

**2001-2002 draft budget initiatives
& capital works program for the
Chief Minister's Department,
the Department of Treasury
and related agencies**

**Standing Committee on Finance and Public Administration
(Incorporating the Public Accounts Committee)**

Report Number 10

March 2001

Legislative Assembly for the Australian Capital Territory



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Committee membership

Mr Ted Quinlan MLA Committee Chair

Mr Trevor Kaine MLA Deputy Committee Chair

Mr Greg Cornwell MLA

Secretary: Janice Rafferty

Resolution of appointment

The Standing Committee for the Chief Minister's Portfolio was appointed by the Legislative Assembly on 28 April 1998 to examine any matter under the responsibility of the Chief Minister's portfolio. The Assembly also resolved that the committee perform the duties of a public accounts committee, specifically:

- (a) to examine:
 - (i) the accounts of the receipts and expenditure of the Australian Capital Territory;
 - (ii) the financial affairs of authorities of the Australian Capital Territory; and
 - (iii) all reports of the Auditor-General which have been laid before the Assembly;
- (b) to report to the Assembly, with such comments as it thinks fit, on any items or matters in those accounts, statements and reports, or any circumstances connected with them, to which the Committee is of the opinion that the attention of the Assembly should be directed; and
- (c) to inquire into any question in connection with the public accounts which is referred to it by the Assembly and to report to the Assembly on that question.

On 26 November 1999, the Assembly retitled the committee as the Standing Committee on Finance and Public Administration (Incorporating the Public Accounts Committee), omitted reference to matters under the responsibility of the Chief Minister's portfolio and included reference to women's affairs, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander issues, asset management, gaming and racing and any other related matter.

On 15 February 2001, the Assembly transferred responsibility for purchasing policy to the Committee and removed asset management.

Terms of Reference

On 15 February 2001 the ACT Legislative Assembly resolved:

That, notwithstanding the resolution of 28 April 1988, as amended on 25 November 1999, 7 December 2000 and 15 February 2001, which appointed the General Purpose Standing Committees for this Assembly:

- (1) the 2001-02 draft Budget initiatives and the 2001-02 draft Capital Works Program for each appropriation unit be referred to the relevant General Purpose Standing Committee, for inquiry into and report by 23 March 2001 with either:
 - (a) recommendations that maintain or improve the operating result; or
 - (b) a conclusion that the Committee will not proceed with the consideration of the 2001-02 draft Budget initiatives and the 2001-02 draft Capital Works Program;
- (2) the relevant draft budget documents be provided by the Treasurer to the Presiding Member of each Standing Committee by close of business Friday, 16 February 2001;
- (3) if the Assembly is not sitting when the Committees complete their inquiries, the Committee may send their reports to the Speaker or, in the absence of the Speaker, to the Deputy Speaker who is authorised to give directions for its printing, circulation and publication; and
- (4) the foregoing provisions of this resolution have effect notwithstanding anything contained in the standing orders.

Summary of recommendations

Recommendation 1 (2.3)

The Committee recommends that, if the Draft Budget Process is conducted again, Committees be provided with sufficient time and information to allow review to be conducted and reasoned recommendations made. This would normally involve presentation of a completed draft budget.

Recommendation 2 - Bridging the Digital Divide (2.17)

The Committee recommends that specific information be provided as to the level of need and the nature of the support required before significant funds are allocated.

Recommendation 3 - Assessing Unmet Need – Responding to Poverty (2.30)

The Committee recommends that the mapping exercise described in the Committee's Service Purchase Arrangements report be implemented as a matter of priority.

Recommendation 4 – Indigenous Programs (2.33)

The Committee recommends that these programs be extended to include creation of new employment and business opportunities as well as supporting the mentoring program for employed indigenous people.

Recommendation 5 – Link Redevelopment Project (3.8)

The Committee recommends that, in the process of planning for the redevelopment of the link between the Canberra Theatre and the Playhouse, consideration be given to providing additional funding for the improvement of the aesthetic of Civic Square by providing more shade, seating, and attractive areas.

