hear details about the progress made in the \$90 million refurbishment program and was advised that this program was approximately half completed. Refurbishment funds have been provided to improve a number of school facilities ranging from new gymnasiums and performing arts centres to school boilers and toilet facilities.
- 4.14     Older buildings have been improved in a number of ways with efforts focused on improving energy efficiency, asbestos removal, replacement of roofs and guttering as well as painting.
- 4.15     The allocation of Commonwealth funding for capital works upgrades at primary schools will enhance this program.

## **Staff satisfaction survey**

- 4.16     The staff satisfaction survey or 'organisational climate survey' is considered by DET as an important tool for supporting and retaining staff. Approximately 75 per cent of staff responded to the survey and indicated that, in general they experienced great job satisfaction and felt valued by the organisation. However, in areas such as performance management and feedback, staff indicated that improvements could be made in three areas:

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<sup>38</sup> Department of Education and Training (2008) *Annual Report 2007-2008*, Canberra p 1.

<sup>39</sup> *Transcript of evidence*, 17 February 2009, p. 21.

- 'the nature of the feedback that supervisors gave their staff'.<sup>40</sup>
- The level of financial or staffing resources for particular projects.
- Communication about the vision and direction of the organisation from the executive.

The Committee was advised that the DET executive is in the process of developing strategies to address these areas of staff concern.<sup>41</sup>

## Class size

- 4.17 The reduction in the average size of classes to 21 promised by the Government prior to the 2008 election was noted at the hearing and the Minister was invited to provide details on the progress of this policy. The Minister explained that this policy faced a number of different challenges during implementation in different sections of the education system because of structural variation such as enrolment areas.
- 4.18 The Minister informed the Committee that in the early years of primary school - kindergarten to year two – this policy objective has already been achieved. The Minister advised that the 'overall average for primary schools is around 22.'<sup>42</sup>
- 4.19 The college system was provided with an additional teacher at the start of the year and this has decreased the average class size to around 20 and in some instances down to 19. The challenge in achieving the policy objective in these settings will be in high schools but the Minister advised that 'the bulk of new teachers will go into the high school system'.<sup>43</sup>
- 4.20 The Committee questioned the Minister about the statistical relevance of "average" class size, noting that some classes may be below 21 for structural reasons while some classes may be larger. The Minister indicated that the Government will not require schools with 23 students to create two classes in

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<sup>40</sup> Ms Davy, *Transcript of evidence*, 17 February 2009, p. 29.

<sup>41</sup> Ms Davy, *Transcript of evidence*, 17 February 2009, p. 29.

<sup>42</sup> Mr Barr, *Transcript of evidence*, 17 February 2009, p. 30.

<sup>43</sup> Mr Barr, *Transcript of evidence*, 17 February 2009, p. 30.

order to meet the policy objective.<sup>44</sup> The intention is to achieve an average across the system of 21 students.

- 4.21 The Minister agreed that from year to year, the actual composition in individual schools will vary but advised that:

the costs associated with a maximum class size across the system would be prohibitive, not to mention the capital costs associated with creating all of the additional classrooms...The government's commitment was to reduce average class sizes. Of course "average" means that for every class that is above the size of 21 there have to be classes below that.<sup>45</sup>

- 4.22 The Committee noted that the policy claim of an average of 21 students per class might obscure the reality that some schools will have classes significantly larger and that this might disadvantage some students in popular enrolment areas. At the hearing the Minister undertook to provide the Committee with additional information about enrolment levels for 2009 and provide information of all classes in all public schools where the actual class size exceeds 21 students once the 2009 ACT School Census was complete.<sup>46</sup>

- 4.23 The Committee wrote to the Minister and was subsequently advised that the following number of schools in each region have class sizes of more than 21 students:

| Region               | Number of schools with class sizes of more than 21 students as at 18 February 2009 <sup>47</sup> |
|----------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| North Canberra       | 7                                                                                                |
| Belconnen South East | 7                                                                                                |
| Belconnen North West | 9                                                                                                |
| Woden                | 6                                                                                                |
| South Canberra       | 4                                                                                                |

<sup>44</sup> Mr Barr, *Transcript of evidence*, 17 February 2009, p. 31.

