

# Matters of public importance—your Assembly @ work

**Sitting week—22 to 24 June 2021**

**Issue 6/2021**

## Government Business

***Includes business items presented to the Assembly by the Executive including bills, motions, and papers***

### Bills introduced

### [Domestic Violence Agencies Amendment Bill 2021](https://legislation.act.gov.au/b/db_64490/) (presented 23 June)

### Summary: The purpose of this bill is to establish the domestic and family violence death review function in the ACT. The review mechanism aims to take a system-wide perspective and make recommendations to improve responses to domestic and family violence in relation to policy, procedures, legislation, system and services, data collection and management, and public awareness.

### [Work Health and Safety Act 2021](https://www.legislation.act.gov.au/b/db_64491/) (presented 24 June)

### Summary: This bill will establish an offence provision that is similar to those in effect under the Crimes Act for the purposes of industrial manslaughter. The bill will establish industrial manslaughter as an offence under the Work Health and Safety Act 2011, repeals industrial manslaughter from the Crimes Act 1900 and sets out the necessary consequential amendments to a number of Acts.

### [Crimes Legislation Amendment Bill 2021](https://www.legislation.act.gov.au/b/db_64496/) (presented 24 June)

### Summary: This bill makes necessary changes to ACT legislation to improve the clarity and effective operation of criminal justice legislation. The bill amends several legislations to support efforts to keep vulnerable people safe, to support police in the field and to ensure that the criminal justice system functions in line with the ACT community’s expectations.

### [Senior Practitioner Amendment Bill 2021](https://www.legislation.act.gov.au/b/db_64492/) (presented 24 June)

### Summary: This bill will amend the Senior Practitioner Act 2018, which contains provisions that both engage and promote or limit human rights in order to regulate and reduce the use of restrictive practices on vulnerable people.

### Bills debated

[Civil Law (Wrongs) Amendment Bill 2021](https://www.legislation.act.gov.au/b/db_64212/) *(presented 12 May)*

*Summary*: This bill will amend the *Civil Law (Wrongs) Act 2002* to enact, in the ACT, the Model Defamation Amendment Provisions 2020 to ensure that defamation law aligns more closely with community expectations in relation to what should and should not be allowed. The amendments will include introducing a serious harm threshold and a single publication rule and will also provide for certain individuals to be counted as employees of a corporation. The bill also includes amendments clarifying the concerns notice procedure, the procedure for offers to make amends and introducing a new public interest defence. The amendments will also clarify that the cap on damages for non-economic loss operates as a scale and that aggravated damages are awarded separately for damages for non-economic loss. The bill was passed without amendment.

[Road Transport (Safety and Traffic Management) Amendment Bill 2021](https://www.legislation.act.gov.au/b/db_64213/) *(presented 13 May)*

*Summary*: This bill will amend a number of laws and regulations to allow for the use of mobile device detection cameras on ACT roads. The bill will amend the legislation governing the use of fixed and mobile speed cameras to be more flexible and responsive. This bill was passed without amendment.

[Loose-fill Asbestos Legislation Amendment Bill 2021](https://www.legislation.act.gov.au/b/db_64332/) *(presented 3 June)*

*Summary*: This bill will amend the definitions of ‘buyback scheme’ and ‘loose-fill asbestos insulation eradication buyback program’ in several Acts to allow the eradication of loose-fill asbestos insulation from Canberra homes to continue beyond closure of the Loose-fill Asbestos Insulation Eradication Scheme Buyback Program on 17 August 2021. The bill was passed without amendment.

### Ministerial statements

The Chief Minister made a statement on 22 June 2021 providing an update on the **ACT Government’s work to create sustainable Canberra jobs**. During the statement, the Chief Minister highlighted key initiatives identified in the *ACT’s Jobs and Economic Recovery Plan* which include investments in the renewable energy sector and infrastructure. The Chief Minister also discussed the creation of sustainable jobs through the ACT Government’s climate action commitments, as well as measures to assist Canberra households - including vulnerable households - transition to cheaper and more sustainable energy sources.

