

Free Floriade: one way to promote Canberra to Australia and the World



ACT Government

Embargoed until 1 May

The 2001-2002 ACT Budget will continue to stimulate tourism activity for the ACT through the promotion of Canberra as a tourist and convention destination, the delivery of quality events and the improvement of the nature-based tourism sites.

Entry to Floriade will also be free of charge from this year onwards. Canberra Tourism and Events Corporation (CTEC) will be subsidised to compensate for the revenue lost from removing entry fees.

The Budget also significantly boosts funding to CTEC for destination marketing, ACT Urban Services Minister Brendan Smyth said.

"The ACT Government already provides annual funding of \$10.24 million for CTEC's activities and events," Mr Smyth said. "In 2001-02, this budget will be supplemented by an extra \$1.23 million for destination marketing activities, targeted marketing to the meetings and conventions industry, and for the continuation of the Events Development Fund," Mr Smyth said.

"Part of this funding is for continuing and improving directed marketing and media campaigns promoting Canberra as a desirable destination, and for marketing specific events in Canberra. The campaign will leverage off the post-Olympic visitation and the success of this year's Centenary of Federation activities, which received additional funding in the 2000-01 financial year.

"The extra funding in 2001-02 will also support efforts to deliver quality tourism information and reservation services using information technology, in particular improving the CTEC website and developing an online booking facility," Mr Smyth said.

The funding also continues the Events Development Fund which provides grants and sponsorships for existing community-run events and for attracting new ones to the ACT. This will fill gaps in tourism demand, generate an economic benefit for the ACT and greater media exposure. It will also re-position Canberra in the minds of potential visitors.

The \$1.23 million also provides \$280,000 for the Canberra Convention Bureau, supported by CTEC, to continue to pursue niche conferences and exhibitions to help the ACT hold its share of the convention market in the face of increasing competition.

Mr Smyth said the 2001-2002 Budget also continues its support for major events managed by Canberra Tourism and Events Corporation.

"Events attract visitors, bring valuable tourist dollars and generate extra business for local suppliers. They add a lively dimension to the city for our community. We have continued to provide funding in this budget for CTEC's major events, including Floriade, the Rally of Canberra and the GMC 400," Mr Smyth said.

ACT Budget 2001-02

"This coming September and October, the Canberra community and visitors to the ACT will once again be able to enjoy Floriade, Canberra's premier spring festival. We are providing additional funding of \$450,000 annually to replace the entry fees, so **entry to Floriade will be free of charge.**"

The funding for the other CTEC-run events includes the following:

- \$200,000 a year for the next four years for the **Rally of Canberra**. The Rally is a round of the Asia Pacific Rally Championship, and has a significant economic impact on Canberra via accommodation, food, beverage and general supplies for teams and supporters. More than 60 teams, including 20 international competitors, participated in the 2000 Rally;
- \$650,000 a year for two years for the **9th Masters' Games**. The ACT hosted the Masters' Games in 1997, attracting 10,000 participants and producing an estimated \$8.3 million economic impact on the ACT; and
- A further \$1.5 million a year for the next three years for the **GMC 400 car race**, a round of the Shell Championship Series for V8 Supercars. The GMC 400 is expected to inject \$39 million into the ACT economy over the next three years;
- \$250,000 a year for two more years for bringing four **Australian Football League games** to Canberra and for promoting the AFL code at junior and school age levels.

Mr Smyth said the 2001-2002 Budget also supported nature-based tourism activities.

"The ACT Nature-Based Tourism strategy was launched in December 2000, and this Budget allocates \$970,000 in capital works funding for a range of works to improve the ACT's top nature-based tourism sites," Mr Smyth said.

Highlights include:

- an upgrade of Namadgi Visitor Centre (\$150,000);
- improvements to infrastructure at Tuggeranong Homestead (\$150,000);
- enhanced visitor facilities and signage in Namadgi (\$250,000);
- works to improve visitor infrastructure and conservation at Gudgenby homestead (\$100,000); and
- design studies to investigate options to upgrade the tourist precinct around the Cotter, and examination of an in-flight walk-through aviary at Tidbinbilla Nature Reserve (\$65,000).

"Together, all of these initiatives will provide valuable improvements to the quality of events and tourism sites, better market Canberra nationally and internationally, and stimulate greater tourism activity for the ACT," Mr Smyth said.

Statement ends
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