<sup>45</sup> Mr Barr, *Transcript of evidence*, 17 February 2009, p. 30.

<sup>46</sup> Mr Barr, *Transcript of evidence*, 17 February 2009, pp. 30-31.

<sup>47</sup> Correspondence from the Minister for Education and Training dated 1 May 2009. (see Appendix C)

|              |    |
|--------------|----|
| Weston Creek | 3  |
| Gungahlin    | 5  |
| Tuggeranong  | 16 |

- 4.24 The Committee notes that it will also be the case that some schools will have classes which are comprised of fewer than 21 students.
- 4.25 The data provided, however, did not clarify for the Committee the actual number of classes in each of these schools were the number of students exceeds 21.
- 4.26 In the course of the discussion at the hearing the Minister also advised the Committee that the 'bulk of the new teachers will go into the high school system'.<sup>48</sup> The Committee sought clarification on the quantity of teachers referred to in this description and was advised by the Minister that:

the Department of Education and Training is preparing advice to the ACT Government on options for the allocation of the additional teachers across the system. Additional teachers will be recruited through the teacher recruitment process in 2009, to commence in classrooms from the beginning of the 2010 year.<sup>49</sup>

## RECOMMENDATION 2

- 4.27 **The Committee recommends that the ACT Government advise the Assembly of all classes in all public schools where the individual class size is above 21 students.**

## Student pathways

- 4.28 The DET annual report highlights the success of the student pathway approach applied at all levels from preschool to secondary college to ensure smooth transitions through the education system.
- 4.29 A particular focus during 2007-2008 has been on high school to college transitions with a review being conducted by Atelier Learning Solutions. In 2008, a transition officer provided support for students to ensure an effective

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<sup>48</sup> Mr Barr, *Transcript of evidence*, 17 February 2009, p. 30.

<sup>49</sup> Correspondence from the Minister for Education and Training dated 1 May 2009. (see Appendix C)

transition.<sup>50</sup> The transition program, T10 was implemented across all schools in 2008.<sup>51</sup>

- 4.30 Another facet of the pathways approach has been to improve connections and enhance potential transitions to other institutions or sectors. Close links have been fostered with the Canberra Institute of Technology, the Australian National University (for example, the ANU secondary college program), the University of Canberra and the business sector (for example, the school-based apprenticeship program). DET's objective is 'to ensure that the whole range of opportunities are covered for our students as they transition out of the college sector'.<sup>52</sup>

## School equity funding

- 4.31 School equity funding was discussed at the hearing and the Committee was advised that there are three major programs or funds to support students from low socio-economic status. These include:
- The school equity funds of around \$280,000. The rationale for school equity funding is primarily to enhance achievements in literacy and numeracy.
  - The secondary bursary scheme provides support to low income families with year 7 to year 10 students. Funding for this scheme was increased in the last budget.
  - The student support fund, which amounts to approximately \$500,000 per annum.<sup>53</sup>
- 4.32 The Committee was interested to know whether a review of the effectiveness or adequacy of the school equity funding program had been undertaken and was advised that a broader review of DET's overall approach to literacy and numeracy conducted over the last 12 to 18 months. As a consequence of this review a more holistic focus on numeracy and literacy has seen a shift in emphasis on the 'teacher Professional development program, enabling more

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<sup>50</sup> Ms Harris, *Transcript of evidence*, 17 February 2009, p. 36.

<sup>51</sup> Annual report p.16.

<sup>52</sup> Ms Harris, *Transcript of evidence*, 17 February 2009, p. 36.

