



**LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY FOR THE
AUSTRALIAN CAPITAL TERRITORY**

2004–2005–2006

MINUTES OF PROCEEDINGS

No. 75

WEDNESDAY, 20 SEPTEMBER 2006

1 The Assembly met at 10.30 a.m., pursuant to adjournment. The Speaker (Mr Berry) took the Chair and asked Members to stand in silence and pray or reflect on their responsibilities to the people of the Australian Capital Territory.

2 PETITION

The Clerk announced that the following Member had lodged a petition for presentation:

Dr Foskey, from 401 residents, requesting that the Assembly pass the Education (School Closures Moratorium) Amendment Bill 2006 to ensure that no schools are involuntarily closed until 2008 and that no school closures take effect from that date unless supported by a specific vote of the ACT Legislative Assembly.

Papers: Dr Foskey, by leave, presented the following papers:

Giralang Primary School—Proposed closure—Drawings (13).

3 EDUCATION (SCHOOL CLOSURES MORATORIUM) AMENDMENT BILL 2006

The order of the day having been read for the resumption of the debate on the question—That this Bill be agreed to in principle—

Debate resumed.

Question—That this Bill be agreed to in principle—put.

The Assembly voted—

AYES, 6

Mrs Dunne	Mr Smyth
Dr Foskey	Mr Stefaniak
Mr Pratt	
Mr Seselja	

NOES, 7

Mr Barr	Ms MacDonald
Mr Berry	Ms Porter
Mr Gentleman	Mr Stanhope
Mr Hargreaves	

And so it was negatived.

4 MINISTERIAL ARRANGEMENTS

Mr Stanhope (Chief Minister) informed the Assembly of the absence of Mr Corbell (Attorney-General) and advised the Assembly that questions without notice normally directed to Mr Corbell could be directed to Mr Stanhope.

5 QUESTIONS

Questions without notice were asked.

6 LEAVE OF ABSENCE TO MEMBER

Mr Hargreaves (Minister for the Territory and Municipal Services) moved—That leave of absence be given to Mr Corbell (Attorney-General) for this sitting.

Question—put and passed.

7 STRATEGIC BUSHFIRE MANAGEMENT

Mr Pratt, pursuant to notice, moved—That this Assembly:

- (1) notes with concern:
 - (a) the Government's lack of progress in finalising the Strategic Bushfire Management Plan (SBMP) Version 2;
 - (b) the lack of:
 - (i) tangible and definitive goals, targets and directions in the current version of the SBMP; and
 - (ii) specific bushfire operational plans for risk areas throughout the ACT; and
- (2) calls on the Government to expedite the completion of SBMP Version 2 so that it addresses the deficiencies of the current plan.

Paper: Mr Pratt, by leave, presented the following paper:

Bushfire vulnerable areas—Map published in the *Canberra Sunday Times*, 10 September 2006.

Mr Hargreaves (Minister for the Territory and Municipal Services) moved the following amendment: Omit all words after “That this Assembly”, substitute:

- “(1) notes the Government's progress in finalising the Strategic Bushfire Management Plan (SBMP); and
- (2) notes the following initiatives have occurred since the January 2003 bushfires that clearly demonstrate that the ACT is so much better prepared for the 2006/2007 bushfire season than was the case four years earlier:
 - (a) development of and implementation of the *Emergencies Act 2004*;
 - (b) development of a CBRN Plan for the ACT;
 - (c) development of a Pandemic Plan for the ACT;
 - (d) development of an Evacuation Plan for the ACT;
 - (e) purchased new vehicles for the Authority, ACT State Emergency Service, ACT Rural Fire Service, ACT Ambulance Service, ACT Fire Brigade, including:

- (i) a special Operations Support Unit for the ACT Ambulance Service;
 - (ii) six new world class ICP ambulances;
 - (iii) four compressed air foam system (CAFS) tankers for the ACT Fire Brigade and six CAFS tankers for the ACT Rural Fire Service, the first of their kind in Australia;
 - (iv) two new fire pumpers for the ACT Fire Brigade, one new tanker and two light units for the ACT Rural Fire Service;
 - (v) ordered a new hazardous materials incident support vehicle for the ACT Fire Brigade, delivery expected September 2006;
 - (vi) six new command units for the ACT State Emergency Service; and
 - (vii) 22 'slip on' fire fighting units supplied to rural lessees through the ACT Rural Fire Service;
- (f) purchased new equipment for the ACT Ambulance Service, including:
- (i) new stretchers; and
 - (ii) new cardiac monitors;
- (g) implementation of a third Comcen Operator for the ACT Ambulance Service;
- (h) implemented a world class computer aided dispatch system (Fortek Vision), which is also the first application of the Geocoded National Address File in the country;
- (i) established and implemented a trunked digital radio network for all the services, implementing a world class technology, which is being expanded to include other key ACT Government agencies;
- (j) performed a recruitment drive for all four services, and:
- (i) recruited an additional 20 ACTAS staff;
 - (ii) recruited an additional 61 full-time firefighters for the Territory;
 - (iii) recruited an additional 110 rural firefighting volunteers to maintain active firefighter numbers in the ACT;
 - (iv) recruited 40 State Emergency Service volunteers; and
 - (v) recruited four full-time staff for the ACT State Emergency Service;
- (k) established 28 community fire units, specific to householders in high bushfire risk areas. There are now 750 registered volunteer members, 550 are fully trained, with equipment and personal protection clothing;
- (l) built, in conjunction with the BOM, an automatic weather station on Mount Ginini for more accurate weather information for mountain fire fighting;
- (m) joined the National Aerial Firefighting Centre scheme, which includes support for the basing of one medium-sized helicopter in the Territory and one light helicopter during the bushfire season and gives the ACT access to many more firefighting aircraft in an emergency;