Recommendation 6 (5.5)

The Committee recommends that equity issues involving the generation of revenue from rates, land taxes, fines, car registrations, etc in the ACT be given serious consideration by the Government when changes to current taxation regimes are discussed.

Recommendation 7 – Expenditure of Expected Surplus (8.8)

The Committee recommends that the \$10 million expected surplus should become part of a program of responsible addressing of the Territory's future liabilities.

Recommendation 8 – Application of Commonwealth Grant Commission Additional Funds (8.13)

The Committee recommends that the additional income from the Commonwealth Grants Commission be used by the Government to undertake the following reviews:

- mapping of community services, with the results of the exercise being forwarded to Standing Committees;
- an inquiry and investigation of equity issues involving the generation of revenue from rates, land taxes, fines, car registrations, etc in the ACT; and
- a review of cultural festivals held in the ACT be conducted to determine the appropriateness of management, timing, funding and volunteer participation in these festivals, and how to best optimise the cultural resources of the city.

1. Introduction

- 1.1 The Committee was provided with documentation entitled 2001-02 Budget Consultation: Phase II, Finance and Public Administration, on 16 February 2001. The documents contained information on the draft budget initiatives and draft capital works program relevant to the Chief Minister's Department and the Department of Treasury. No actual "Draft Budget" has materialised.
- 1.2 On 1 March 2001, the Treasurer advised that an additional \$4.6m was expected to be received by the Territory from the Commonwealth Grants Commissions for 2001-2002. Of this amount, the Committee was allocated an additional \$442,000 for which it might make recommendations.
- 1.3 On 15 February 2001, the Treasurer had made a media announcement that \$10 million had been found as available for a 'revenue return to Canberrans' in the 2001/02 Budget. Whether these funds fall within the Committee's terms of reference is unsure
- 1.4 The weeks surrounding these events were marked by fluctuating pronouncements as to the anticipated Budget bottom line for 2000/01, as well as the changes for 2001/02 implied by the successive announcements mentioned above.
- 1.5 Submissions were called from the general public, through advertisement, and a small number of relevant community organisations, by letter.
- 1.6 On 23 February 2001 and 2 March 2001, the Committee held preliminary briefings with the relevant Ministers. A public hearing was conducted on 16 March 2001 and the final report due for tabling a week later on 23 March 2001.

Context to Overall Process

- 1.7 Simply, there was insufficient time to thoroughly canvass community opinion and thought. The timeframe included two sitting weeks and a public holiday. Committees have not been provided a Draft Budget that would provide context in which to examine proposed initiatives, or to bring forward suggested changes and initiatives of their own
- 1.8 Several committees are likely to make the same observations, and the Government is likely to adopt a dismissive approach to them. It is therefore useful to refer to the comments made by ACTCOSS in their submission:-
- 1.9 *"The Council's ability to comment on the Government's draft measures has been limited by a lack of information. Without publication of an entire draft budget, it is not possible to determine whether these measures represent new initiatives, whether they are merely existing initiatives re-named or whether they are Commonwealth programs being implemented by the ACT....."*

The timing of the draft budget process has also presented a number of problems....

The process for the draft budget consultations has changed this year. These changes have not been well communicated by the Government and has resulted in confusion within the community and lower levels of engagement with the draft budget process than would otherwise be expected.”¹

- 1.10 The draft budget initiatives document provides little information or context to enable the Committee to rigorously assess each initiative and project. The Committee therefore could not assess the proposals for comparative merit.

¹ ACTCOSS submission

2. Government Initiatives

Whole of Government Issues

- 2.1 As already observed, information pertaining to the expected budget surplus was not provided to Committees at the same time as the draft initiatives and capital works proposals.
- 2.2 Committees were not provided with any information as to what, if any, programs had been deleted from various budget units and if there had been any movement in the budget allocations that were part of Forward Estimates in the 2000/01 Budget.