<sup>53</sup> Ms Davy, *Transcript of evidence*, 17 February 2009, pp. 42-43.

teachers professional development program around early intervention'.<sup>54</sup>

## **Birrigai**

- 4.33 Birrigai 'offers a range of dynamic, experiential day and residential programs that support curriculum needs, foster positive action for the environment and promote community awareness and responsibility'.<sup>55</sup>
- 4.34 The Committee was advised that the Government was committed to maintaining Birrigai as an educational resource and, to enhance the opportunities for students, a stronger relationship with Tidbinbilla was being established. Birrigai, which was rebuilt following the 2003 fires, was constructed using sustainability principles and this provides ecological teaching opportunities with students. The stronger relationship between Birrigai and Tidbinbilla will enhance the learning opportunities available.<sup>56</sup>

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<sup>54</sup> Ms Davy, *Transcript of evidence*, 17 February 2009, p. 43.

<sup>55</sup> <<http://www.birrigai.act.edu.au/>>

<sup>56</sup> Ms Harris, *Transcript of evidence*, 17 February 2009, p. 44.



## 5 OFFICE OF CHILDREN, YOUTH AND FAMILY SERVICES

- 5.1 The Office for Children and Family Services (OCYFS) reports as Output Class 2 (Early Intervention) and Output Class 4 (Children, Youth and Family Services) of the Department of Disability, Housing and Community Services (DHCS) Annual Report.<sup>57</sup>
- 5.2 Early intervention programs (output class 2) provided by OCYFS include targeted and universal programs offering educational and specific support services for families of children from birth to aged five (output 2.1). Within this output class, OCYFS also promotes opportunities for families to be involved with the community and regulates child care services in the ACT (output 2.2).
- 5.3 Services to children, youth and families (output class 4) include adoption services, support for young people at risk and supervision of young offenders (output 4.1). Care and protection services also fall within this output class (output 4.2).
- 5.4 At the public hearing held on 3 March 2008, the Committee discussed a range of issues with the Minister for Children and Young People and officials from the Department of Disability, Housing and Community Services (see Appendix A). The Committee did not hear from the Official Visitors. Details of some of the issues discussed are outlined below.

### Implementation of the *Children and Young People Act*

- 5.5 During the reporting period, OCYFS concluded a review of the *Children and Young People Act 1999*. The review included an extensive consultation process with the community, operational staff and relevant oversight agencies. The review also addressed the recommendations made following the *Human Rights Audit of Quamby Youth Detention Centre*.<sup>58</sup> New legislation was developed as a part of this process and was enacted in July 2008.

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<sup>57</sup> Department of Disability, Housing and Community Services Annual Report 2007-08; pp. 33-42 and pp. 61-71.

<sup>58</sup> Department of Disability, Housing and Community Services Annual Report 2007-08; p. 2 and p. 17.

- 5.6 The Committee was interested to hear details of the implementation of the Act and was advised that this process had been:

overseen by a steering committee and is supported by some comprehensive project plans. It really is in three phases, all of which are now in place. The first, last year, came into effect on 9 September, in relation to the youth detention provisions. On 27 October last year, the care and protection provisions came into place. And only last week, all of the remaining provisions of the act commenced.<sup>59</sup>

- 5.7 In conjunction with this process, OCYFS has also undertaken a functional realignment to streamline a number of the functions undertaken and enhance external relationships. The realignment had assisted with the 'smooth implementation of the new legislation under which the office operates.'<sup>60</sup>

- 5.8 Although the realignment had not been formally evaluated, OCYFS planned to undertake a project to monitor their compliance with the new legislation and it was anticipated that this project would also provide indications of the improved outcomes that have occurred since the implementation of the Act and the functional realignment.

### RECOMMENDATION 3

- 5.9 **The Committee recommends that the Minister for Children and Young People advise the Assembly of the outcomes of the compliance review project once completed.**

### Overseas recruitment program

- 5.10 The Committee was advised that the overseas recruitment program for care and protection workers established in 2005 had achieved positive outcomes in terms of the numbers of case workers who have been attracted and the retention of those staff once they have been resettled. The Minister advised that the second recruitment campaign to the United Kingdom in 2008 had secured 36 new case workers and that this increase meant that the Care and Protection Services (CPS) would reach the full staffing complement of 105

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<sup>59</sup> Mr Barr, *Transcript of evidence*, 3 March 2009, p. 54.

