

Shaping Canberra's Future

Our vision

The ACT Government has a vision of Canberra as a strong, confident and prosperous community asserting its place in the country's affairs as the national capital.

The Government's vision is of a community that:

- is inclusive of all Canberrans;
- is prosperous, progressive, skilled and creative;
- is cohesive, fair, tolerant and optimistic;
- is committed to protecting the vulnerable and supporting those in need; and
- gives its children every chance to realise their potential

The 2002-03 Budget restores and enhances the basic services Canberrans want their Government to deliver. In particular, it supports our schools and hospitals and assists those people in greatest need, as well as ensuring that essential supporting systems are maintained so that the ACT Public Service can continue to effectively serve the people of Canberra.

Building on the initiatives included in the Second and Third Appropriations of the current financial year, the 2002-03 Budget will also progress work on our long-term strategies for Canberra. This Budget delivers on many commitments made during the 2001 election. Our approach for the future will be responsible and sustainable. The Government's vision is underpinned by sustainability in a social, economic and environmental context, and by a whole of government approach to developing policies and delivering services.

What we stand for

The Government has committed itself to an agenda that:

- is open, honest, measured and responsible;
- addresses participation and engagement for all, including the most disadvantaged;
- establishes equal access;
- provides effective, efficient and committed services;
- is financially responsible;
- frames sustainable economic growth; and
- plans and builds a sustainable future.

How we will achieve good government

The Government wants the highest possible degree of community participation in decision-making in order to achieve equitable outcomes for all members of the ACT community. The Government will focus on the community needs and delivering better services by:

- listening;
- leading;
- getting agreement;
- respecting and cooperating; and
- honouring its commitments.

We were elected to restore confidence in the processes of government – to deliver a strong, responsible, responsive and accountable government.

We are governing in consultation with the community, in an atmosphere of respect and cooperation. We are engaging as many people as possible, and explaining issues and our approaches.

We will be honest and measured in exercising our duties. We are basing our decisions on evidence and following due process.

We are governing for the community as a whole rather than for a select few, encouraging everyone to contribute. We will be a government that listens and leads.

What we started with

The Commission of Audit, based on all known data as at the end of October 2001, predicted a budget deficit result for 2001-02.

The Commission of Audit also raised a number of substantial financial issues which will have the combined effect of placing the small projected surpluses for the 2003-06 Forward Estimates under real pressure. These issues included doubts as to whether the following costs had been properly provided for:

- information technology services;
- insurance costs;
- wage pressures;
- the 27th Public Service pay day in 2003-04; and
- infrastructure maintenance.

Confused accountability, a failed purchaser/provider model and resulting mistrust marred the health system, while disability services were in need of major reform.

The Government has found that there was neither a comprehensive overview of the services being funded to meet particular needs, nor sufficient evidence on which to develop robust policies to meet the Government's program for reform.

The Government has initiated a number of processes to give it a clearer picture of the baseline from which it was working, including reviews into health, education funding, the state of the ACT budget, poverty and affordable housing.

The Government also found that there was a wealth of anecdotal evidence about the state of play in the ACT, but little concrete evidence to back this up.

To address this, the Government is undertaking a comprehensive mapping of all government services, in particular programs addressing unmet need and disadvantage.

This exercise will assist the Government to determine appropriate programs for particular target groups, and to identify any duplications and overlaps in services which might enable funds to be released for reallocation to other high priorities.

Work undertaken to date has identified that, despite the development of the State of the Territory Report, a wide range of services are not well targeted to need, and have not been effectively monitored and evaluated.

Making the hard decisions

In light of the challenges faced by the ACT, hard decisions had to be made to ensure that the ACT could sustain funding for necessary reform, while maintaining both a responsible financial position as well as the quality of the core services on which the community depends.

To achieve its priorities for education and training, for health, economic development, community engagement and safety, for planning, sustainability and public service capacity, the Government has decided to take a three pronged approach, involving:

- making financially-sound, balanced decisions, based on good evidence;
- responding to community need; and
- rebuilding and maintaining quality services.

Making financially sound, balanced decisions

Given the findings of the Commission of Audit, the general prospects for the ACT economy and the Territory's relatively limited revenue base, the Government has taken a cautious, balanced and long-term approach to the development of the Budget and Forward Estimates.

The 2002-03 budget strategy is based on achieving both a surplus in 2002-03 as well as providing a cumulative surplus over the next four years. This approach demonstrates our commitment to managing the revenues of Canberra responsibly as well as providing a base for the funding of essential services in future years.

The Government, in framing the Budget and its long-term financial strategy, recognised that the needs of our citizens and equity for all Canberrans are at the centre of its concerns and that the ACT community, its economy and the environment are all interdependent.

The Government is keenly aware of delivering to those in most need, and not placing an undue burden on current and future generations of Canberrans. This is consistent with the Government's overall commitment to a sustainable Canberra.

With this in mind, the Government undertook a rigorous assessment of:

- previous commitments and programs to identify potential opportunities to redirect savings to higher priorities;
- options to increase revenue; and
- a detailed assessment of proposed new initiatives to address election commitments and also to ensure that all initiatives are well targeted and achieve the maximum community benefit from the allocated resources.