Recommendation 1

- 2.3 **The Committee recommends that, if the Draft Budget Process is conducted again, Committees be provided with sufficient time and information to allow review to be conducted and reasoned recommendations made. This would normally involve presentation of a completed draft budget.**
- 2.4 There was discussion on the calculation of the \$12.9m figure provided as the “reasonable” estimate of the available funds². It was recognised that this figure was calculated in February 2001 and that it depends on the treatment of superannuation liability and other factors on an accrual accounting basis.
- 2.5 The Committee is aware that, through accounting treatment associated with previous overstatements of the Territory’s superannuation liability, any calculated Operating Surplus will include a positive \$25 million that is purely an accounting ‘paper’ entry that represents no actual value received. In other words, any surplus below that figure would be an effective deficit.
- 2.6 The Committee was advised that the base level of funding for Chief Minister’s Department remained the same as the previous fiscal year, allowing for the transfer of some functions in and/or out of the Department. Transfers included some elements of Canberra Connect and InTACT which will deal with some whole of government issues and concern the shopfronts³. No indication of change was provided for the Department of Treasury.
- 2.7 On face value most of the initiatives put forward look reasonable. However they might not stand up in the context of an overall draft budget. They may well not warrant priority over other proposals – that evaluation would depend on overall funding capacity.

² Transcript 23 Feb 2001, p 1

³ Ibid p 10

Centenary of Federation

- 2.8 This item stands as an example of the muddle that is the Draft Budget process of 2001. It proposes expenditure by the Chief Minister's department of \$100,000 for "continued support of the National Capital Education Tourism Project, which commenced in 2000." The funds are to be a grant to a consortium to manage the project to the end of 2001.
- 2.9 To give perspective to the \$100,000 expenditure the Committee referred to Budget 2000 looking for forward estimates or expenditure in the 2000/2001 financial year. That budget included, under CTEC as a 'highlight', an uncoded program to conduct a major public awareness campaign. Had there been time several questions would have arisen:-

Is this funding to go to CTEC, or has the project been taken from them?

How much was scheduled to be spent in 2000/2001?

Was there a previous Forward Estimate to which this amount is additive, or did the Government forget to provide for the second half of 2001 in the last budget?

- 2.10 This so-called initiative, at \$100,000, does not loom large in the scheme of things, but it is indicative of the difficulties with the Draft Budget process as it has occurred this year.

Expansion of the Multicultural Grants Program

- 2.11 Information provided for this initiative included the statement that the \$50,000 per annum represented a 100% increase over the previous year. That statement may have been included more as puffery than as a conscious attempt to inform, but it did represent context.
- 2.12 It appears to be the only grants program to be increased. It is also the smallest grant program operated by the Government⁴.

Demographic Profile of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Community and Multicultural Community in the ACT

- 2.13 The Committee was surprised that this sort of activity had not already been undertaken as a core function of the relevant unit in the Chief Minister's Department.
- 2.14 The initiative states that the demographic profiles are required for national and local reporting requirements⁵. The Committee is not convinced that this is a

⁴ Ibid p 15

⁵ Budget Consultation Phase II, p 5

new initiative. It was not provided with sufficient information to assess this program.

Bridging the Digital Divide

- 2.15 In considering this initiative the Committee was of the opinion that the justification for the allocation of \$2.632m over four years was not well supported by the documentation.
- 2.16 In its submission ACTCOSS was concerned that an analysis of areas of need had not been undertaken and a program of priorities had not been developed⁶.

Recommendation 2

- 2.17 **The Committee recommends that specific information be provided as to the level of need and the nature of the support required before significant funds are allocated.**

Public Service Reform

- 2.18 The Committee was advised that the projects referred to in the Phase II document related to a proposed review of the ACT public service and the way it operates.
- 2.19 It is considered healthy for organisations to undertake reviews of its processes and culture. The Committee was concerned that, in this situation, the reviews are carried out as a result of a particular recent negative experience and that it is an attempt to redirect focus on responsibility. This type of review is not productive.

