

Inquiry into memorialisation through public commemoration

Legislative Assembly for the Australian Capital Territory Standing Committee on Economy and Gender and Economic Equality

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About the committee

Establishing resolution

The Legislative Assembly established the Standing Committee on Economy and Gender and Economic Equality on 2 December 2020.

The Committee is responsible for the following areas:

- Chief Minister's responsibilities
- Economic development and diversification
- Tourism
- Industrial relations and workplace safety
- Social impacts and outcomes of economic policies including gender considerations (excluding Office for Women)
- Minister of State responsibilities (excluding Justice and Community Safety Directorate reporting areas)
- Business and better regulation
- Arts

You can read the full establishing resolution on our website.

Committee members

Ms Nicole Lawder MLA, Chair (from 8 December 2020 to 24 June 2021)

Ms Leanne Castley MLA, Chair (from 24 June 2021)

Ms Suzanne Orr MLA, Deputy Chair

Mr Johnathan Davis MLA

Secretariat

Dr Lee Kerr, Committee Secretary (from 10 January 2022 until 20 June 2022)

Mr Samuel Thompson, Committee Secretary (from 20 June 2022)

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About this inquiry

Petition 6-21 (titled, 'Monumental Women') was presented to the Legislative Assembly on 2 June 2021, with 223 signatories. It was then referred to the Standing Committee on Economy and Gender and Economic Equality for consideration under Standing Order 99.¹

The Committee resolved to inquire into the petition on 15 June 2021.

The full Terms of Reference for the inquiry are available on our website.

¹ ACT Legislative Assembly, *Minutes of Proceedings No 16*, 2 June 2021, p 180.

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Acronyms and abbreviations

Acronym	Long form
ACT	Australian Capital Territory
aka	Also known as
AM	Member of the Order of Australia
the Assembly	the Legislative Assembly for the Australian Capital Territory
CALD	Culturally and linguistically diverse
CBD	Central business district
the Committee	Standing Committee on Economy and Gender and Economic Equality
EPSDD	Environment, Planning and Sustainable Development Directorate
LGBTIQ+	Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Trans, Intersex and Queer
MLA	Member of the Legislative Assembly
NDIS	National Disability Insurance Scheme
OAM	Medal of the Order of Australia
QR code	Quick Response code
the Review	ACT Place Names Committee and Guidelines Review (June 2019)
ZCCB	Zonta Club of Canberra Breakfast

Recommendations

Recommendation 1

The Committee recommends that the ACT Government provide an update to the Legislative Assembly, by the first sitting week of 2023, on names suggested for future commemoration, after consultation with key stakeholders such as the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Elected Body, the ACT Office for Women, and the ACT Office of LGBTIQ+ Affairs.

Recommendation 2

The Committee recommends that the ACT Government provide an update to the Legislative Assembly, by the first sitting week of 2023, on the implementation of recommendations arising from the ACT Place Names Committee and Guidelines Review.

Recommendation 3

The Committee recommends that the ACT Government conduct an education campaign to increase awareness on how nominations for public memorialisation can be made.

Recommendation 4

The Committee recommends that the ACT Government develop a strategy for addressing the historical discrepancy and legacy of this discrepancy in street and suburb naming conventions in the ACT.

In doing so, the ACT Government should:

- conduct a review of all its current street and suburb names and identify where the imbalances exist;
- ensure that all future naming of streets and suburbs adhere to the latest policy and guidelines to reflect on these historical discrepancies; and
- report annually on new street and suburb names implemented across the ACT to show adherence to the latest policy and guidelines.

Recommendation 5

The Committee recommends that the ACT Government review existing suburb names with a view to co-naming where possible to include women, LGBTIQ+ people, and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

Recommendation 6

The Committee recommends that, for all new and replacement signage, the ACT Government investigate the cost of adding information about individuals on signage where they have a suburb or a street named after them, and if the cost is not prohibitive, that these changes be made.

Recommendation 7

The Committee recommends that, for existing signage where suburbs and streets are named after individuals, the ACT Government add QR codes with relevant historical and biographical information.

Recommendation 8

The Committee recommends the ACT Government look into the history of Mt Ainslie and, if appropriate, erect a sign explaining the history of 'women's business' in Aboriginal culture and the significance this has for Mt Ainslie.

Recommendation 9

The Committee recommends that the ACT Government provide an update to the Legislative Assembly, by the first sitting week of 2023, on the commissioning of future public artwork commemorating women, LGBTIQ+ people, and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

Recommendation 10

The Committee recommends that the ACT Government establish memorials at local shops throughout Canberra prioritising recognition of members of the local community as part of the project.

Recommendation 11

The Committee recommends that the ACT Government establish a mechanism for the nomination of community members who have not yet been recognised for their work, so that more members of the ACT community who have provided great service but may not be as visible, are considered in memorialisation decisions.

Recommendation 12

The Committee recommends that the ACT Government commission Cathy Weiszmann to produce a bust of Rosemary Dobson to be erected in Poet's Corner.

1. Introduction

Referral and decision to inquire

- 1.1. On 2 June 2021, <u>Petition 6-21</u> was tabled in the Legislative Assembly, sponsored by Ms Suzanne Orr MLA, and signed by 223 signatories.²
- 1.2. The full terms of Petition 6-21 were:

The following residents of the ACT draw to the attention of the Assembly:

- Of the public statues that dot the ACT, the overwhelming majority are of men;
- Of the suburbs and streets named after people, the overwhelming majority are named after men; and
- It is important for women and girls to have women role models present and celebrated in the public space after whom to model themselves, as they cannot be what they cannot see.

Your petitioners, therefore, request the Assembly to call on the ACT Government to:

- Look to promote equality and diversity in the people we recognise through public commemoration;
- o Increase the prominence of women in place naming conventions across the territory; and
- o Identify opportunities to increase the representation of women, especially of diverse backgrounds and First Nations leaders in our public statues.
- 1.3. On 2 June 2021, the petition was referred to the Standing Committee on Economy and Gender and Economic Equality (the Committee) by the Legislative Assembly under Standing Order 99.³
- 1.4. On 15 June 2021, the Committee resolved to conduct a widened inquiry into memorialisation through public commemoration by self-referral. While the Committee's inquiry expanded on the scope of the petition, the requests made by the petitioners to the Legislative Assembly formed part of the Terms of Reference.
- 1.5. The Committee advised the Legislative Assembly of its decision to conduct the inquiry through a statement under Standing Order 246A in the Legislative Assembly during its sittings on 23 June 2021.⁴

² ACT Legislative Assembly, *Minutes of Proceedings No 16*, 2 June 2021, p 179.

