



LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY
FOR THE AUSTRALIAN CAPITAL TERRITORY

STANDING COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC ACCOUNTS

Brendan Smyth MLA (Chair), Mary Porter AM MLA (Deputy Chair), Chris Bourke MLA,
Nicole Lawder MLA

STANDING COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC ACCOUNTS

Inquiry into 2012–13 Annual reports

Chief Minister's portfolio

Regional Development portfolio

Responses to questions taken on notice at public hearing of 2 December 2013

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY FOR THE AUSTRALIAN CAPITAL TERRITORY

STANDING COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC ACCOUNTS

QUESTION TAKEN ON NOTICE

2 DECEMBER 2013

Dr Bourke – asked the Chief Minister upon notice on 2 December 2013, in relation to the recommendations of the Targeted Assistance Strategy:

Dr Bourke –

a) You mentioned that there were eight recommendations still under consideration. What were those recommendations?

b) You mentioned low interest loans. How do they work?

(Proof P30)

Ms Gallagher - The answer to the Member's questions are as follows:

a) Implementing the 34 recommendations of the Targeted Assistance Strategy is something that will take time, and we are working on a number of recommendations which are in various stages of development. While we develop and implement initiatives which address some of the recommendations, eight of the long term recommendations are still under consideration:

- i. Recommendation 10: Waive co-payment requirements for adult dental services for concession card holders and those experiencing financial hardship;
- ii. Recommendation 13: CHC take special consideration of the cost of living pressures faced by those with a disability/chronic illness when assessing eligibility;
- iii. Recommendation 17: In conjunction with the outcomes of the ACT Taxation Review and the proposed NDIS, take account of the extra cost of having a disability or chronic illness in determining concession eligibility criteria;
- iv. Recommendation 21: Establish a data framework to monitor the effectiveness of Community Service Obligations in providing assistance to people experiencing financial hardship;



- v. Recommendation 23: Increase access to Community Transport buses, including providing additional buses where there is a demonstrated need;
- vi. Recommendation 27: Establish a School Relief Fund;
- vii. Recommendation 28: Establish partnerships between schools and community service organisations to enable improved identification of families experiencing financial hardship and to link them to support services;
- viii. Recommendation 30: The Education Directorate develop a web portal focussed on the trainee, using the Assistance portal as a model.

b) The No Interest Loan Scheme is a community managed program offering no interest loans for concession card holders.

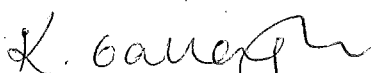
Loans up to \$1,500 are provided for the purchase of necessities such as white goods, furniture or health aids. Loans are not provided for reoccurring expenses such as rent, car registration, electricity bills or debt consolidation.

Repayments are made in affordable amounts for a period of between 12 and 18 months.

No interest loans are provided to people on low incomes who need an essential household item; are ACT residents; hold a current Centrelink Concession Card; can show that they can afford to repay the loan; and have been in permanent accommodation for six months or longer.

The No Interest Loans Scheme is currently administered through Care Inc. (<http://www.carefcs.org/no-interest-loan-scheme.html>) and the Salvation Army (<http://salvos.org.au/need-help/financial-troubles/documents/120810-NILSbrochure-Online-SNIL02APR.pdf>).

Approved for circulation to the Committee.


Katy Gallagher MLA
Chief Minister

Date: 11/1/14

PAC QTON

2 Dec 2013

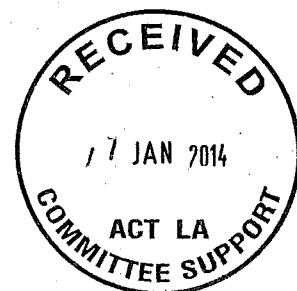
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LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY FOR THE AUSTRALIAN CAPITAL TERRITORY

STANDING COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC ACCOUNTS

QUESTION TAKEN ON NOTICE

2 DECEMBER 2013



Mr Smyth - Asked the Chief Minister upon notice on 2 December:

Mr Smyth – Do you therefore coordinate the postings daily from the RFS on the weather forecast on their Facebook page? (Proof P41)

Ms Gallagher - The answer to the Member's question is as follows:

No, the Chief Minister and Treasury Directorate does not. The ACT Rural Fire Service (RFS) manages updates for their Facebook page.