Canberra Connect

- 2.20 The Committee had insufficient information to comment on this initiative.
- 2.21 In regard to the provision of information through electronic means, the Committee was of the view that consideration must be given to the parallel maintenance of existing distribution methods such as hard copy, shopfronts etc. Otherwise the Government itself may be contributing to the “digital divide”.

Integrated Document Management System (IDMS)

- 2.22 This proposal is intended to support the Territory Records Bill, recently tabled in the Assembly.
- 2.23 The Committee supports improvement in the Government’s record keeping and document archiving practices, however it was unable to assess the value for money component of the project. The projected operating and capital expenditure, over four years, exceeds \$14.5 million.

⁶ ACTCOSS Submission p 21

Arts – Participating at the Cutting Edge

- 2.24 The Committee was advised that the funding proposed was in addition to funding already received. Given that the Committee was not provided with any information about existing funding levels, it is difficult to assess what impact these additional funds might have.
- 2.25 The proposed program was perceived by the Committee to offer little to arts groups not currently funded. The ‘closed shop’ mentality of some of these funded arts organisations leads to new and innovative arts groups being excluded on subjective and inequitable grounds.
- 2.26 In addition, the Committee was not provided with information regarding Arts programs that had been withdrawn. With that in mind, the relevance of this new “initiative” is unclear.

Assessing Unmet Need – Responding to Poverty

- 2.27 Areas of unmet need in the area of poverty have been identified in previous reports. This proposed expenditure is to research the level of demand for community services. The Committee was concerned that the prominence of the recent report on poverty did not lead to the overlooking of areas of unmet need that go beyond poverty – mental health, isolation, domestic violence, etc.
- 2.28 It was noted that the recommendation of the Committee in its report entitled “The Implementation of Service Purchasing Arrangements in the ACT”, December 1999, relating to the mapping exercise had not been undertaken.
- 2.29 The Committee considered this to be a priority.

Recommendation 3

- 2.30 **The Committee recommends that the mapping exercise described in the Committee’s Service Purchase Arrangements report be implemented as a matter of priority.**

Indigenous Employment Mentoring Program

- 2.31 This program appears worthy of support. It will be effective if it goes beyond tokenism and selective showcasing. It should be conducted in conjunction with a program to create new employment opportunities.

Indigenous Business Support Program

- 2.32 Again, this program is worthy of support.

Recommendation 4

- 2.33 **The Committee recommends that these programs be extended to include creation of new employment and business opportunities as well as supporting the mentoring program for employed indigenous people.**

Australian Football League Contribution

- 2.34 This support has been announced previously, and at the time of preparation of this report had been included in the Supplementary Budget Paper that accompanied Appropriation Bill 2000-2001 (No.2). The Committee considered it reasonable, provided that it could be demonstrated that support for such events was provided within the context of an overall program of support for recreational activities that is representative of the pluralistic community that is Canberra.

Global Biodiversity Information Facility

- 2.35 It was unclear from the documentation whether the decision to establish the OECD's Global Biodiversity Information Facility in Canberra had been made. If successful, the facility would impact favourably on the ACT.

GMC 400

- 2.36 This item was not an "initiative" but simply a request for additional funding for an existing project that had already received significant funding.
- 2.37 The \$1.5m per annum allocated to this project is in addition to \$2.5m already appropriated bringing the total to \$4m per year plus capital works allocations⁷. The additional funds are required to upgrade some of the track surface and improve spectator areas.
- 2.38 The economic benefits of the GMC 400 have been loudly extolled by Government through the media. In particular, the creation of 150 jobs was highlighted as an outcome of the GMC 400⁸. The Committee recognises that these events do stimulate economic activity, but shares the wider community scepticism as to the validity of the extent of the claims made.

Australian Masters Games

- 2.39 This expenditure is supported, but the assessment of the total economic impact begs for rigorous, independent evaluation.