³ The standing orders and continuing resolutions of the Assembly, March 2021, *standing order 99*, available at: https://www.parliament.act.gov.au/parliamentary-business/in-the-chamber/standing-orders/standing-orders.

⁴ ACT Legislative Assembly, Minutes of Proceedings No 29, 23 June 2021, p 217.

Conduct of the inquiry

- 1.6. On 15 June 2021, the Committee resolved to conduct an inquiry into memorialisation through public commemoration.
- 1.7. On 7 July 2021, the Committee resolved to call for submissions as part of a media event on 14 July 2021.
- 1.8. On 7 December 2021, the Committee resolved to extend the deadline for submissions from 7 February 2022 to 8 April 2022.
- 1.9. The Committee received 16 submissions which were published on the inquiry webpage and are listed in **Appendix A**.
- 1.10. A public hearing was held on Tuesday, 24 May 2022. The Committee heard evidence from witnesses listed in **Appendix B**. The transcript and video recording are available on the Legislative Assembly website.

2. Current system of public commemoration

Commemorative places, items, and monuments

- 2.1. Commemorative places, items, and monuments around Australia take many forms they range in size and materials, commemorate individuals and groups, as well as events and stories, and provide a link between present and past generations as a permanent marker to these memories.⁵
- 2.2. The naming of streets and suburbs, electorates, buildings and institutions, and the identification and registration of heritage sites may also be considered as commemorating the values associated with a figure, event, or place in Australia's history.⁶

Federal land and Territory land

- 2.3. In the Australian Capital Territory (ACT), the National Capital Authority has historically approved the location and character of national memorials and the naming of suburbs and public places on <u>Federal land</u>, in consultation with the Canberra National Memorials Committee under section 3 of the *National Memorials Ordinance 1928* (Cth).⁷
- 2.4. On 1 April 2022 the *National Memorials Ordinance 1928* (Cth) was repealed and replaced by *Australian Capital Territory National Land (National Memorials, Territory Divisions and Public Places) Ordinance 2022* (Cth) which serves the same purpose.
- 2.5. Following the establishment of self-government in 1989, the *Public Place Names Ordinance* 1989 (Cth) was made an Act of the Territory. The *Public Place Names Act 1989* allows for the Minister for Planning and Land Management to name the suburbs and public places of the ACT on Territory land.
- 2.6. Under the *Public Place Names Act 1989*, if the Minister is making a determination about the naming of a suburb, or the naming of a public place after a person, the Minister must consider:
 - the number of women and men after whom suburbs or public places have been named in the last 10 years; and
 - whether the names of women are well-represented.

⁵ Australian Heritage Council, *Protection of Australia's Commemorative Places and Monuments*, March 2018, p vii.

⁶ Australian Heritage Council, *Protection of Australia's Commemorative Places and Monuments*, March 2018, p 1.

⁷ Australian Government directory, <u>Department of Infrastructure, Transport, Regional Development and Communications – Canberra National Memorials Committee</u>, accessed 28 June 2022.

⁸ ACT Legislation Register, <u>Public Place Names Act 1989 – Law History</u>, accessed 11 July 2022.

⁹ ACT Legislation Register, *Public Place Names Act 1989 - Current Law*, accessed 11 July 2022.

¹⁰ Public Place Names Act 1989, s 3(2).

- 2.7. Further, when making a determination in respect of the naming of a suburb, the Minister 'shall have regard to the names of persons who have made notable contributions to the existence of Australia as a nation.'11
- 2.8. When making a determination in respect of the naming of a public place, the Minister 'shall have regard to:
 - the names of persons famous in Australian exploration, navigation, pioneering, colonisation, administration, politics, education, science, or letters;
 - the names of persons who have made notable contributions to the existence of Australia as a nation;
 - the names of Australian flora;
 - the names of things characteristic of Australia or Australians; and
 - Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander vocabulary.'12

¹¹ Public Place Names Act 1989, s 4(1).

¹² Public Place Names Act 1989, s 4(2).

3. Representation of women, LGBTIQ+ people, and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples

Reflecting Australia's diversity

- 3.1. Changing attitudes toward, and understandings of, history have led many people to question the appropriateness of some commemorative places, items, and monuments.
- 3.2. Research suggests that public commemoration has historically favoured men, with the names of women, LGBTIQ+ people, and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples being disproportionately underrepresented in public places.¹³
- 3.3. For example, of the 151 electoral division names across Australia, with just 17 of those electoral divisions (or 11.3%) named after women, with only 8 electoral divisions (or 5.3%) named after Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander people. A 2017 study found that within the CBD of Melbourne, there are more than 520 memorials, statues, and monuments however, the overwhelming majority (510+ commemorations) represented either a colonial landscape, or the civic leadership or heroic achievement by a man.
- 3.4. In a newspaper article by The Canberra Times, historian and associate professor at the 50/50 by 2030 Foundation¹⁶ at the University of Canberra, Chris Wallace, said that statues should reflect Australia in its diversity:

For every [male] statue that's thrown up now, there needs to be at least a dozen women, Indigenous Australians, people from multicultural heritage, to reflect what Australia is really like.

It's really disappointing that this isn't being addressed. Because it's about 'if you can see it, you can be it'. And the idea that only bronzes of dead white men are being installed, that continues to bend the reality and bend future outcomes.¹⁷

¹³ The Age, *Historic statues: Where Indigenous people and women go missing*, 3 September 2017, accessed 28 June 2022.

¹⁴ Australian Electoral Commission, <u>Classification of electoral division names</u>, 24 February 2022, accessed 28 June 2022.

¹⁵ The Age, <u>Historic statues: Where Indigenous people and women go missing</u>, 3 September 2017, accessed 28 June 2022.

¹⁶ Note: The 50/50 by 2030 Foundation is a research and advocacy centre with a focus on achieving equal representation of women in leadership and key decision-making roles in all levels of government and public institutions around Australia.