<sup>60</sup> Ms Mitchell, *Transcript of evidence*, 3 March 2009, p. 54.

workers.<sup>61</sup>

- 5.11 Officials from OCYFS explained that recruitment and turnover of staff in this field was generally difficult and the overseas campaign had proven to be remarkably effective for the ACT. Other jurisdictions, such as Victoria, were also engaged in overseas recruitment campaigns. The Acting Chief Executive of DHCS advised that the ACT team has been more successful than Victoria in meeting their recruitment objectives.<sup>62</sup> The Committee was provided with details of the recruitment tools used which had included:

a presentation on the live in Canberra campaign. The other thing we did that I think was significant was to invite all the families to the interview process. We would have the applicant plus the families and we interviewed and worked with the families during the day as well. So we did not just isolate out the candidates; we worked with the families and discussed schooling, health, lifestyle et cetera. I think that was a significant issue and we had a number of applicants who had come to the interview telling us they had already been accepted for Victoria but opted to come to Canberra.<sup>63</sup>

- 5.12 The Committee heard that approximately 50 per cent of workers in the care and protection field had been recruited in this manner and that 50 per cent of the overseas recruits from the 2004 campaign had been retained.<sup>64</sup>
- 5.13 The Committee commends OCYFS for their success in achieving this staffing outcome in a crucial and difficult service area.

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<sup>61</sup> Mr Barr, *Transcript of evidence*, 3 March 2009, p. 55.

<sup>62</sup> Mr Hehir, *Transcript of evidence*, 3 March 2009, p. 57.

<sup>63</sup> Mr Duggan, *Transcript of evidence*, 3 March 2009, p. 57.

<sup>64</sup> Mr Hehir and Mr Duggan, , *Transcript of evidence*, 3 March 2009, p. 55.

## RECOMMENDATION 4

- 5.14 **The Committee recommends that the Office of Children, Youth and Family Support (OCYFS) provide details of the retention rates for staff recruited from overseas as a part of the human resource performance report within the Department of Disability, Housing and Community Services annual report.**

## West Belconnen Child and Family Centre

- 5.15 In 2008, the Government announced that a third Child and Family Centre (CFC) would be built in West Belconnen. The Annual Report noted that consultation with all stakeholders would ensure that the new centre complemented existing services in the area.<sup>65</sup>
- 5.16 The Committee was interested in hearing more details about the site selection and planning process as well as the potential services to be delivered from the Centre.
- 5.17 While the planning process has only progressed through a feasibility study stage, DHCS was able to advise that negotiations with the Chief Minister's Department are in train for a site on Starke Street in Kippax near the Uniting Church. The intention, once approval processes have been completed, is to construct a purpose-built facility.<sup>66</sup>
- 5.18 The intention would be to provide the full range of services from the Centre, providing a joined-up service delivery model with both government and non-government agencies. Drawing on the service delivery model used at existing Centre, OCYFS provided the following example:
- antenatal clinics also function from the centres; so we are actually able to connect with families even before they have their children, particularly those who are considered vulnerable or risk taking.<sup>67</sup>
- 5.19 The Minister also advised that it was the Government's intention that the four

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<sup>65</sup> *Department of Disability, Housing and Community Services Annual Report 2007-08*, p. 14.

<sup>66</sup> *Transcript of evidence*, 3 March 2009, p. 67.