Rally of Canberra

- 2.40 This is "additional" support. It cannot be evaluated because there is no information as to the existing base to which it being added. Reference to Budget 2000 sheds no light on the matter. There some 80% of CTEC's "Total Expenses" are included under the single line item of "Administrative Expenses". It is presumed the gross cost of the Rally is included in that line.

⁷ Transcript 23 Feb 2001, p 14

⁸ Ibid 23 Feb 2001, p 16

National Photonics Training Institute

- 2.41 This expenditure of \$300,000 for each of two years was described as “financial assistance for the creation of a National Photonics Training Institute in the ACT, the only one of its kind in Australia.” It transpires that this claim was a somewhat exaggerated.
- 2.42 The Australian Photonics Cooperative Research Centre was established under a Commonwealth Government program in 1992. Amongst other activities, it provides undergraduate, postgraduate, PhD and Masters education in Melbourne, Sydney and Canberra.
- 2.43 The ACT contribution may well be worthwhile, but it appears to be a marginal contribution that does not warrant the hyperbole in the Government’s documentation.

Transport Concessions – Responding to Poverty

- 2.44 The documentation provided to the Committee claims that this initiative will provide transport concessions to low income earners who are currently eligible for concessions⁹.
- 2.45 The Committee would like to have seen more on the practical implementation of this program, and how it relates to existing public transport concessions.

Financial Management

- 2.46 The Committee does not consider financial management an “initiative” and believes that this is an inappropriate way to increase staff in the Department of Treasury. Financial management is core business.
- 2.47 This proposal begs the question as to why there are no appropriately qualified staff in the Department able to deal with financial management issues.

Low Alcohol Subsidy Scheme

- 2.48 The continuation of an existing scheme, in the Committee’s view, did not constitute an “initiative” and should be an ongoing budget item until the Federal Government plan for a national scheme is implemented.

Strengthening Procurement Policy and Systems

- 2.49 The Committee assumed that this initiative supported the ACT Procurement Board on an ongoing basis and expected that from 2002—03 this would become a line item within the Department’s budget.

3. Proposed Capital Works Program

⁹ Budget Consultation Phase II, p 9

Centenary of Federation Monument

- 5.1 The Committee was disappointed that no additional information was provided in relation to this item. The Committee would like to see some community consultation in the siting and design of the proposed monument.

Relocation of Artists Studios and Printmaking Workshop

- 5.2 No Comment.

Minor New Works – Public Art Program

- 5.3 The Committee is happy to see public art enhancing the city.

Cultural Facilities Corporation – Link Redevelopment Project

- 5.4 The Committee noted that some publicity had already occurred in relation to this proposal.
- 5.5 City Square has been subjected to several expensive redevelopments that have done little to bring life to the area. It is hoped that this development contributes more to enlivening the square.
- 5.6 The Link redevelopment was recognised as serving the dual purposes of providing suitable accommodation for the City Library and also improving the facility of the Canberra Theatre Centre.
- 5.7 It was noted that the current Library premises were rented¹⁰ and that the rental was expensive in terms of the quality of the building and furnishings. Some savings were expected although there was no information provided.

Recommendation 5

- 5.8 **The Committee recommends that, in the process of planning for the redevelopment of the link between the Canberra Theatre and the Playhouse, consideration be given to providing additional funding for the improvement of the aesthetic of Civic Square by providing more shade, seating, and attractive areas.**

Minor New Works – Historic Places Conservation and Restoration Works

- 5.9 The Committee believed the conservation of the three historic venues is appropriate and should be a regular item in the Corporation's budget plans.

Exhibition Park in Canberra (EPIC) – Minor New Works – Site Upgrades

- 5.10 It was recognised that the planned upgrades to parking, fencing, buildings and signage was required and necessary.