In response to your comment that on Saturday 30 November, they posted the weather and the bushfire danger index for 31 November, the ACT Rural Fire Service (ACTRFS) confirmed that an ACTRFS Duty Officer is responsible for posting on Facebook the following day's fire danger and weather information; they advised that this is one of many tasks that the ACTRFS Duty Officer is responsible for in a short space of time to ensure that all ACTRFS Brigades and stakeholders are aware of the fire danger for the following day and to prepare accordingly.

I have been advised that in this particular circumstance, human error was attributable. The correct day (Sunday) was posted as well as the correct fire danger forecast, however the wrong date (31/11/13) was written when initially posted at approximately 5pm on Saturday 30 November 2013. The error was recognised and corrected soon after.

Approved for circulation to the Committee.


Katy Gallagher (MLA)
Chief Minister

Date: 5/1/14

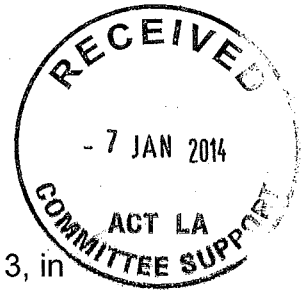
PAC QTON
2 Dec 2013
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LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY FOR THE AUSTRALIAN CAPITAL TERRITORY

STANDING COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC ACCOUNTS

QUESTION ON NOTICE QTON

2 DECEMBER 2013



Mr Smyth - Asked the Chief Minister upon notice on 2 December 2013, in relation to budgets:

Mr Smyth – you should be able to give me a breakdown of all the outputs to the next level, and is it possible to get a breakdown of the business unit budgets? (Proof P37-38)

Ms Gallagher - The answer to the Member's question is attached.

Approved for circulation to the Committee.


Katy Gallagher MLA
Chief Minister

Date: 5.1.14

2013-14

Budget
\$'000

Business Unit

Output

1.1 Government Policy and Strategy	Policy and Cabinet Division	6,779
1.2 Public Sector Management	Public Sector Management Branch	4,306
	Continuous Improvement & Workers' Compensation Branch	4,795
		<u>9,101</u>
1.3 Industrial Relations Policy	Office of Industrial Relations Branch	1,686
	Continuous Improvement & Workers' Compensation Branch	840
		<u>2,526</u>
1.4 Coordinated Communications and Community Engagement	Culture and Communications Division	2,298
	Centenary of Canberra Unit	3,993
		<u>6,291</u>

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY FOR THE AUSTRALIAN CAPITAL TERRITORY

STANDING COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC ACCOUNTS

QUESTION TAKEN ON NOTICE

2 DECEMBER 2013

Ms Porter - Asked the Chief Minister upon notice on 2 December 2013, in relation to the National Capital Authority's national survey on people's perception of Canberra:

Ms Porter -

- a) Does the centenary question go to: since you came here for the centenary, have you changed your mind, that sort of question? (Proof P48)

And

- b) Are these children being asked about their perceptions as well? (Proof P49)

Ms Gallagher - The answer to the Member's question is as follows:

- a) The *Australians' Perceptions of their National Capital* survey is an online survey conducted by the Service Innovation Lab at the University of Canberra, for the National Capital Authority. One of the objectives of the survey is to investigate attitudes and perceptions towards Canberra as the national capital, based on an image analysis of Canberra. The project also examines whether Australians' perceptions of, and attitudes towards, Canberra as a national capital are still altered positively by a visit to Canberra by comparing attitudes towards the national capital of those who have visited, and those who have not. These perceptions will be compared from early 2013 to early 2014, and again when the survey is run in 2017. The survey in early 2014 is funded by the Centenary of Canberra, so as to gain an understanding of the impact the Centenary year may have had on perceptions of Canberra.

In the 2013 survey, respondents were asked about their awareness of the Centenary of Canberra and their plans to attend.

- b) Children were not specifically targeted in this survey, however, 0.5% of respondents were under the age of 18.

Approved for circulation to the Committee.


Katy Gallagher MLA
Chief Minister

Date: 5.1.14





PAC QTON
2 DEC 2013
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LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY FOR THE AUSTRALIAN CAPITAL TERRITORY

STANDING COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC ACCOUNTS

QUESTION TAKEN ON NOTICE

2 DECEMBER 2013



Mr Smyth – Asked the Chief Minister upon notice on 2 December 2013:

Mr Smyth – How do we then work out whether or not the centenary was effective if we do not know what the causal links are and whether it was a function of expenditure or a function of the fact that it was simply the centenary?