<sup>67</sup> Ms Pappas, *Transcript of evidence*, 3 March 2009, p. 67.

early childhood centres would provide a site for outreach services to children and their families. In the West Belconnen area, the Scullin Early Childhood Centre will have 'multi-departmental representation; so it is not just the education department, it also involves DHCS and Health'.<sup>68</sup>

- 5.20 The Committee also heard that UnitingCare in Kippax has already been funded to provide services to the community in the interim and the Centre, once established, will build on the existing partnership. A key focus in the establishment of this, and other Centres, has been partnerships with government and non-government agencies as well as the commercial operations in the area.<sup>69</sup>
- 5.21 An additional possibility under discussion is to co-locate a childcare centre. Discussions with the Australian government regarding funding for this proposal are underway. DHCS consider that co-location would enhance the opportunity to provide services to children and families in the area.<sup>70</sup>

## RECOMMENDATION 5

- 5.22 **The Committee recommends that the Minister for Children and Young People report back to the Assembly on the progress made in the development of a Child and Family Centre in West Belconnen.**

## Programs for the Indigenous community

- 5.23 Within the discussion about the proposed West Belconnen Children and Family Centre, the Committee heard that planning included 'a detailed integration of the Indigenous services'.<sup>71</sup>
- 5.24 During the hearing the Committee heard that there are four types of service programs provided by the Department with a focus on the needs of the Indigenous community.
- Family support services are provided to families within the care and

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<sup>68</sup> Mr Barr, *Transcript of evidence*, 3 March 2009, p. 66.

<sup>69</sup> Mr Hehir, *Transcript of evidence*, 3 March 2009, p. 68.

<sup>70</sup> Mr Hehir, *Transcript of evidence*, 3 March 2009, p. 68.

<sup>71</sup> M Collett, *Transcript of evidence*, 3 March 2009, p. 69.

protection system with the objective of supporting families to leave the system.

- The Indigenous foster care service offers support programs and training for indigenous families providing foster care to Indigenous children.
- An accommodation service called Narraundah House supports young Indigenous men.
- The integrated family support program, which is delivered via the Children and Family Centres, is an early intervention service.<sup>72</sup>

5.25 One of the integrated family support programs identified in the DHCS annual report utilises a community development framework to engage with parents through the Koori preschool system with the objective of supporting Indigenous families to make use of Indigenous and mainstream services within the community.<sup>73</sup>

5.26 The Committee was also informed that DHCS provides funding for a number of non-government Indigenous services in the community.<sup>74</sup> The Smith Family has also developed a Indigenous Parenting Support Service which focuses on the West Belconnen region.<sup>75</sup>

## Bimberi Youth Justice Centre

5.27 The Committee was advised that, since the reporting period, the Bimberi Youth Justice Centre has opened and is fully functioning. On the day of the hearing, there were 11 young people in the Centre and the Committee heard that five identified as Indigenous people.<sup>76</sup>

5.28 Acknowledging the over-representation of Indigenous Young People in custody, DHCS had been:

very mindful, as we went through the project, to think about how we

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<sup>72</sup> Mr Harwood, *Transcript of evidence*, 3 March 2009, p.71.

<sup>73</sup> *Department of Disability, Housing and Community Services Annual Report 2007-08*, pp. 36-37.

<sup>74</sup> Mr Harwood, *Transcript of evidence*, 3 March 2009, p.72.

<sup>75</sup> *Department of Disability, Housing and Community Services Annual Report 2007-08*, p. 38.

<sup>76</sup> Mr Wyles, *Transcript of evidence*, 3 March 2009, p.76.

could engage with the community and work with programs...We have got some Indigenous programs coming in. Gudan Gulwan come in and provide a service. We have an identified worker on the case management team who works with our staff in terms of consultation and with communities to try to link young people back into services.<sup>77</sup>

5.29 Nonetheless, the Committee heard that there are a number of challenges for all youth offenders in achieving a successful transition back into the community where routines and discipline may have been lacking in the past.<sup>78</sup> For many young offenders, returning to a family environment is not always an option.