¹⁰ Transcript 2 March 2001, p 53

4. Other Issues Arising

Relocation of Canberra Tourism and Events Corporation (CTEC)

- 4.1 The Committee discussed at length the recently announcement that the main office of CTEC would be moving from its premises in Civic to the Brindabella Business Park at the Canberra International Airport
- 4.2 While it is recognised that CTEC required additional office space, the Committee was concerned that, in moving from Civic, the Corporation was failing to remain accessible to the community groups it purports to service.
- 4.3 There is also concern that CTEC employees will face difficulties getting to and from work – by public transport or finding suitable car parking.

5. Community Proposals - ACT Council of Social Service Inc (ACTCOSS)

- 5.1 ACTCOSS provided the Committee with a well-considered submission which included some 25 recommendations.
- 5.2 The Committee considered the submission and met with representatives of ACTCOSS at the public hearing held on 16 March 2001.
- 5.3 A major concern of ACTCOSS is the inequitable collection and expenditure of revenue. It is claimed that people in low incomes pay a proportionally higher rate of tax than people on higher incomes¹¹. ACTCOSS proposes that taxes be moved from broad-based regressive taxes where everyone pays at the same level, to progressive taxes taking in account a person's capacity to pay.
- 5.4 The Committee considered that several of the issues in the submission from ACTCOSS relating to inequities in revenue, while meritorious, should be addressed in a different forum.

Recommendation 6

- 5.5 **The Committee recommends that equity issues involving the generation of revenue from rates, land taxes, fines, car registrations, etc in the ACT be given serious consideration by the Government when changes to current taxation regimes are discussed.**

Funding of Major Events

¹¹ ACTCOSS Submission, p 5

- 5.6 In its submission, ACTCOSS is critical of Government support for major events¹². These events are said to be private sector activities.
- 5.7 The Committee believes that, while events may seem worthwhile, more work needs to be done to allow objective assessment of economic benefits to the community.

Social and Community Services (SACS) Award, GST Compliance Costs, Occupational Health and Safety

- 5.8 The Committee accepted the proposition that funding levels for community organisations should be adjusted to offset the impact of award changes over which the organisations have no control.

6. Community Proposals – ArtsVoice ACT

- 6.1 ArtsVoice ACT presented a detailed submission and appeared before the Committee on 16 March 2001.
- 6.2 The Committee considered five new strategies developed by ArtsVoice, totalling \$220,000.
- 6.3 A number of the proposals related to the development of research programs or strategy development. It needs to be noted that a significant amount of activity takes place outside arts organisations and little attempt is made to assist the individual.
- 6.4 One proposal put forward by ArtsVoice was a performing arts ticket subsidy scheme. The converse of this is a venue hire subsidy scheme, which would allow performers to utilise community venues for fees that are low enough to allow ticket prices to remain affordable to most people.
- 6.5 The efforts made to encourage innovative arts need to be balanced by the demand and saleability of performances.

7. Community Proposals – Property Owners Association of the ACT Inc

- 7.1 The Property Owners Association appeared before the Committee and spoke to their brief submission.
- 7.2 The Submission did not address the draft budget initiatives or the capital work program. It did, however, make some recommendations to reduce the taxes and rates collected from property owners and car owners.

¹² ACTCOSS Submission, p 13

8. Committee Deliberations

- 8.1 The Standing Committee on Finance and Public Administration, in the little time provided to it, considered the material presented to it by both the Government and community groups.
- 8.2 The reference from the Assembly dictated that should the Committee decide to participate in the process then it should make “recommendations that maintain or improve the operating result”.
- 8.3 The Committee was not provided with information relating to the “operating result” nor the programs and proposed expenditures involved.

Suggestions for Expenditure of Expected Surplus - \$10m

- 8.4 Not only have Committees been denied detail of the total Draft Budget, if indeed it exists at all, they have also witnessed varying utterances by Government that have given different indications of the financial position of the Territory.
- 8.5 There is every indication of a slow-down in the national economy that may, or may not, impact upon the ACT. Common sense would indicate that care should be taken in setting in train funding streams that imply recurrent commitment for future years - commitment that may be extremely difficult to honour.
- 8.6 There is no indication in any of the Government’s pronouncements that indicate that there will be cash contribution to the funding of superannuation liabilities other than those derived from asset sales.
- 8.7 The Committee believes that the Government must honour a commitment made a couple of years ago to provide \$50 million per annum to fund accumulating superannuation liabilities out of Operating Income.