- (n) entered into agreement with NSW RFS to have both NAFC aircraft available for 12 weeks minimum in the ACT compared to six weeks previously;
- (o) created an Operational Atlas for ensuring a consistent operations map for all agencies involved in any emergency situation in the future;
- (p) signed memoranda of understanding with the NSW RFS, NSW Fire Brigade and NSW State Emergency Service for guaranteed cross-border co-operation;
- (q) signed memoranda of understanding with the ACT media;
- (r) signed memoranda of understanding between ACTAS and ACTFB;
- (s) established memoranda of understanding with NSW NPWS to provide mutual aid for emergency response in bushfire control;
- (t) established a consistent Government Land Access agreement with all Territory land managers to allow emergency access to all lands;
- (u) created the FireWise Program, a travelling public education resource, which has been teaching the ACT about bushfires for three years;
- (v) extended the Bush FireWise Program to a Farm FireWise Program to engage all ACT leaseholders in a targeted bushfire risk management program to protect their properties and the Canberra community from bushfire;
- (w) created and distributed a public bushfire education supplement called 'Bushfires in the Bush Capital';
- (x) implemented a Standard Early Warning System for the Territory, ensuring a timely warning in an emergency, distributed throughout the Territory at media outlets, shopping centres, sports grounds, etc;
- (y) implemented revised AIIMS training for ACT RFS senior officers, including Incident Controller, Operations Officer and Planning Officer to meet national competency standards;
- (z) created a Yellow Pages information section for improved public awareness during an emergency;
- (aa) created a full-time community relations and media liaison unit;
- (ab) established an Emergency Co-ordination Centre for incident response co-ordination and planning;
- (ac) established a new Incident Control Centre as part of the RFS Headquarters at Fairbairn which can provide purpose-built incident management facilities for all agencies separate from the ECC;
- (ad) created and published a Strategic Bushfire Management Plan, which gives a ten-year forward view of bushfire management activities, including establishing a Bushfire Abatement Zone;
- (ae) developed Bushfire Operational Plans for all Government-managed lands to implement the strategies identified in the Strategic Bushfire Management Plan;

- (af) established and undertaken annual audits of the Bushfire Operational Plans to ensure risks are effectively managed by GLM in the Territory;
- (ag) created and distributed to all households an All Hazards Guide covering a range of different emergencies; and
- (ah) created an All Hazards Warning System for the ACT, which has already been used in emergency situations.”.

Debate continued.

Dr Foskey, by leave, moved the following amendment to Mr Hargreaves’ proposed amendment: add:

“(3) calls on the Government to report to this Assembly by the end of the next sitting week on the effects of cuts to staff of the former Environment ACT and Parks and Conservation services upon the Parks Brigade’s capacity to conduct operational planning and to fight fires.”.

Debate continued.

Question—That Dr Foskey’s amendment to Mr Hargreaves’ proposed amendment be agreed to—put and negatived.

Question—That Mr Hargreaves’ amendment be agreed to—put.

The Assembly voted—

AYES, 8		NOES, 7	
Mr Barr	Mr Hargreaves	Mrs Burke	Mr Pratt
Mr Berry	Ms MacDonald	Mrs Dunne	Mr Smyth
Ms Gallagher	Ms Porter	Dr Foskey	Mr Stefaniak
Mr Gentleman	Mr Stanhope	Mr Mulcahy	

And so it was resolved in the affirmative.

Papers: Mr Pratt, by leave, presented the following papers:

Fire breaks—

Yarralumla bushfire—Photograph.

Roads around Canberra—Maps and photographs (2).

Question—That the motion, as amended, be agreed to—put and passed.

8 BELCONNEN—40TH ANNIVERSARY

Ms Porter, pursuant to notice, moved—That this Assembly notes the recent 40th anniversary of the establishment of Belconnen.

Mr Stefaniak (Leader of the Opposition) addressing the Assembly—

Debate interrupted in accordance with standing order 34 and the resumption of the debate made an order of the day for the next sitting.

9 ADJOURNMENT

It being 6 p.m.—The question was proposed—That the Assembly do now adjourn.

Debate ensued.

Paper—Standing order 213: Mrs Dunne, pursuant to standing order 213, moved—That the document quoted from by Ms MacDonald be tabled.

Question—put and passed.

Paper: Ms MacDonald, pursuant to order, presented the following paper:

Request for a pair—Copy of emails between the offices of Mr Barr and Ms MacDonald.

Debate continued.

Question—put and passed.

And then the Assembly, at 6.22 p.m., adjourned until tomorrow at 10.30 a.m.

MEMBERS' ATTENDANCE: All Members were present at some time during the sitting, except Mr Corbell*.

*on leave

Tom Duncan
Clerk of the Legislative Assembly