



LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY
FOR THE AUSTRALIAN CAPITAL TERRITORY

STANDING COMMITTEE ON ENVIRONMENT AND TRANSPORT AND CITY SERVICES
Ms Suzanne Orr MLA (Chair), Miss Candice Burch MLA (Deputy Chair), Mr James Milligan MLA

Submission Cover Sheet

Inquiry into a Territory Coat of Arms

Submission Number: 064

Date Authorised for Publication: 1 May 2019

Ms McGill
Official Secretary,
Inquiry into A.C.T. Coat of Arms,
CANBERRA A.C.T. 2600

Dear Ms McGill,

As an Elector of the Commonwealth of Australia and as an Elector of the Australian Capital Territory and as a Ratepayer and Resident in this Territory, I duly make the following Submission to the above Inquiry for its consideration.

I have read a copy of the Submission of the Australian Heraldry Society dated 20 April 2019 and I wish to express my agreement with the contents of that very detailed Submission and therefore I commend it to the Inquiry.

In particular, may I suggest that it is very important indeed that any steps taken in regard to the A.C.T. Coat of Arms only be taken after expert advice is sought; and such advice should be sought from persons and bodies possessing authoritative and proven knowledge and familiarity with the well-established principles of Arms and Heraldry and also the Law of Arms and of Armorial matters. Such authoritative knowledge can be had from the Officers of the Australian Heraldry Society and the Heralds of the College of Arms in London.

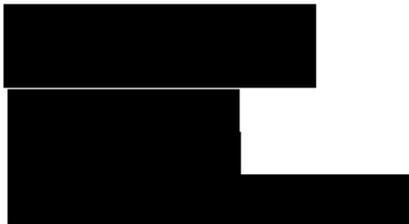
One point that needs always to be borne in mind is that, as the traditional principles and practice governing the design of Achievements of Arms indicate, all arms, whether they be for a Nation, a State, a Territory, a Corporation or an Individual, should have a simple and clear design which is easily recognisable at a distance, particularly when they are displayed upon and in any public buildings. In short, some of the best arms ever designed, have been the simplest in design.

Experience shows that persons lacking knowledge, skill and ability in Arms who nevertheless undertake to “design” an Achievement of Arms, tend to produce designs that are either contrary to the Principles and Practice of Heraldry and/or contain various “howlers” or errors in that regard; or result in “overbusy” designs which include all manner of small objects or features considered by the amateur designer to be somehow “emblematic” of the proposed holder, but which result in a confused and cluttered design of arms. This tendency was particularly bad in many examples from the late eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, when the emphasis on “paper arms” resulted in many grants of arms that are unimpressive and/or inappropriate. This was known as a decadence in the history of Arms. It is a great mistake to think mere inclusion of this or that object or image thought to be typical of the holder or subject jurisdiction, is sufficient to make a good design for an achievement of arms. So, I urge the Inquiry to consult established experts.

The best experts to consult about designing any new A.C.T. Achievement of Arms are the Australian Heraldry Society and the College of Arms in London.

A useful starting point for consideration and further researches on the position in Australia is: "A Roll of Australian Arms – Corporate and Personal, Borne by Lawful Authority" edited by Charles Low FHS, FHSA with a Foreword by Sir Anthony Wagner, which was published by Rigby Limited at Adelaide in 1971. The Arms granted to the "City of Canberra" in 1928 pursuant to Royal Warrant dated 8 October 1928 are discussed at pages 3 and 4 of Low's helpful book. However, the additional matters set out in the Heraldry Society's Submission are equally important in order to understand the position in contemporary Australia.

Douglas Hassall



21 April 2019