¹⁷ The Canberra Times, 'Another bronze ghost: What John McEwen's statue says about Australia', The Canberra Times, 5 February 2021, p 2.

3.5. In another newspaper article by The Canberra Times, historian and professor at the University of Sydney, Mark McKenna, has said that, in his view, the lack of commemoration acknowledging Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander history and peoples in the parliamentary zone reflected much about the nation:

It's an accurate reflection of the fact that we have not yet found a way to include Indigenous Australians in our image of the nation and our vision of the nation, we have not found a way to do it.

In a sense, the parliamentary triangle and that absence reflects the fact that the land was taken without treaty, compensation or consent. That's the big absence, and it's there, and speaks very loudly.

And we have to turn that around, we have to show that it's not good enough, that we don't accept any more that that is who we want to be. 18

Women

3.6. The ACT Government has provided a submission to this inquiry, which provided statistics of women recognised through public commemoration (streets, suburbs, parks, and locations) in the ACT:

There are twelve suburbs across the ACT named to commemorate notable Australian women, such as Franklin (writer, Stella Miles Franklin), Taylor (architect, Florence Taylor), Macnamara (scientist and medical researcher, Dame Jean Macnamara), and Wright (writer, poet and conservationist, Judith Wright). 19

In 2002, the *Public Places Names Act 1989* was amended to require consideration of whether women are well-represented in the names of suburbs and public places. The number of women recognised is improving, with statistics showing that in the past 10 years, the gender representation for new names has improved to approximately 40% women and 60% men.²⁰

In the past 10 years, seven parks have been named to honour the contribution of individual women.²¹

3.7. Further, the ACT Government's submission has acknowledged there is ongoing work required to promote equality and diversity in the people recognised through public commemoration:

We are reversing the decades of patriarchal place naming but obviously there is some way to go.²²

¹⁸ The Canberra Times, 'Another bronze ghost: What John McEwen's statue says about Australia', The Canberra Times, 5 February 2021, p 2.

¹⁹ ACT Government, Submission 2, p 2.

²⁰ ACT Government, *Submission 2*, p 3.

²¹ ACT Government, Submission 2, p 3.

²² ACT Government, Submission 2, p 3.

LGBTIQ+ people

3.8. In relation to the representation of LGBTIQ+ people recognised through public commemoration, the ACT Government's submission notes that the government is unable to report on the number of non-binary people commemorated in ACT place names, stating:

Currently, personal biographical information, such as a person identifying as non-binary, is only captured if it relates to their contribution. For example, the deceased person identified as non-binary as part of their advocacy for the rights of LGBTIQ+ people and diversity. This information may be offered by the relatives or close colleagues of the person during consultation to name a place.²³

3.9. The Minister for Planning and Land Management, Mr Mick Gentleman MLA, elaborated on this point during his appearance before the Committee at the public hearing:

In terms of naming places after members of the LGBTIQ+ community, there is obviously a difficulty in identifying the gender and sexual identities of historical figures. The ACT Government consults with families and descendants of people who are proposed for commemoration, and it may be the wish of the family to focus on the achievements of an individual in their chosen field, rather than on revealing sensitive personal information. As our society is changing, we may see more people recognised as openly identifying as part of the LGBTIQ+ community that, historically, may not have had such recognition.²⁴

3.10. Minister Gentleman advised the Committee that he has asked the ACT Place Names Unit to invite agencies such as the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Elected Body, the ACT Office for Women, and the ACT Office of LGBTIQ+ Affairs to offer suggestions of names for commemoration into the future.²⁵

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples

- 3.11. The ACT Human Rights Commissioner, Dr Helen Watchirs OAM, described the representation of cultural and linguistically diverse names as 'much worse [than the representation of females], so there is a lot of work to be done there.' ²⁶
- 3.12. To address these issues, Dr Helen Watchirs OAM suggested that working with peak Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander bodies on the matter is integral to the commemoration process:

The Office for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Affairs could probably provide some secretariat support in capacity-building for community organisations and

²⁴ Mr Mick Gentleman MLA, Minister for Planning and Land Management, *Committee Hansard*, 24 May 2022, p 48.

²³ ACT Government, Submission 2, p 3.

²⁵ Mr Mick Gentleman MLA, Minister for Planning and Land Management, *Committee Hansard*, 24 May 2022, p. 48.

²⁶ Dr Helen Watchirs OAM, ACT Human Rights Commissioner, *Committee Hansard*, 24 May 2022, p 58.

individual families, to seek them out, regarding what place names they would recommend and what the current breakdown is.

We have the oldest living culture in the world, and that needs to be reflected in modern things, not just generational things that have survived. Languages and other manifestations of culture are equally important.²⁷

3.13. In its submission, the Australian Institute for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies noted that there are many First Nations people who have contributed to the ACT, who are yet to be publicly commemorated. Several notable omissions are Jimmy Clements and John Noble – the only Indigenous people to attend the first opening of Parliament House in 1927 – and the writer, artist and activist, Kerry Reed-Gilbert.²⁸ The Committee notes that two other submissions also put Kerry Reed-Gilbert's name forward for public commemoration.²⁹

Committee comment

3.14. The Committee is of the view that the ACT Government should provide an update to the Legislative Assembly on the names suggested for future commemoration after consultation with peak bodies, by the first sitting week of 2023. The Committee believes that it is crucial for the government to consult peak bodies insofar as consultation would allow for meaningful, practical and measurable input from key stakeholders on the issue.

Recommendation 1

The Committee recommends that the ACT Government provide an update to the Legislative Assembly, by the first sitting week of 2023, on names suggested for future commemoration, after consultation with key stakeholders such as the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Elected Body, the ACT Office for Women, and the ACT Office of LGBTIQ+ Affairs.

ACT Place Names Committee and Guidelines Review of June 2019

3.15. The ACT Government has previously undertaken the ACT Place Names Committee and Guidelines Review (the Review) in response to a resolution passed by the Legislative Assembly on 28 November 2018.³⁰ Minister Gentleman tabled the Review and the Government's response in the Legislative Assembly on 6 June 2019.³¹

²⁷ Dr Helen Watchirs OAM, ACT Human Rights Commissioner, *Committee Hansard*, 24 May 2022, p 60.

²⁸ Australian Institute for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies, *Submission 16*, p 3.