Mr Stankevicius – As you are probably aware, we have taken the goals that were developed out of the consultations undertaken by the former Chief Ministers. We have put KPIs against those goals, and we have got monitoring mechanisms in place. And I can provide you with a table that tells you what we are going to do against what the KPIs are against the goals.

Mr Smyth – All right. We will have that table, if we may?

(Proof P51)

Ms Gallagher - The answer to the Member's question is attached.

Approved for circulation to the Committee.


Katy Gallagher MLA
Chief Minister

Date: J. 1. 14

Centenary of Canberra Monitoring, Evaluation and Reporting Framework

Note: Langdale Consulting will produce the interim report, due in early 2014, and the inheriting agencies for the longer term KPIs will include information on the KPIs in their annual reports.

Goal	KPI	Data collection mechanism	Report due
Fully engage the community of Canberra, the Capital region and the broader Australian community in the celebrations	1a. 50% of the ACT community will have been consulted, involved or collaborated in the Centenary (186,556 people ¹).	Contractor reporting. Community Centenary Initiatives Fund recipient reporting. Surveys by other entities, such as the national cultural institutions, that are running Centenary events.	Once in March 2014.
	1b. 20% of the regional community will have been consulted, involved or collaborated in the Centenary (35,375 people from a total of 550,000 less the ACT population).		Once in March 2014
	1c. 1% of the broader Australian community will have been consulted, involved or collaborated in the Centenary (217,500 people representing the October Australian population of 22.3m less ACT/Canberra Region residents).		Once in March 2014.
Increase the pride and ownership of Australians in their capital	2. More Australians express positive sentiments, including pride and a sense of ownership in Canberra as their national capital following the Centenary.	The University of Canberra: <i>Australians' Perceptions of their National Capital</i> survey, commissioned by the National Capital Authority (NCA).	April 2013 (paid for by the NCA). April 2014 (paid for by Centenary of Canberra). April 2017 (paid for by the NCA).
Build the positive image and reputation of Canberra as a city and community	3. An increase in positive media coverage of Canberra by the end of 2013.	iSentia (formerly Media Monitors) to analyse media coverage in late 2012 and late 2013.	Once in March 2014.
	4. By the end of 2013, key print, digital and online publications will have images of Canberra containing people, demonstrating that Canberra has a personality outside of government.	iSentia (formerly Media Monitors) to analyse media coverage in late 2012 and late 2013.	Once in March 2014.

¹ Based on the ACT Demographic Statistics for the March quarter 2012 where the estimated resident population was 373,122.

Goal	KPI	Data collection mechanism	Report due
Create impetus for future development of the national capital	5. Public and private investment in Canberra continues to grow.	Capture publicly released Treasury produced figures; Quarterly State Final Demand figures for ACT. Centenary Unit to record baseline in 2012, follow up in 2013 and then inheriting agency to collect in following years.	Annually, in January each year to show progress towards long term KPI. One-off achievement report in January 2020 Centenary Final Report record of pre-Centenary investment levels for public and private investors.
	6. By 2015, five event/program producers new to Canberra in 2013 will have committed to new productions in Canberra.	Annual review of program and marketing materials. Centenary unit will have initial detail but inheriting agency will need to collect from 2014 (artsACT have agreed to monitor this KPI).	Centenary Final Report listing of new producers. Annual in January each year to show progress towards long term KPI. One-off achievement report January 2016.
Establish enduring international recognition of Canberra and its role as the capital	7. By the end of 2013, 10 new opportunities for connection with international partners will have been created.	Record of international opportunities in negotiation/agreements signed.	Once in March 2014.
Build lasting legacies of community value through memorable celebrations and high quality projects	8. By 2018, at least five Centenary initiatives will still be operating in some form.	Web-based research and personal contact with relevant entities. Centenary unit will have initial detail but inheriting agency will need to collect from 2014 (artsACT have agreed to monitor this KPI).	Centenary Final Report listing of new initiatives generated in the Centenary. Annually, in January each year until 2018 to show progress towards long term KPI. One-off achievement report January 2019.