5.30 The Committee was advised that the new legislation had provided the additional option of post order support. Where as in the past:

Young people would leave custody following a sentence and effectively that would finish their connection with our system and would often finish their connection with any level of support. We now have, certainly for young people who are sentenced, capacity to follow up if the court chooses to make an order post release.<sup>79</sup>

5.31 For young people leaving the custodial system, there are also options for housing support provided by Housing ACT and for intensive post-release support from community based organisations. The sustained relationships built between young offenders and the organisations involved at Brimberi during a custodial period can provide some stability for young people on release.<sup>80</sup>

## RECOMMENDATION 6

5.32 **The Committee recommends that the Office and Children, Youth and Family Services provides details in the next Department of Disability, Housing and Community Services annual report of all programs offered, including those specifically intended for Indigenous young offenders, and the organisations working within Bimberi.**

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<sup>77</sup> Mr Wyles, *Transcript of evidence*, 3 March 2009, p.76.

<sup>78</sup> Mr Wyles, *Transcript of evidence*, 3 March 2009, p.77.

<sup>79</sup> Mr Wyles, *Transcript of evidence*, 3 March 2009, p.77.

<sup>80</sup> Mr Wyles and Mr Hehir, *Transcript of evidence*, 3 March 2009, pp. 77-78.

Amanda Bresnan MLA

Chair

1 May 2009

## **APPENDIX A: Witnesses**

### **Tuesday 17 February 2009**

Mr Jon Stanhope MLA, Minister for Arts and Heritage

#### **Chief Minister's Department**

Mr Andrew Cappie-Wood, Chief Executive

Mr David Whitney, Director ArtsACT

#### **Cultural Facilities Corporation**

Ms Harriet Elvin, Chief Executive Officer

Mr Andrew Barr MLA, Minister for Education and Training

#### **Department of Education and Training**

Ms Janet Davy, Acting Chief Executive

Ms Joanne Howard, Acting Executive Director, Schools

Ms Carol Harris, Acting Executive Director, Business Improvement Services

Mr Mark Whybrow, Director, Finance and Facilities

Ms Jocelyn Vasey, Director, Training and Tertiary Education

#### **Building and Construction Industry Training Fund Authority**

Mr James Service, Chairman

Mr Gary Guy, Chief Executive Officer

## **Tuesday 3 March 2009**

Mr Andrew Barr MLA, Minister for Children and Young People

### **Department of Disability, Housing and Community Services**

Mr Martin Hehir, Acting Chief Executive

Ms Megan Mitchell , Executive Director, Office for Children, Youth and  
Family Support (OCYFS)

Ms Jenny Kitchin, Director, OCYFS – Service and Sector Development

Mr Paul Wyles, Director, OCYFS – Youth Directorate

Mr Neil Harwood, Director, OCYFS - Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander  
Services

Ms Helen Pappas, Senior Manger, Early Intervention and Prevention Services

Mr David Collett, Director, Asset Management

## APPENDIX B: Supplementary Questions

| No.          | Responses to Supplementary Question <sup>81</sup>                          |
|--------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| ETYA 01-2009 | Primary school average class size                                          |
| ETYA 02-2009 | Number of children and funding fro SCAN students in non-government schools |
| ETYA 03-2009 | Allocation of funding from the Canberra Arts Marketing                     |
| ETYA 04-2009 | Attendance figures for the Canberra Glassworks                             |
| ETYA 05-2009 | Building and Construction Industry Training Access and Equity funding      |
|              |                                                                            |

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<sup>81</sup> Answers to questions taken on notice can be viewed at:

<<http://www.parliament.act.gov.au/committees/index1.asp?committee=117&inquiry=756&category=15>>



## **APPENDIX C: Correspondence**

1. Letter from Mr David Whitney, Director artsACT (dated 2 March 2009) clarifying funding figures for the Percent-for-Art Scheme.
2. Letter from Mr Andrew Barr, Minister for Education and Training (dated 1 May 2009) regarding the numbers of classes with more than 21 students.
3. Letter from Mr Jon Stanhope, Minister for Arts and Heritage (dated 24 April 2009) regarding the commissioning of public art works.