²⁹ Jacqui Malins, *Submission 5*, p 2; Samantha Faulkner, *Submission 15*, p 2.

³⁰ ACT Legislative Assembly, *Minutes of Proceedings No 81*, 28 November 2018, pp 1161–1162.

³¹ Environment, Planning and Sustainable Development Directorate, <u>ACT Place Names Committee and Guidelines Review - June 2019</u>, accessed 28 June 2022.

- 3.16. The resolution required the ACT Government to conduct a review of the ACT Place Names Committee, the *Public Place Names (Naming of Public Places) Guidelines 2014 (No 1)*, and associated processes. The Review also called on the ACT Place Names Committee to review the naming of two public places, Haig Park and William Slim Drive.
- 3.17. The Review made a total of 18 recommendations across the ACT Place Names Committee Terms of Reference, ACT Place Names Committee membership, Public Place Names Guidelines, and for the consideration of community proposals and renaming. The ACT Government has agreed to implement all recommendations from the Review.³²

Committee comment

3.18. The Committee is of the view that the ACT Government should provide an update to the Legislative Assembly on the implementation of recommendations arising from the Review, by the first sitting week of 2023. The Committee wishes to examine how the government has so far addressed the 18 recommendations from the Review.

Recommendation 2

The Committee recommends that the ACT Government provide an update to the Legislative Assembly, by the first sitting week of 2023, on the implementation of recommendations arising from the ACT Place Names Committee and Guidelines Review.

- 3.19. During its public hearing on 24 May 2022, the Committee heard from a former member of the ACT Place Names Committee that '[the ACT Place Names Committee] has done good work, [but] it could be more proactive in promoting its work, including how nominations are received and considered'.³³
- 3.20. The Review identified several ways for the Public Place Names Guidelines to capture more community input, such as:
 - a call for community feedback, noting the need to balance community input with the rights of families, such as through the YourSay website.
 - updating the place names website and the communications strategy for place-naming proposals and decisions, so that the community is more aware and has the opportunity to become more engaged with the place-naming process.
 - improvements be made to the place names website to develop an online portal for providing feedback to the Committee on naming proposals, renaming proposals and other feedback.³⁴

³² Environment, Planning and Sustainable Development Directorate, <u>ACT Place Names Committee and Guidelines Review - June 2019</u>, accessed 28 June 2022.

³³ Samantha Faulkner, *Committee Hansard*, 24 May 2022, p 23.

³⁴ ACT Legislative Assembly – Tabled Papers, <u>ACT Place Names Committee and Guidelines Review - June 2019</u>, pp 31–32, accessed 28 June 2022.

- 3.21. The Committee was also told that the ACT Place Names Committee could also be more active in reaching out to attract a diverse range of people to serve on the Committee.³⁵ The Committee notes that another recommendation from the Review was that the expression of interest process for new Committee appointments should include a broad and multi-faceted communications approach which targets new members and seeks to reach a diverse range of candidates.³⁶
- 3.22. Following the Review, a new set of guidelines titled *Public Place Names (Naming of Public Places) Guidelines 2021* was notified on 12 February 2021.³⁷

Committee comment

3.23. The Committee believes that it is important for public engagement to be a part of the process for public commemoration, as widening the scope for community input allows for meaningful contributions from across the diverse community here in the ACT.

Recommendation 3

The Committee recommends that the ACT Government conduct an education campaign to increase awareness on how nominations for public memorialisation can be made.

³⁵ ACT Human Rights Commission, Submission 14, p 2.

³⁶ Environment, Planning and Sustainable Development Directorate, <u>ACT Place Names Committee and Guidelines Review - June 2019</u>, p 31, accessed 28 June 2022.

³⁷ ACT Legislation Register, <u>Public Place Names (Naming of Public Places) Guidelines 2021</u>, accessed 11 July 2022.

4. Commemoration through naming streets and suburbs

Past vs. Present

4.1. Social advocacy group Women in Gippsland's submission noted that public place recognition has historically favoured men, and women's names are disproportionately underrepresented in public places around the world. Women in Gippsland are of the view that:

[T]he alarming underrepresentation of public place name recognition is a clear example of gender inequality and sends the dangerous message that women and their contributions are not as important as men.³⁸

- 4.2. The ACT Government's submission explained that the *Public Place Names Act 1989* was amended in 2002 to require consideration of whether women are well-represented in the names of suburbs and public places.³⁹
- 4.3. At the public hearing, the Minister for Planning and Land Management, Mr Mick Gentleman MLA, told the Committee that most of the suburbs in the ACT were named under the National Memorials Ordinance of the Commonwealth, which carried through until self-government was enacted in 1989:

The [A]ct covers the naming of suburbs, streets, parks and locations in the ACT. There is a legislative provision in the Act that requires me to consider the representation of women when considering names for these places. That provision has been in the Act since 2002. Many suburbs and streets in Canberra were obviously given names before 2002 and I recognise that there is some catching up to do in terms of gender representation.⁴⁰

4.4. A submission to the inquiry by Greg Tannahill added:

Our history disproportionately commemorates rich white conservative straight men, largely reflecting the demographics who have held power in our country. An appropriate policy going forward would not only be to select a more diverse range of individuals in future but take steps to correct the imbalances of the past.⁴¹

4.5. The ACT Human Rights Commissioner, Dr Helen Watchirs OAM, stated at the public hearing that:

It is really important that we reflect the diversity of the community that we have and the changing values and mores. Gender identity was not thought of in our

³⁸ Women in Gippsland, *Submission 4*, pp 1–3.

³⁹ ACT Government, Submission 2, p 3.

⁴⁰ Mr Mick Gentleman MLA, Minister for Planning and Land Management, *Committee Hansard*, 24 May 2022, p 48.

⁴¹ Greg Tannahill, Submission 12, p 2.

constitution, or even in our self-government act in 1989; the place names [A]ct is the same age—1989. There needs to be updating, and that needs to be reflected in our celebration and recognition of the diversity of Canberra. 42

Committee comment

4.6. The Committee is of the view that, while the legislation for place names has been amended to address the disparity between men and women, there is still a need to correct the historical imbalance, and the government should develop strategies to address the legacy of these discrepancies.

Recommendation 4

The Committee recommends that the ACT Government develop a strategy for addressing the historical discrepancy and legacy of this discrepancy in street and suburb naming conventions in the ACT.