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY FOR THE AUSTRALIAN CAPITAL TERRITORY # 6

STANDING COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC ACCOUNTS

QUESTION TAKEN ON NOTICE

2 DECEMBER 2013



Mr Hanson - Asked the Chief Minister upon notice on 2 December:

Mr Hanson – How many ACT public servants would that affect—people who are over 65? How many ACT public service employees? (Proof P61)

Ms Gallagher - The answer to the Member's question is as follows:

As at June 2013, there were 519 ACT public sector staff aged over 65 years (excluding Calvary Public Health Care); this amounts to around 2.3 per cent of ACT public sector staff.

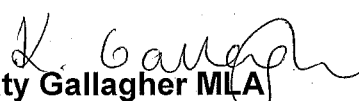
In the event that a staff member aged over 63 years becomes incapacitated for work due to a compensable injury, they would be entitled to the full range of Comcare workers' compensation benefits (including weekly incapacity payments).

There is, however, a 104 week limit on the amount of time that a person aged over 63 years may receive incapacity payments. Other compensation benefit types are unaffected by worker age.

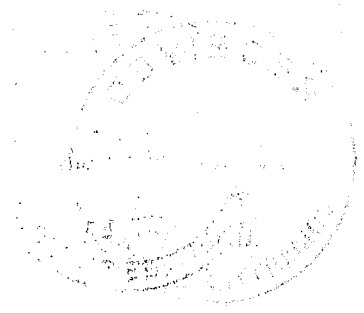
This limit on incapacity payments strikes a balance between the need to control scheme costs while also providing workers who choose to work past the retiring age with the care and support they may need to do so.

The Commonwealth Government has legislated to gradually increase the retiring age from 65 to 67 years. Comcare has indicated that it intends to amend workers' compensation laws to keep weekly incapacity payment time limits aligned with the Commonwealth retiring age.

Approved for circulation to the Committee.


Katy Gallagher MLA
Chief Minister

Date: 5.1.14



PAC QTON

2 Dec 13

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY FOR THE AUSTRALIAN CAPITAL TERRITORY

1

STANDING COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC ACCOUNTS

(Other agencies)

QUESTION TAKEN ON NOTICE

2 DECEMBER 2013



Ms Lawder - Asked Mr Neave upon notice on 2 December:

Ms Lawder – But, can you tell me if the Ombudsman in this reporting period received any whistleblower complaints?

Ms Gallagher - The answer to the Member's question is as follows:

No Public Interest Disclosures were made to the Ombudsman's Office during the reporting period. This information is provided on page 26 of the Ombudsman's Annual Report 2012-13.

Approved for circulation to the Committee.

K. Gallagher
Katy Gallagher MLA
Chief Minister

Date: 5.1.14



PAC QTON
2 Dec 13
2
(Other agencies)

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY FOR THE AUSTRALIAN CAPITAL TERRITORY

STANDING COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC ACCOUNTS

QUESTION TAKEN ON NOTICE

2 DECEMBER 2013



Mr Smyth - Asked Mr Neave upon notice on 2 December:

Mr Smyth – In relation to the ACT Ombudsman’s Annual Report, on page 22, you talk about the child sex offender register, for which you have some oversight responsibilities.

In the second-last paragraph on that page, it says:

No assessment was made in relation to two criteria, which could not be assessed or were not applicable ...

What were the two criteria and why were they not assessed or not applicable?

It continues to say that there were some minor errors in administrative practice and they have been fixed. Were any children placed at risk as a consequence of those errors?

Ms Gallagher - The answer to the Member’s question is as follows:

The two inspection criteria in question are outlined and discussed below.

1. *Had the Chief Police Officer ensured that access to information about protected witnesses on the register was restricted?*

We could not make an assessment under this criterion.

Section 119 of the *Crimes (Child Sex Offenders) Act 2005* places restrictions on access to personal information in the register about protected registrable offenders (an offender who is also in the witness protection program) residing in the ACT, to persons authorised by the Chief Police Officer or an officer of an approved authority responsible for the day-to-day operation of the witness protection program.

Currently, the register does not have the functionality to restrict access to information about protected registrable offenders and any changes to the functionality of the register can only be carried out by Crimtrac, being the host of the database.

Furthermore, it appears that witness protection legislation across the Commonwealth, state and territory, prohibits disclosure of a person’s

participation in witness protection to child sex offender registrars. Consequently, there is no mechanism for this information to be provided to registrars.

