



LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY
FOR THE AUSTRALIAN CAPITAL TERRITORY

SELECT COMMITTEE ON ESTIMATES 2013-2014

Jeremy Hanson CSC MLA (Chair), Chris Bourke MLA (Deputy Chair),
Mick Gentleman MLA, Brendan Smyth MLA

COMMUNITY AND INDUSTRY REPRESENTATIVE GROUPS SURVEY

SURVEY OF COMMUNITY AND INDUSTRY GROUPS ON THE ACT BUDGET 2013-2014 TO BE PRESENTED BY THE ACT GOVERNMENT ON 4 JUNE 2013

If you wish to respond to this survey, please return it to committees@parliament.act.gov.au by **9.30am Tuesday 11 June 2013**. If there is insufficient room for any of your comments, below, please feel free to append additional comments.

1. Full name of group/organisation:

SEE Change Society Environment Economy Inc

2. Name of contact person for this survey and their telephone number and email address:

Anne Clarke

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Email: office@see-change.org.au

3. Has your organisation/group developed a written analysis of the ACT Budget that it would like to submit to the Committee?

Yes (If yes, please email it to the Committee Secretariat with your completed survey.)

No

4. Please list, in order of priority, your three main areas of concern regarding the ACT Budget 2013-2014:

a. Meeting the ACT Government's commitment to greenhouse gas reductions of target of 40 per cent reduction in greenhouse gas emissions from 1990 levels by 2020

b. Integrated public transport and active travel networks which meet the mobility needs of all Canberrans, including those without access to cars (e.g. children and elderly people).

c. Support the community infrastructure required to create a sustainable Canberra

5. What are your views on the ACT Budget in relation to your priority areas?

Greenhouse gas reduction targets:

SEE-Change welcomes the acknowledgment of our work and the means to continue, and we are pleased that other allied organisations such as the Conservation Council and Environment Centre will also continue to be funded.

SEE-Change is pleased to see that sustainability was afforded an entire chapter in Budget Paper 3 however it is silent on the reality that emissions in the ACT have actually increased since 1990. Substantial action will be required to turn this situation around in the next seven years. To this end, the establishment of a Sustainability Data Management System to provide comprehensive data on the Government's operations is welcomed.

Unlike other jurisdictions, most of the contribution to the ACT's emissions come from individuals' consumption; not industry. Focusing attention on households, offices and businesses is thus imperative. SEE-Change welcomes the continuation of funding for ACTSmart and the Energy Efficiency Scheme. Of concern has been the defunding of HEAT which went beyond inefficient energy consumption. Compounding this situation is that the majority of ACT households do not qualify for those programs targeted at low income households. Further efforts need to be provided to the bulk of households to ensure that their homes are efficient and do not leak heat. This is an area of expertise of SEE-Change. We have run a number of events designed to equip residents with the knowledge to reduce energy consumption, build better houses and retrofit existing dwellings. We welcome opportunities to partner with the ACT Government to address one of the key sources of emissions. The other is transport which is addressed below.

SEE-Change also welcomes the continued funding for the Canberra Urban Futures Program. Information on how the work of this program is used to inform government planning and decision-making would be appreciated.

Integrated public transport and active travel that meets the needs of Canberrans:

SEE-Change welcomes the announcement of funding to establish the Capital Metro Agency and the intention to commence planning of the first stage of a light rail network for Canberra. SEE-Change urges the ACT Government to engage with the community from the outset and co-design the plan with the community in line with international best practice.

SEE-Change also welcomes the additional funding for ACTION including enhancing bus stations, updating the bus fleet to be more energy efficient and accessible and Bike and Ride facilities. While these investments are appreciated, it is the extent to which they are designed to meet the needs of Canberrans that will determine their value. Canberra has been designed as a car-based city, which continues to marginalise those without access to individual cars, and creates higher transport-related greenhouse gas emissions per capita than necessary.

In seeking a more diverse and active set of travel options, we'd like the ACT Government to pay particular attention to the suburbs; not just Civic and the Town Centres. 'Walkable' suburbs that allow residents to access much of what they need in close proximity to their houses, simultaneously reduces greenhouse gas emissions and increases activity levels, which improves people's health, lowers the burden on the health system and creates a more socially connected local community. A focus on sporting venues is not the only way to encourage physical activity. Designing for incidental

exercise can help to increase activity levels of all Canberrans, not just those who are predisposed to a healthy lifestyle or live in particular locations. SEE-Change is pleased to see continued funding for the revitalisation of local shopping centres which will revive local areas and reduce the need for car travel to the major centres.

Support the community infrastructure required to create a sustainable Canberra:

The 'SEE' in SEE-Change stands for Society, Economy and Environment. The challenge for the ACT is to see our city excel in each of these, which is only possible if we design and build to cater to the needs of vibrant communities in all their facets. Currently many of these facets are handled by separate budget items allocated to different directorates. We'd like to see more budget items that enable cross-directorate work towards better integrated planning. For example the ACT urban stormwater wetlands bring health, amenity and biodiversity benefits as well as valuable water-quality improvement, and the kind of integrated planning that made this possible is welcome.

A focus of SEE-Change's program for this year is food security. Canberra was initially designed to be self-sufficient for its food; this has long since changed. We have access to substantial amounts of urban space which could be productively used for urban agriculture to provide our people with quality produce that is not trucked from across the country or even internationally. Support for urban agriculture is growing as evidenced by the number of community gardens and the demand for more. SEE-Change urges the ACT Government to increase its support for these initiatives (e.g. support for the Canberra Organic Growers Society to maintain its community gardens, and support for the Canberra City Farm). This is in line with the ACT Government's electoral promise to "fund 10 more community gardens across Canberra in existing suburbs to make our community places and spaces even better."

6. Are there any other particular issues with the ACT Budget that you would like to bring to the Committee's attention?

Yes No

a. If yes, please comment/attach further details:

This budget makes mention of triple bottom line reporting. SEE-Change is keen to work with the ACT Government to develop broader measures of well-being to gauge the level of development of our community and target appropriate responses.

Both the Conservation Council and Food Co-op have been affected by increased costs brought about by their shift to the Lena Karmel Unilodge building. They are now required to pay outgoings which was not made clear at the time that they accepted the ACT Government's offer to relocate. SEE-Change urges the ACT Government to reconsider its position on this matter.

7. Did you provide a budget submission to the ACT Government?

Yes (go to question 8) No (go to question 9.)

8. Do you think that the ACT Budget has addressed the issues raised in your submission?

Yes No

a. If yes, please comment

9. Does your organisation/group wish to give its views in a Committee public hearing on Friday 14 June 2013, at the Legislative Assembly, London Circuit, Canberra.

Yes No

If you indicate yes, and the Committee decides to invite you to appear at the hearing, the Committee Office will contact you by close of business Wednesday 12 June 2013 to confirm arrangements. Please note that the Committee may not be able to hear from all groups/organisations.

Thank you very much for contributing to the inquiry.