**Safer Families Annual Statement 2021,** the fifth annual statement,was made by the Minister for the Prevention of Domestic and Family Violence on 23 June 2021. The Minister provided information on the progress made on initiatives that support those affected by domestic and family violence over the last twelve months and the rationale behind these initiatives. These measures include works in establishing a domestic and family violence death review in the ACT. The Minister emphasised the importance of listening to, and being led by those who were impacted, including the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community.

On 24 June 2021, the Attorney-General provided an update on the progress of the **ACT Government’s commitment to raise the minimum age of criminal responsibility** in the ACT. The Minister announced the release of a discussion paper on 23 June, which is now available on the YourSay website. Further, the Minister stated that $120,000 has been allocated to fund an independent review of the service system needs and implementation requirements for raising the minimum age of criminal responsibility in the ACT.

Other ministerial statements made during the sitting week related to:

**Update on ChooseCBR**—Minister for Business and Better Regulation *(22 June)*

**Update on the Government’s response to the COVID-19 emergency**—Minister for Health *(22 June)*

**Trade mission to New Zealand 26-29 May 2021—**Chief Minister *(24 June)*

**Recovery and management in Namadgi National Park—**Minister for Planning and Land Management *(24 June)*

The full text of the statements made by Ministers can be accessed from the [Assembly Hansard](http://www.hansard.act.gov.au/hansard/2021/links/download.htm) site.

## Private Members’ Business

***Includes items presented to the Assembly by all non-Executive Members, including bills and motions***

### Bills introduced

### [Road Transport (Safety and Traffic Management) Amendment Bill 2021 (No 2)](https://legislation.act.gov.au/b/db_64493/) (presented 22 June)

### Summary: This bill will improve road safety, and where Vulnerable Road Users (people outside of a car) are harmed, to bring penalties closer to meeting community expectation. It introduces a new offence for negligent driving that causes harm to a Vulnerable Road User with a maximum penalty of 50 penalty units and a traffic infringement notice penalty for this offence of $1600 plus the loss of three licence points.

### [Carers Recognition Bill 2021](https://legislation.act.gov.au/b/db_64504/) (presented 23 June)

### Summary: This bill aims to recognise, promote, and value the role of unpaid carers within the community, by putting in place measures requiring certain entities and organisations to consider and adapt business practices to support the care relationship that exists between carers and the people they care for.

### Motions debated

**A proposed audit of the ACT Government’s ChooseCBR** was the subject of a motion moved by Ms Castley MLA on 22 June 2021. The motion notes that ChooseCBR ‘has been plagued with problems with serious questions about its integrity and how it has been monitored’ and questions the benefits it brings to small businesses in need. The motion called on the ACT Legislative Assembly to write to the ACT Auditor-General requesting a comprehensive audit of ChooseCBR. During debate an amendment was moved by the Government. The amendment notes that the Government plans to conduct an independent review of ChooseCBR and that it has already been in discussion with the Auditor-General. The amendment also includes a statement that the Auditor-General cannot be directed to conduct an audit, but can seek input on the audit program, including from members of the Assembly. The amended motion was passed by the Assembly.

A motion moved by Ms Clay MLA on 23 June 2021 called on the Government to explore ways to contribute to **the establishment of national recycling arrangements for renewables and general electrical appliances**. The motion notes that many of recycling operations in Australia are looking for local government partners and that the ACT Government has expertise in setting up recycling arrangements. The motion also called on the ACT Government to consider banning e-waste from ACT Government landfill sites. The motion was passed by the Assembly without amendment.

Further items debated during the sitting week related to:

**E-scooter share scheme expansion**—Moved by Mr Pettersson MLA on 22 June

**Education system review**—Mr Hanson MLA on 23 June

**Lake Tuggeranong amenity upgrades**—Ms Lawder MLA on 24 June

**Student participation in democracy**—Mr Davis MLA on 24 June

The full debate on the above motions can be accessed from the Assembly [*Hansard*](http://www.hansard.act.gov.au/hansard/2021/links/download.htm) site.