We acknowledge ACT Policing's limited ability in addressing this issue and note that ACT Policing has taken steps internally to provide guidance on dealing with information about protected registrable offenders. ACT Policing has also advised that it continues to work with the Justice and Community Safety Directorate and other jurisdictional legislative bodies to progress this issue.

ACT Policing has advised that as of April 2013, there were no protected registrable offenders recorded on the register.

2. *Had the Chief Police Officer complied with registrable offenders' requests to correct the register?*

This criterion was not applicable.


Section 122 of the Crimes (Child Sex Offenders) Act 2005 states that the Chief Police Officer must, if requested by an offender, give them a copy of the information contained in the register about that offender. An offender may also request that the Chief Police Officer amend any incorrect information in the register.

No assessment was made of ACT Policing's compliance with s 122 as there were no such requests made by offenders in this inspection period.

Clarifying information - The Chair questioned whether the minor administrative errors noted on the register placed any children at risk.

We confirm that the administrative errors noted did not, in our opinion, place any children at risk. These instances occurred as a result of human error when transposing information from hard file to the electronic register. As noted in the annual report, ACT Policing advised that it will review its work practices to reduce future occurrences.

Approved for circulation to the Committee.


Katy Gallagher MLA
Chief Minister

Date: 20.1.14



LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY
FOR THE AUSTRALIAN CAPITAL TERRITORY



STANDING COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC ACCOUNTS

MR BRENDAN SMYTH (CHAIR), MS MARY PORTER (DEPUTY CHAIR), DR CHRIS BOWEN
(MEMBER), MS NICOLE LAWDER (MEMBER)

ANSWER TO QUESTION TAKEN ON NOTICE
DURING PUBLIC HEARINGS

PAC QTON
2 Dec 13
3

(Other agencies)

Asked by Brendan Smyth MLA on 2 December 2013: Territory and Municipal Services took on notice the following question:

Ref: Hansard Transcript 2 December 2013 page 81

In relation to:

THE CHAIR: How many of the forests are native to either Australia or this latitude?

Acting Chief Minister: The answer to the Member's question is as follows:

There are currently 33 species of Australian trees planted in forests at the National Arboretum Canberra (Arboretum), of which eight are regarded as nationally threatened. They are planted as either a forest with one or two species or with multiple species. Further individual plantings of Australian species have been made in the Arboretum's Central Valley by dignitaries.

Below are the Australian tree species that are planted in forests which include only one or two Australian species:

1. *Acacia caeruleascens* – Forest 13
2. *Allocasuarina verticillata* – Forest 100
3. *Araucaria bidwillii* – Forest 71
4. *Brachychiton populneus* – Forest 79
5. *Brachychiton rupestris* – Forest 79
6. *Callitris oblonga* subsp. *oblonga* – Forest 48
7. *Corymbia maculata* – Forest 99
8. *Eucalyptus argophloia* – Forest 19
9. *Eucalyptus benthamii* – Forest 30
10. *Eucalyptus lacrimans* – Forest 68
11. *Eucalyptus michaeliana* – Forest 55
12. *Eucalyptus morrisbyi* – Forest 85
13. *Eucalyptus parvula* – Forest 81
14. *Eucalyptus scoparia* – Forest 92
15. *Eucalyptus tricarpa* – Forest 99
16. *Grevillea robusta* – Forest 51
17. *Wollemia nobilis* – Forest 32

The Arboretum has two forests which include numerous species:

1. Indigenous Flora Forest - Forest 2 (Eucalypts of the Arboretum's local area)

- *Eucalyptus bridgesiana*
- *Eucalyptus blakelyi*
- *Eucalyptus melliodora*
- *Eucalyptus pauciflora*
- *Eucalyptus dives*
- *Eucalyptus mannifera*
- *Eucalyptus viminalis*

2. Southern Tableland Ecological Park (STEP) Forest - Forest 20 (Flora of the ACT)

- *Eucalyptus albens*
- *Eucalyptus bridgesiana*
- *Eucalyptus blakelyi*
- *Eucalyptus dalrympleana*
- *Eucalyptus delegatensis*
- *Eucalyptus macrorhyncha*
- *Eucalyptus melliodora*
- *Eucalyptus pauciflora*
- *Eucalyptus rossii*
- *Eucalyptus stellulata*
- *Eucalyptus dives*
- *Eucalyptus mannifera*
- *Eucalyptus nortonii*
- *Eucalyptus polyanthemos*
- *Eucalyptus rubida*
- *Eucalyptus viminalis*