Ms Sandra Lilburn  
Secretary  
Standing Committee on Education, Training and Youth Affairs  
ACT Legislative Assembly  
GPO Box 1020  
CANBERRA ACT 2601

Dear Ms Lilburn

I am writing in response to your letter dated 20 February 2009 to Mr Jon Stanhope, Minister for Arts and Heritage, in which you requested any corrections to the proof copy of the transcript of the evidence presented at the public hearing of the Standing Committee on Education, Training and Youth Affairs into Annual and Financial Reports (Arts portfolio) held on Tuesday 17 February 2009.

In reading the transcript I have noted that in response to a question from Mr Jeremy Hanson MLA I inadvertently quoted financial information from the financial year previous to the one Mr Hanson actually referred to in his question.

On page 5 of the transcript Mr Hanson asked:  
*My question relates to the per cent for art scheme. Could you tell us how much we have allocated in the 2008-09 budget for that, and are we on track to expend that money?*

On page 5 of the transcript my response was:  
*That amount is a total of \$991,887 allocated from the per cent for art scheme, and \$104,000 from a second appropriation.*

The figures in my response were actually from the 2007-08 Budget, ie from the reporting period of the Chief Minister's Department Annual Report under discussion by the Committee, as I thought this was the timeframe Mr Hanson referred to in his question.

The 2008-09 Percent-for-Art Scheme financial allocation is as follows:  
*In 2008-09, \$2.3m Capital has been allocated.*

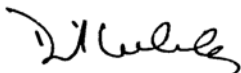
artsACT, Chief Minister's Department

Level 4, Canberra Nara Centre, 1 Constitution Avenue, Canberra City ACT 2601    GPO Box 158, Canberra City ACT 2601  
Telephone 02 6207 2384    Fax 02 6207 2386    website [www.arts.act.gov.au](http://www.arts.act.gov.au)

I would appreciate if this information could be brought to the attention of Committee members, and I apologise for any confusion on the matter.

Please contact me on 6207 2389 if you wish to discuss or require any further information.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'D Whitney', with a stylized flourish at the end.

David Whitney  
Director  
artsACT

2 March 2009



**Andrew Barr MLA**

MINISTER FOR EDUCATION AND TRAINING  
MINISTER FOR CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE  
MINISTER FOR PLANNING  
MINISTER FOR TOURISM, SPORT AND RECREATION  
MEMBER FOR MOLONGLO

Ms Amanda Bresnan MLA  
Chair  
Standing Committee on Education, Training and Youth Affairs  
ACT Legislative Assembly  
GPO Box 1020  
CANBERRA ACT 2601



Dear Ms Bresnan

Thank you for your letter of 22 April 2009, following up from the 2007-08 Annual Reports Inquiry of 17 February 2009.

At the hearing I undertook to provide the committee with additional information about enrolments for 2009 and schools with individual classes of more than 21 students. The 2009 ACT School Census is attached. The number of schools in each region which have class sizes of more than 21 students is as follows:

|                      |    |
|----------------------|----|
| North Canberra       | 7  |
| Belconnen South East | 7  |
| Belconnen North West | 9  |
| Woden                | 6  |
| South Canberra       | 4  |
| Weston Creek         | 3  |
| Gungahlin            | 5  |
| Tuggeranong          | 16 |

In relation to the new teachers for ACT public schools, the Department of Education and Training is preparing advice to the ACT Government on options for the allocation of the additional teachers across the system. Additional teachers will be recruited through the teacher recruitment process in 2009, to commence in classrooms from the beginning of the 2010 year.

Yours sincerely

Andrew Barr MLA  
Minister for Education and Training

- 1 MAY 2009

**ACT LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY**

London Circuit, Canberra ACT 2601 GPO Box 1020, Canberra ACT 2601  
Phone (02) 6205 0011 Fax (02) 6205 0157 Email barr@act.gov.au



**Jon Stanhope MLA**

**CHIEF MINISTER**

MINISTER FOR TRANSPORT MINISTER FOR TERRITORY AND MUNICIPAL SERVICES  
MINISTER FOR BUSINESS AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT  
MINISTER FOR INDIGENOUS AFFAIRS MINISTER FOR THE ARTS AND HERITAGE

MEMBER FOR GINNINDERRA

Ms Amanda Bresnan MLA  
Chair  
Standing Committee on Education, Training and Youth Affairs  
Legislative Assembly  
London Circuit  
Canberra ACT 2601



Dear Ms Bresnan

Thank you for your letter of 23 March 2009 regarding the processes involved in the commissioning of public art works by the Territory. The processes outlined in this letter are based on processes followed in the 2007-2008 financial year.