In doing so, the ACT Government should:

- conduct a review of all its current street and suburb names and identify where the imbalances exist;
- ensure that all future naming of streets and suburbs adhere to the latest policy and guidelines to reflect on these historical discrepancies; and
- report annually on new street and suburb names implemented across the
 ACT to show adherence to the latest policy and guidelines.

Co-naming streets and suburbs

- 4.7. The Committee was interested in the opportunities which the naming of streets and suburbs provide, for addressing the gender balance when commemorating individuals, including co-naming.
- 4.8. At the public hearing, ACT Surveyor-General, Mr Greg Ledwidge, advised the Committee about the difficulties of changing existing street or suburb names:

In terms of trying to address the imbalance in existing suburbs, be it the streets or the suburb names, that is quite tricky because there are lots of complications. If you are talking about changing a street name, all the lessees that may have addresses off that street are affected. It can be quite a difficult process if you decide to go down that path. But we do try, as much as possible, to correct that imbalance as we go forward, in every circumstance.⁴³

⁴² Dr Helen Watchirs OAM, ACT Human Rights Commissioner, *Committee Hansard*, 24 May 2022, p 61.

⁴³ Mr Greg Ledwidge, ACT Surveyor-General, Statutory Planning, Environment, Planning and Sustainable Development Directorate, *Committee Hansard*, 24 May 2022, p 50.

4.9. However, the Committee was advised that co-naming is not as difficult.⁴⁴ For example, the Committee heard evidence that the Environment, Planning and Sustainable Development Directorate (EPSDD) are looking at co-naming the suburb of Spence to include journalist, social and political reformer, novelist and feminist, Catherine Helen Spence:⁴⁵

It is a complex process because you have to discuss and negotiate with the family, or the person already commemorated. It is not an easy process, but that is underway. 46

- 4.10. The Committee raised that, in the same way that Spence could be co-named to include a man and a woman, the suburb of Lawson could similarly be co-named after both Henry Lawson and his mother, Louisa Lawson (1848-1920), who was a poet, writer, publisher, suffragist and feminist.⁴⁷
- 4.11. The ACT Human Rights Commission put that there should be systems in place that support the greater use of dual place names where there are landmarks or geographical features which have been named, but which have significance to local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, as recognised in section 14 of the Public Place Names Guidelines 2021. 48

Committee comment

4.12. The Committee is of the view that the ACT Government should actively review existing suburb names with a view to co-naming where possible, to address the current gender imbalance and recognise significant landmarks and geographical features for local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

Recommendation 5

The Committee recommends that the ACT Government review existing suburb names with a view to co-naming where possible to include women, LGBTIQ+ people, and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

4.13. The Committee was also interested in actions which other jurisdictions have taken to include information about the person being commemorated on street and suburb signage, including through the use of QR codes or adding a line underneath the street name in smaller font 'in recognition of'.

⁴⁴ Mr Mick Gentleman MLA, Minister for Planning and Land Management, *Committee Hansard*, 24 May 2022, p.54.

⁴⁵ Note: The suburb is currently named after William Spence (1846-1926), one of the founders of the Australian Workers' Union, and later a member of the first Australian House of Representatives.

⁴⁶ Mr Greg Ledwidge, ACT Surveyor-General, Statutory Planning, Environment, Planning and Sustainable Development Directorate, *Committee Hansard*, 24 May 2022, p 50.

⁴⁷ Ms Suzanne Orr MLA, Deputy Chair, Standing Committee on Economy and Gender and Economic Equality, *Committee Hansard*, 24 May 2022, p 53.

⁴⁸ ACT Human Rights Commission, Submission 14, p 2.

4.14. ACT Surveyor-General, Mr Greg Ledwidge, advised the Committee at the public hearing, that in the ACT:

There is a short section in the naming instrument that outlines what that person is being commemorated for. That is the first option. However, the second option is through the ACTmapi website, to go and source some of that information.⁴⁹

Committee comment

4.15. The Committee is of the view that the ACT Government should investigate the cost of including additional information regarding individuals on signage, who have had a suburb or street named after them. If the cost is not prohibitive, the Committee recommends the ACT Government implement these changes.

Recommendation 6

The Committee recommends that, for all new and replacement signage, the ACT Government investigate the cost of adding information about individuals on signage where they have a suburb or a street named after them, and if the cost is not prohibitive, that these changes be made.

4.16. Regarding the use of QR codes, the Minister Gentleman advised the Committee that:

We do do it, I guess. When we look at historic walks for example, across the ACT, we usually have some signage with a QR code that give you quite detailed information about the area, the naming of the walk or the location, for example. That might be something that we could have a look at.⁵⁰

Committee comment

4.17. The Committee is of the view that, for existing signage where suburbs and streets are named after individuals, QR codes should be added to the signage, which links to relevant historical and biographical information on the ACTmapi website.

Recommendation 7

The Committee recommends that, for existing signage where suburbs and streets are named after individuals, the ACT Government add QR codes with relevant historical and biographical information.

⁴⁹ Mr Greg Ledwidge, ACT Surveyor-General, Statutory Planning, Environment, Planning and Sustainable Development Directorate, *Committee Hansard*, 24 May 2022, p 50.

⁵⁰ Mr Mick Gentleman MLA, Minister for Planning and Land Management, *Committee Hansard*, 24 May 2022, p 50.

Mt Ainslie

- 4.18. At the public hearing for the inquiry, the Committee heard from Ngambri Elder, Guumaal Ngambri Mingku (aka Shane Mortimer), about the significance of the Ainslie Volcanics site. He believes that the Ainslie Volcanics site, including Mt Ainslie, has been overlooked for their Aboriginal significance, and that this now needs rectification.
- 4.19. His submission to the inquiry also highlights this issue:

The Ainslie Volcanics site is highly significant. Shane Mortimer has a close personal affiliation with the site as his great, great, great grandmother led James Ainslie to the "Clump of Trees" – Corroboree Park. Shane Mortimer has been campaigning for the last decade to preserve the Ainslie Volcanics [and] the native grassland, and to achieve recognition of the Ainslie Volcanics, surrounding grassland and Corroboree Park as highly significant Aboriginal and European historic sites. ⁵¹

...Shane Mortimer was hoping... to have the aboriginal significance of Dya (Mt Ainslie) formally recognised as a women's business significant site... [and for] the Ainslie Volcanics and foothills [recognised] as Aboriginally significant tors and outcrops used for markers, tool site[s], [as a] meeting place and Corroboree preparation site... ⁵²

[Recognition should also occur for] Corroboree Park as an Aboriginal significant Corroboree site...⁵³

Committee comment

4.20. The Committee is of the view that Mt Ainslie and its surrounding areas hold significance to the local Aboriginal peoples which has not yet been recognised. The Committee suggests the ACT Government look into the history of the area and, if appropriate, install signage explaining the history of women's business around Mt Ainslie.