## Petitions and petition response

The following petitions were lodged—

* Proposed improvement to increase safety at the Lawrence Wackett Crescent and Tharwa Drive intersection—lodged by Mr Parton (22 June 2021)

This Petition was referred to the Standing Committee on Planning, Transport and City Services

* Proposed water bubbler and prioritise other amenities in Bonner Oval—lodged by Ms Orr   
  (22 June 2021)
* Keeping the community green waste and landscape supplies open at Parkwood Road West Belconnen—lodged by Mr Cain (22 June 2021)

This Petition was referred to the Standing Committee on Planning, Transport and City Services

The following ministerial responses to petitions were lodged—

* Expansion of the shops at Kippax Fair *(Minister for Planning and Land Management)*
* French language tuition at Belconnen High School (*Minister for Education and Youth Affairs)*

A copy of the petitions and petition responses can be found on the Assembly [*Hansard*](http://www.hansard.act.gov.au/hansard/2021/links/download.htm) site.

## Papers Presented

The following are papers of interest that were presented during the sitting week:

* Auditor-General’s Report 5/2021—Management of Closed-Circuit Television Systems
* Auditor-General’s Report 6/2021—Teaching Quality in ACT Public Schools
* Inspector of Correctional Services Report of a healthy centre review of Bimberi Youth Justice Centre

## Committee Activities

### Committee report

#### Scrutiny Committee

#### [Scrutiny Report 6](https://www.parliament.act.gov.au/__data/assets/pdf_file/0005/1776155/Report_06.pdf)

This report contained the committee’s comments on one bill and thirty-four subordinate legislations.

#### Standing Committee on Economy and Gender and Economic Equality

[Discussion paper: Future of the working week](https://www.parliament.act.gov.au/__data/assets/pdf_file/0008/1776257/EGEE-Discussion-paper-Future-of-the-working-week.pdf)

This paper was released to assist individuals and organisations to prepare submission for the Committee’s inquiry into the future of the working week. The paper includes discussion about historical background and development of working time in a week, advantages and disadvantages of work time reduction, policy frameworks and case studies.

## Members of the Legislative Assembly for the ACT

### Electorate of Brindabella

Ms Joy Burch (Australian Labor Party)

Mr Johnathan Davis (ACT Greens)

Mr Mick Gentleman (Australian Labor Party)

Ms Nicole Lawder (Canberra Liberals)

Mr Mark Parton (Canberra Liberals)

### Electorate of Ginninderra

Ms Yvette Berry (Australian Labor Party)

Mr Peter Cain (Canberra Liberals)

Ms Tara Cheyne (Australian Labor Party)

Ms Jo Clay (ACT Greens)

Mrs Elizabeth Kikkert (Canberra Liberals)

### Electorate of Kurrajong

Mr Andrew Barr (Australian Labor Party)

Ms Elizabeth Lee (Canberra Liberals)

Mr Shane Rattenbury (ACT Greens)

Ms Rachel Stephen-Smith (Australian Labor Party)

Ms Rebecca Vassarotti (ACT Greens)

### Electorate of Murrumbidgee

Emma Davidson (ACT Greens)

Mr Jeremy Hanson CSC (Canberra Liberals)

Mrs Giulia Jones (Canberra Liberals)

Dr Marisa Paterson (Australian Labor Party)

Mr Chris Steel (Australian Labor Party)

### Electorate of Yerrabi

Mr Andrew Braddock (ACT Greens)

Ms Leanne Castley (Canberra Liberals)

Mr James Milligan (Canberra Liberals)

Ms Suzanne Orr (Australian Labor Party)

Mr Michael Pettersson (Australian Labor Party)

## Next Sitting

**Tuesday 3 August 2021.**

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