Approved for circulation to the Standing Committee on Public Accounts

Signature: 

Date: 10 . 1 . 2014

By Andrew Barr MLA, Acting Chief Minister



LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY
FOR THE AUSTRALIAN CAPITAL TERRITORY



STANDING COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC ACCOUNTS

MR BRENDAN SMYTH (CHAIR), MS MARY PORTER (DEPUTY CHAIR), DR CHRIS BOURNE (MEMBER), MS NICOLE LAWDER (MEMBER)

**ANSWER TO QUESTION TAKEN ON NOTICE
DURING PUBLIC HEARINGS**

PAC @TON
3 Dec 13
4

Asked by Brendan Smyth MLA on 2 December 2103: Territory and Municipal Services took on notice the following question(s): *(Other agencies)*

Ref: Hansard Transcript 2 December 2013 page 83 and 84

In relation to:

What is the amount budgeted to pay for the bore?

Acting Chief Minister: The answer to the Member's question is as follows:

The estimated cost of water extraction and licensing for the bore as part of the irrigation master plan at the National Arboretum Canberra is expected to be \$0.035m.

It includes:

- Bore work licence, fee for construction of the bore – \$148.50.
- Licence to Take Water application fee – \$148.50.
- Annual administration fee for Licence to Take Water – \$384.30/per annum.
- The fee for issue of Water Access Entitlement (WAE) – \$671.40/ML.
- ACT Water Abstraction Charge (WAC) – \$0.25/KL of water taken – up to a maximum potential cost for water abstraction of \$34,091.80.

Approved for circulation to the Standing Committee on Public Accounts

Signature: *Andrew Barr*

Date: *10.1.2014*

By Andrew Barr MLA, Acting Chief Minister

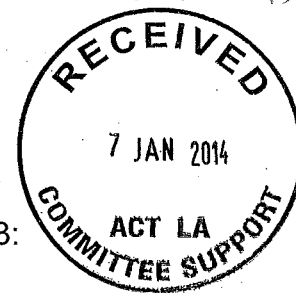
LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY FOR THE AUSTRALIAN CAPITAL TERRITORY

STANDING COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC ACCOUNTS

QUESTION ON NOTICE

2 DECEMBER 2013

PAC QoN
2 DEC 2013
1
(Regional Dup)



Mr Smyth - Asked the Chief Minister upon notice on 2 December 2013:

Mr Smyth – Given the interests of time, perhaps you could take this on notice: in regard to things that are blocking efficient service delivery, could you break that down into the areas of health, education, transport, emergency services, justice, tourism, planning and economic development, and report back to the committee? (Proof P84)

Ms Gallagher - The answer to the Member's question is as follows:

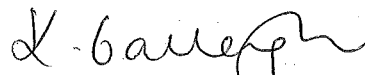
The border between the ACT and NSW represents an inherent blockage for the delivery of services reflecting, inter alia, separate governing arrangements for each jurisdiction.

However, the ACT, NSW and surrounding local governments acknowledge that by working together, developing a coherent approach and coordinating our service delivery efforts, the communities in both jurisdictions benefit.

The mechanisms that we have in place to ameliorate blockages include:

- ACT-NSW Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) for Regional Collaboration;
- membership with the South East Regional Organisations of Councils, including initiatives such as the Capital Region Living website;
- compilation of regional demographic and service delivery data to inform refinement of service delivery programs;
- ACT Health's joint planning initiative with the Southern NSW Local Health District;
- an infrastructure and land use framework for the ACT and region, being prepared in conjunction with the NSW Department of Planning and Infrastructure;
- the Greater Capital Region Initiative, a collaboration between the Australian, ACT and NSW Governments and the Regional Development Australia Committees of the ACT, Southern Inland and Far South Coast, which will inform the Regional Economic Development Statement;
- ACT and NSW police implementation of a cross border road safety campaign;
- ACT and NSW emergency service agencies regularly meeting and testing possible emergency scenario;
- CIT and TAFE Illawarra's MoU for collaboration;
- liaison with the NSW Cross Border Commissioner; and
- a range of harmonised laws and standards.

Approved for circulation to the Committee.


Katy Gallagher MLA
Chief Minister

Date: 5.1.14