Recommendation 8

The Committee recommends the ACT Government look into the history of Mt Ainslie and, if appropriate, erect a sign explaining the history of 'women's business' in Aboriginal culture and the significance this has for Mt Ainslie.

⁵¹ Shane Mortimer, *Submission 8*, p 4.

⁵² Shane Mortimer, *Submission 8*, p 4.

⁵³ Shane Mortimer, Submission 8, p 4.

5. Representation of women in public art

Commissioning of future works

- 5.1. As noted in Chapter 1: Introduction, this inquiry commenced upon the referral of Petition 6-21 ('Monumental Women') to the Committee. While the Committee's inquiry expanded on the scope of the petition, the requests made by the petitioners to the Legislative Assembly formed part of the Terms of Reference.
- 5.2. Jasiri Australia, a youth-led organisation, originally launched the petition to 'smash the bronze ceiling' and celebrate the distinct accomplishments of women through statues and place names. Jasiri Australia launched the petition to spark conversations about equal representation after last year's unveiling of the statue of Andrew Inglis Clarke at Constitution Avenue.⁵⁴
- 5.3. According to Jasiri National Program Manager, Olivia Kourmadias, 'whilst putting statues up is a seemingly symbolic act, it goes further than that': 55

In the ACT, one in every 10 statues is [of] a woman. It is absolutely disproportionate and in no way honours the political heritage of women.

It tells young women that their political heritage isn't important and that their contributions to politics isn't worthy of commemoration or honour like the contributions of men.

The 'bronze ceiling' is women don't see themselves in architecture, they don't see themselves in place names and they don't see themselves in statues.⁵⁶

- 5.4. Women in Gippsland's submission provided some telling statistics on the number of statues of women there are currently:
 - Globally, there are few statues commemorating historic women the estimate quoted is around three per cent of all statues.⁵⁷
 - In Melbourne, 1.5 per cent, or nine out of 580, are statues of women.⁵⁸
 - In Sydney, there are over 200 statues and only six per cent are women.⁵⁹

⁵⁴ Note: the statue of Andrew Inglis Clark, co-author of the constitution of Australia, was suggested by the National Capital Authority, and was not the ACT Government's decision.

⁵⁵ Erin Cross, 'Monumental Women petition aims to smash 'the bronze ceiling', Canberra Weekly, 26 February 2021, p 1.

⁵⁶ Erin Cross, 'Monumental Women petition aims to smash 'the bronze ceiling', Canberra Weekly, 26 February 2021, p 2.

⁵⁷ Statues for Equality, *Cities*, https://statuesforequality.com/pages/cities, accessed 30 June 2022.

⁵⁸ Statues for Equality, *Melbourne*, https://statuesforequality.com/pages/melbourne, accessed 30 June 2022.

⁵⁹ Statues for Equality, *Sydney*, https://statuesforequality.com/pages/sydney, accessed 30 June 2022.

5.5. Shortly after the installation of the statue of Sir John Gorton, Australia's 19th Prime Minister, and his kelpie, Suzie Q, in the Parliamentary Triangle in early 2021, an article in the Canberra Times newspaper stated:

It's official: there are now more statues of dogs in the Parliamentary Triangle than there are women or Indigenous people. Or, to put it another way, there are now precisely zero statues of women or Indigenous people in the Parliamentary Triangle, while there is one dog and countless men represented in bronze, wandering about the place.⁶⁰

- 5.6. The Committee is aware that work is underway by the National Capital Authority on a commemorative sculpture of Dame Enid Lyons and Dame Dorothy Tangney, the first two women to be elected to the Parliament, to be placed in the Parliamentary Triangle. Another sculpture will honour the first Indigenous Australian in Parliament, Neville Bonner. Bonner.
- 5.7. The ACT Government submission acknowledged that currently, the government's public art collection does not fully reflect the diversity of the community:

Women are poorly represented, not only as artists but also as subjects in the collection. There is the opportunity to increase the representation of women and non-binary people, especially of diverse backgrounds and First Nations leaders, through public artwork commissions. ⁶³

Committee comment

- 5.8. The Committee welcomes the advice in the ACT Government's submission that the sum of \$200,000 was allocated in the 2021-22 Budget for an artwork commissioned by and about women and that a female or non-binary artist will be engaged to design, fabricate and install a public artwork that celebrates women.⁶⁴
- 5.9. The Committee was encouraged to learn that the ACT Government is considering how women and non-binary people can be commemorated in the ACT as part of future public artwork commissioning processes. This will be determined in consultation with the community and the arts sector with support from the Office for Women and the Office of LGBTIQ+ Affairs, and the Committee looks forward to the commissioning of future public artwork commemorating women, LGBTIQ+ people, and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.⁶⁵

⁶⁰ The Canberra Times, 'Why are there no women statues in the Parliamentary Triangle?', The Canberra Times, 29 March 2021, p 1.

⁶¹ National Capital Authority, Dame Dorothy Tangney and Dame Enid Lyons Sculpture, https://www.nca.gov.au/environment/projects/current-projects/dame-dorothy-tangney-and-dame-enid-lyons-sculpture#, accessed 30 June 2022.

⁶² Karen Barlow, "<u>Deserve our recognition</u>": <u>Three trailblazers of Australian politics to be immortalised</u>", *The Canberra Times*, 25 August 2021, p 1.

⁶³ ACT Government, Submission 2, p 5.

⁶⁴ ACT Government, *Submission 2*, p 5.

⁶⁵ ACT Government, Submission 2, p 7.