As the Minister for the Arts I developed an *Action Statement for Public Art* that was released in May 2007 (available at <http://www.arts.act.gov.au/pages/index.asp>). This statement provides the principles and processes for the commissioning of public art for the Territory. The statement also provides actions for new Government commissions and an outline on how to encourage the non-government sector to commission public artworks.

I appointed the ACT Public Art Panel, a panel of advisors, in March 2006. The ACT Public Art Panel and artsACT provide advice to me, on an annual basis and as the need arises throughout the year, regarding proposals for new commissions.

In 2007-2008 commissioning of public artwork was informed by the *Government Procurement Act 2001* and the *Government Procurement Regulation 2007*. The three most common methods are a two stage open tender process either calling for concept designs or artist Curriculum Vitae (CV) in the first stage, a one stage select tender process or a single select process.

Many well established artists will not enter an open tender process so open tenders are used when a diverse range of artist/ideas are sought. When a specific type of artwork is required it may be necessary to target artists that have prior experience and expertise producing that particular type of work, for example figurative statues. A select tender process, where three or four artists are invited to submit either CV's or a concept design, is used in this circumstance. In a single select tender, one artist only is approached and invited to submit a proposal. This approach is used where a response to quite specific circumstances is required or where a specific artwork is identified as having particular merit from another selection process where it was not identified as the preferred proposal.

ACT LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY

London Circuit, Canberra ACT 2601 GPO Box 1020, Canberra ACT 2601  
Phone (02) 6205 0104 Fax (02) 6205 0433 Email [stanhope@act.gov.au](mailto:stanhope@act.gov.au)

Two Stage Open Tender Process

The first step is to develop an Artist's Brief in consultation with the ACT Public Art Panel and relevant stakeholders. An Expression of Interest is advertised and artists are issued with the project brief. The artists then submit a proposal by a tender closing date.

Following closing the tender period the proposals are sent to the Tender Evaluation Team (TET) for review prior to the first stage TET meeting. The TET is also provided with an Evaluation Plan and a Risk Management plan, which form part of the overall Procurement Plan. The Evaluation Plan outlines the process for scoring submissions. These documents have been developed in accordance with ACT Procurement guidelines. In the first stage the TET selects four shortlisted artists based on their written and creative response to the brief or their previous experience. The second stage allows the shortlisted artists to more fully realise their initial design for that particular site and often involves site visits. The artists generally have five weeks to submit their response for the second stage and are paid a small fee to prepare this more detailed information (typically \$1,650 inc GST). At the second meeting of the TET the shortlisted artists are interviewed and the successful artist and their preliminary design are selected.

Following the selection of the preferred artist a Tender Evaluation Report including a comparative analysis of the shortlisted artists is forwarded to the Minister for the Arts for approval. The next steps are:

- contract documents are completed and signed by the artist;
- final design approval;
- Development Application/Approval;
- fabrication; and
- installation of the artwork.

The Development Application is submitted to the ACT Planning and Land Authority (ACTPLA). Documentation for design and siting of the artwork is also submitted to Territory and Municipal Services for Design Acceptance. Both approvals are mandatory prior to fabrication and installation of the artwork.

One Stage Select Tender Process

The One Stage Select Tender Process is as per the Two Stage Open Tender Process however starts at the shortlisted stage as outlined above.

I hope the information provided addresses the issues raised by the Standing Committee.

Yours sincerely

  
Jon Stanhope MLA  
Chief Minister

24 APR 2009