Recommendation 7

- 8.8 **The Committee recommends that the \$10 million expected surplus should become part of a program of responsible addressing of the Territory’s future liabilities.**

Application of \$442,000 out of the \$4.6 million windfall

- 8.9 Funding provided in 2001-2002, while supporting worthwhile projects, could, if not continued, have a detrimental affect on those the project sought to assist.

Community Services – Investment in Information

- 8.10 The Committee is of the view that these “windfall” amounts should be used as an “investment in information” - to improve the information the Government has about the community it services. In doing so, the Government then has the tools to review, research and investigate better ways of providing services to the ACT community.

Multicultural Festival/Canberra Festival/Arts Festival

- 8.11 The confused nature of the status of the various arts festivals in Canberra was highlighted by recent events involving the Canberra Tourism and Events Corporation. It was unclear which groups were responsible for the organisation and management of the various festivals and whether the current arrangements are indeed, the best ones.
- 8.12 Consideration needs to be given to examining the goals and objectives of these activities, the timing of events, the relevance of combining activities, and the management structures. The Committee was of the opinion that there was merit in the Canberra Day activities and the Multicultural Festival but an investigation was required to best optimise the resources of community groups that participate in the festivals.

Recommendation 8

- 8.13 **The Committee recommends that the additional income from the Commonwealth Grants Commission be used by the Government to undertake the following reviews:**
- **mapping of community services, with the results of the exercise being forwarded to Standing Committees;**
 - **an inquiry and investigation of equity issues involving the generation of revenue from rates, land taxes, fines, car registrations, etc in the ACT; and**
 - **a review of cultural festivals held in the ACT be conducted to determine the appropriateness of management, timing, funding and volunteer participation in these festivals, and how to best optimise the cultural resources of the city.**

Reduction in Revenue Collection

- 8.1 A number of suggestions have been made in relation to the reduction of rates, taxes, charges and fines. Some of these advocated a sliding scale relative to capacity to pay.
- 8.2 The Committee recognises that there are inequities resulting from changing land values in older, redeveloping areas. Long-term residents of areas that

enjoy a new-found attraction for “gentrification” have witnessed dramatically spiralling rates as land values escalate.

Ted Quinlan MLA

Chair

23 March 2001

Appendix 1 – Submissions Received

- ACT Council of Social Service Inc – Investing in the Community
- ArtsVoice ACT Inc
- Property Owners Association of the ACT Inc

Appendix 2 – Witnesses Appearing

23 February 2001

Mr Gary Humphries MLA, Chief Minister and Treasurer

Ms Megan Smithies, Director, Financial and Budgetary Management, Department of Treasury

Mr Howard Ronaldson, Chief Executive, Department of Treasury

Mr Robert Tonkin, Chief Executive, Chief Minister's Department

2 March 2001

Mr Brendan Smyth MLA, Minister for Business, Tourism and the Arts

Mr Peter Gordon, Office of Business, Tourism and the Arts

Mr James Service, Chair, Canberra Tourism and Events Corporation

Mr Robert Tonkin, Chief Executive, Chief Minister's Department

Ms Mandy Hillson, Director, artsACT

Ms Harriet Elvin, Chief Executive Officer, Cultural Facilities Corporation

Friday 16 March 2001

Mr Michael White, Chair, ArtsVoice ACT

Mr Greg Marginson, Deputy Chair, ArtsVoice ACT

Mr Peter Jansen, President, Property Owners Association of the ACT Inc.

Mr William (Bill) Bartley, Committee member, Property Owners Association of the ACT Inc.

Mr Daniel Stubbs, Director, ACT Council of Social Service Inc

Ms Marianne Vreugdenhil, Policy Officer, ACT Council of Social Service Inc