Recommendation 9

The Committee recommends that the ACT Government provide an update to the Legislative Assembly, by the first sitting week of 2023, on the commissioning of future public artwork commemorating women, LGBTIQ+ people, and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

6. Commemorating local champions, changemakers, and everyday heroes

Local commemorations

- 6.1. Another theme which emerged during the public hearings was the concentration of public art in the Central Business District (CBD). Several witnesses stated that they would like to see art at their local shops, and to start to bring memorialisation of women, non-binary people, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, and culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) people into local areas and out of Canberra's CBD.
- 6.2. Minister Gentleman advised the Committee its public hearing on 24 May 2022 that:

It is certainly practical, if you were doing representations of people in areas of the CBD or local areas – for example, local shops. We have done it. I think there are quite a number. Hughes shops has some representations of people that have been committed to the Territory, recognising the work that they have done. So, it is practical in that sense. There is a cost with all of that of course, and we need to be aware of what the local community could want as well. I think Hughes was quite a success, the Hughes shops and the experience of the commemoration there. ⁶⁶

Committee comment

6.3. The Committee is of the view that establishing memorials of members of local communities at their local shops, would be a meaningful commemoration of the individuals and their contributions to their respective community.

Recommendation 10

The Committee recommends that the ACT Government establish memorials at local shops throughout Canberra prioritising recognition of members of the local community as part of the project.

6.4. A topic which emerged from the submissions and from the evidence taken during the public hearing was the need to commemorate 'quiet Canberrans'. 'Quiet Canberrans' are those who may not have appeared in the headlines but have nevertheless made considerable contributions to the community leaving a lasting legacy. The Committee heard about two such 'quiet Canberrans' it considers worthy of recognition; Stephanie Goulstone and Sue Salthouse. 67

⁶⁶ Mr Mick Gentleman MLA, Minister for Planning and Land Management, *Committee Hansard*, 24 May 2022, p. 54.

⁶⁷ Zonta Club of Canberra Breakfast, Submission 1; Nicholas Villiers, Submission 7.

Stephanie Goulstone

6.5. The Zonta Club of Canberra Breakfast (ZCCB) informed the Committee about Stephanie Goulstone, who was a member of the Club from July 2017 until her death in January 2021. During that time:

Stephanie was one of our most passionate and energised members who assisted in all our projects to empower women and girls, including the making of breast cushions [for cancer patients], [and] the preparation and delivery of home starter packs to women leaving ACT refuges to go into provided homes following domestic violence.⁶⁸

- 6.6. Stephanie Goulstone also initiated the practice of wearing and displaying orange flowers in public places such as local libraries, to raise awareness of domestic violence. The ZCCB has also sought assistance in recent years from ACT Government directorates to turn buildings, fountains, and light rail stops orange during the 16 days of the Zonta Says No to Violence campaign. ⁶⁹
- 6.7. Asked about the most appropriate way to commemorate Stephanie Goulstone, ZCCB said she would be embarrassed if it was 'something big':

Stephanie was an average ACT woman. There are so many of them out there. They are often totally overlooked because the majority of the names are male. We wanted to put in this submission to show how somebody can make such a difference when she has the time. She has put in her energy... she worked day and night for ZCCB and for the empowerment and betterment of women and children. It is a story that is important to get out to everybody.⁷⁰

Susan (Sue) Salthouse AM

- 6.8. Another 'quiet Canberran' the Committee heard about was Sue Salthouse AM, who worked tirelessly to advocate for and ensure better social outcomes for women, and particularly, women with disabilities.
- 6.9. After being seriously injured in an accident in 1995, Sue Salthouse became involved with Women with Disabilities Australia and was national president from 2009-12. She participated in the Prime Minister's Advisory Panel to reduce violence against women, chaired the ACT Disability Expert Panel advising on the National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS), and received the 2014 ACT Senior Woman of the Year and 2015 Canberra Citizen of the year.⁷¹
- 6.10. The Committee was told that Sue Salthouse should be publicly commemorated in the ACT, as 'she worked tirelessly to improve social outcomes for people facing disadvantage':

⁶⁸ Zonta Club of Canberra Breakfast, Submission 1, p 1.

⁶⁹ Zonta Club of Canberra Breakfast, *Submission 1*, p 1.

⁷⁰ Zonta Club of Canberra Breakfast, Submission 1, p 1.

⁷¹ Nicholas Villiers, *Submission 7*, pp 1–2.

Having Sue memorialised in some way would show people with disabilities in the community that they are respected and valued, that they can make contributions and that they are important to the fabric of our Canberra community. Having her somehow at the front and centre of that would be a very good way of demonstrating that value and that contribution to community.⁷²

- 6.11. Sue Salthouse passed away in 2020 after being involved in an accident in her wheelchair accessible motorcycle on Commonwealth Avenue Bridge. In 2022, she was posthumously made a Member of the Order of Australia (AM) for her work and advocacy for people with disabilities, women with disabilities, and family violence.⁷³
- 6.12. The Committee asked Minister Gentleman about existing opportunities for recognising the 'quiet Canberrans':

We have heard quite a bit from some of the other submitters today about recognising the quiet people—the people who go about doing things and doing a lot of service within our community but fly a bit under the radar and usually, from what we have had described today, would not draw attention to themselves or the good work they do. They are really appreciated within the community, but they are not necessarily high profile or visible in our media. What opportunities currently exist for recognising those people?⁷⁴

6.13. In his response, Minister Gentleman told the Committee that:

...members of the community could write to the [EPSDD] directorate. There is a link on the EPSDD website which allows you to write to the place names committee and make suggestions for people that should be commemorated. I would suggest that is probably the best link.⁷⁵

Committee comment

6.14. The Committee is of the view that the ACT Government devise a system where the general public can submit nominations of community members who have not yet been recognised for their work, to ensure local heroes can be considered in memorialisation decisions.

Recommendation 11

The Committee recommends that the ACT Government establish a mechanism for the nomination of community members who have not yet been recognised for their work, so that more members of the ACT community who have provided great service but may not be as visible, are considered in memorialisation decisions.

⁷² Nicholas Villiers, *Submission 7*, p 2.

⁷³ Nicholas Villiers, *Submission 7*, p 2.

⁷⁴ Ms Suzanne Orr MLA, Deputy Chair, Standing Committee on Economy and Gender and Economic Equality, *Committee Hansard*, 24 May 2022, p 53.

⁷⁵ Mr Mick Gentleman MLA, Minister for Planning and Land Management, *Committee Hansard*, 24 May 2022, p 53.

Poet's Corner

- 6.15. The Committee received 7 submissions (out of a total of 16) calling for a bust of the poet Rosemary Dobson to be included in Poet's Corner.
- 6.16. Poet's Corner, located in Garema Place in Canberra City, is a collection of three bronze busts by Cathy Weiszmann of Canberra-focussed Australian poets Judith Wright, A.D. Hope, and David Campbell. Poet's Corner highlights the importance of these poets and creates a space where people can reflect upon, recite and enjoy poetry. A sample of each poet's work is presented on the granite plinths supporting the busts.⁷⁶
- 6.17. Poet's Corner was unveiled in January 2012, while Rosemary Dobson was still alive. While there was a campaign for her to be recognised as part of it at the time, it was not considered appropriate to include her, as she was still alive.⁷⁷ Rosemary Dobson passed away in June 2012.
- 6.18. The Committee received multiple testimonies for Rosemary Dobson's literary stature and legacy, along with active contributions to Canberra's literacy culture:

Rosemary Dobson was an extraordinarily gifted poet, whose work expressed a profound understanding of the nature of women's (and men's) lives at a time when women's lives were less frequently recognised. Her poetry, as her nature, was quiet and incisive, both profound and accessible. It is perhaps her personal quietness that has led to her being overlooked in the matter of memorialisation.⁷⁸

The premier publisher of poetry in Australia last century was Angus and Robertson. Poems were selected for inclusion in their annual anthology of poetry published from 1941 to 1973 by a different poet-editor each year. Poems by Dobson are included in all issues from 1941 to 1973 except two, making her the most anthologised female poet in the series (the next is Judith Wright who is in all but five). Dobson's poems have also been included in every major Australian poetry anthology in the period 1946 to 2015. ⁷⁹

Rosemary was a friend and colleague of Hope, Campbell and Wright... With them she made Canberra a vital powerhouse of the Australian poetry scene. Rosemary left a rich literary legacy for Canberra, both via her writing, and her mentorship and encouragement of other writers – attending readings by other, younger Canberra poets well into her 80s.⁸⁰

⁷⁶ ACT Government artACT, Poet's Corner, https://www.arts.act.gov.au/public-art/poets-corner, accessed 6 July 2022.

⁷⁷ Jacqui Malins, *Submission 5*, p 1.

⁷⁸ Lesley Lebkowicz, *Submission 3*, p 1.

⁷⁹ Maggie Shapley, Submission 11, p 2; Meredith Hinchliffe AM, Submission 13, p 1.

⁸⁰ Paul Cliff, Submission 6, p 1.

6.19. The Committee asked why it was so important for Rosemary Dobson to be represented in Poet's Corner specifically, as opposed to being memorialised elsewhere in Canberra – by a street name, for example. One of the submissions to the inquiry stated that Poet's Corner is 'where she belongs':

Her addition to the group is logical; they WERE Canberra's classical poets, they were well known as a peer group, and without her the group is incomplete. It's a no-brainer. There is room for her to be there, and it is time to place her where she belongs. 81

Committee comment

6.20. The Committee agrees that a place in Poet's Corner seems more appropriate to Rosemary Dobson's literary stature and legacy than any other type of memorialisation. The Committee considers that ten years after its erection in 2012 would be an appropriate time to 'round out matters', in the words of one submission – giving equal representation to two major Canberra male poets alongside two major female ones.⁸²

Recommendation 12

The Committee recommends that the ACT Government commission Cathy Weiszmann to produce a bust of Rosemary Dobson to be erected in Poet's Corner.

⁸¹ Caren Florance, Submission 9, p 1.

⁸² Paul Cliff, Submission 6, p 1; Meredith Hinchliffe AO, Submission 13, p 1.

7. Conclusion

- 7.1. The Committee has made 12 recommendations in relation to its inquiry into memorialisation through public commemoration.
- 7.2. The Committee acknowledges those who contributed to its inquiry, including Minister Gentleman and staff from the EPSDD, all participants at the public hearing, and to the principal petitioners of Petition 6-21, Jasiri Australia, for bringing this issue to the attention of the Committee.

Ms Leanne Castley MLA

Chair, Standing Committee on Economy and Gender and Economic Equality

1 August 2022

Appendix A: Submissions

No.	Submission by	Received	Published
1	Zonta Club of Canberra Breakfast	10/11/21	07/12/21
2	ACT Government	11/11/21	07/12/21
3	Lesley Lebkowicz	14/11/21	07/12/21
4	Women in Gippsland	25/11/21	07/12/21
5	Jacqui Malins	28/09/21	12/10/21
6	Paul Cliff	14/12/21	17/03/22
7	Nicholas Villiers	02/02/22	15/02/22
8	Shane Mortimer	02/02/22	15/02/22
9	Caren Florance	14/01/22	08/03/22
10	Ian Bolton	21/02/22	08/03/22
11	Maggie Shapley	21/02/22	08/03/22
12	Greg Tannahill	09/03/22	17/03/22
13	Meredith Hinchliffe AM	16/03/22	31/03/22
14	ACT Human Rights Commission	08/04/22	14/04/22
15	Samantha Faulkner	08/04/22	14/04/22
16	Australian Institute for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies	12/05/22	28/07/22

Appendix B: Witnesses

Tuesday 24 May 2022

ACT Human Rights Commission

• Dr Helen Watchirs OAM, President and Human Rights Commissioner

Minister for Planning and Land Management

- Mr Mick Gentleman MLA, Minister for Planning and Land Management
- **Dr Erin Brady**, Deputy Director-General, Planning and Sustainable Development, Environment, Planning and Sustainable Development Directorate
- **Mr Greg Ledwidge**, Surveyor-General/Senior Director, Statutory Planning, Environment, Planning and Sustainable Development Directorate

Women in Gippsland

Ms Kerry Wilson

Zonta Club of Canberra Breakfast

- Ms Christine Magner, President
- Mr Jeremy Goulstone

Individuals

- Mr Greg Tannahill
- Ms Samantha Faulkner
- Mr Shane Mortimer
- Ms Lesley Lebkowicz
- Ms Jacqui Malins