Responding to community need

The requirements of prudent financial management call for a measured approach to responding to community need. The initiatives included in this budget complement the aim of the Government to create a fairer society for all Canberrans, a society that enables active participation of all members of our community. The Budget converts words into action, with a range of services and programs being supported in the budget address areas of significant need and disadvantage.

Rebuilding essential services

The Government is focusing on ensuring essential services and other programs needed for the well-being of the community are maintained to a high standard. The 2002-03 Budget therefore focuses in the first instance on core services, taking steps to upgrade these services which have in many respects been overlooked for several years.

We are rebuilding core services and undertaking overdue maintenance in areas such as health, disability, education, safety, public transport and affordable housing. We are reinvesting in the ACT Public Service, restoring respect and confidence, and upgrading essential infrastructure, particularly in information technology.

Delivering on our priorities

The Government has seven priority areas, and these are being addressed through this budget:

- education and training
- health, disability and housing
- planning
- sustainability
- economic growth
- community engagement and safety and
- public service capacity

Education and Training

Education is of strategic importance to Canberra and a key investment in our future. A well-educated community is the basis of what makes Canberra socially and economically healthy. The outcomes of the Government will be:

- an innovative education and training system that is participative, inclusive, and supports life-long learning;
- a quality government school system with skilled teachers and high standards of student achievement;
- improved participation, retention and outcomes for Indigenous students and those at risk; and
- resilient and optimistic children and young people who receive family, community and government assistance and support.

The key to raising standards and improving opportunities for all students is investing in education to ensure the ACT school system remains strong and viable.

The Government is examining resourcing arrangements for government and non-government schools based on the relative needs of students, and has commenced action through the 2002-03 Budget to invest in ACT schools.

The Government is redirecting the \$27 million allocated to the former Government's free school bus plan into initiatives that will benefit all students and restore the pre-eminence of the ACT schooling system. We are focusing on both improving programs and upgrading school facilities and infrastructure.

The Government has substantially increased expenditure on education in the 2002-03 Budget while at the same time providing for future investment.

With the \$27 million additional funding provided for education in the Budget over the next four years of which \$19.2 million in new initiatives will commence in 2002-03, the Government has met its election commitments. We are also redirecting another \$530,000 from completed programs into new initiatives.

Our investment in education reinforces our Government's commitment to education as a key priority.

In response to sustained community pressure and to ensure children in our schools are given a solid start to their formal education, an additional \$2.25 million (including \$1 million in capital) is being provided in 2002-03 to reduce Year 3 class sizes in government schools. We have also provided capital funding of \$8.59 million for a new primary school in Gungahlin to meet increased demand. A further \$19.95 million has been allocated for a new high school in Gungahlin, and \$1.88m for transportable classrooms.

The needs of adolescents in government high schools are also being addressed, particularly those at risk of not achieving satisfactory outcomes. Funding is being allocated for high school development (\$500,000 in 2002-03) and for a review of both counselling and career services (\$100,000 each in 2002-03). High school and college students at risk of not achieving satisfactory outcomes are being provided with additional assistance through a student pathways initiative. The funding will provide ongoing learning support and transitional pathways planning (\$410,000 in 2002-03).

The Government recognises the importance of out-of-school activities that build resilience and optimism in our young people. This Budget is broadening the available services by providing \$151,000 in 2002-03 for youth services in North and West Belconnen.

High standards in ACT government schools depend on the provision of quality facilities. Accordingly, \$2.5 million is being allocated to the refurbishment of older schools.

The 2002-03 Budget is providing \$70,000 for a review of school reporting to provide parents with more useful information on their children's progress. In addition, \$190,000 has been provided in 2002-03 to fund a program that will see Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students given greater home/school support by an increase in the skill levels of staff.

The Government's priority of improving information technology in schools has also been addressed in the 2002-03 Budget. \$473,000 has been provided (including \$355,000 in capital) to upgrade the IT capacity of government schools, and we have provided a \$250,000 IT grant to Catholic systemic schools to enhance their IT programs. Mindful of the need for flexible and skilled practitioners in schools, the Government has allocated \$420,000 to the laptops for teachers program.

The importance of the role of the new Government School Education Council has been recognised through funding of \$50,000 in 2002-03 to assist its ability to

function effectively. This council gives educationalists and the broader community the capacity to further participate in decisions about schools.

In line with the Government commitment to fund schools equitably and on the basis of greatest need, \$150,000 has been made available in 2002-03 for the public inquiry into education funding. The inquiry is currently under way and will report later this year.

These initiatives, and the Government's broader approach to supporting education, will help build a strong and viable school system for the ACT.

Health, Disability and Housing

Quality public health and disability services delivery is essential. The Government will focus on prevention, fostering a proactive and integrated approach to services. We will address the care of those with greatest need, providing support to those who may lack the confidence to seek help.

Access to safe affordable housing is a right of everyone in the community. Provision of affordable housing is a significant way in which we can address social disadvantage.

The outcomes of the Government's programs will be:

- accessible health services through hospitals and the community;
- responsive programs and services for people within the community particularly the Indigenous community, older persons, those with mental illness, substance abuse, disabilities and respite care needs;
- efficient and effective delivery of health, disability, housing and community services;
- collaborative medical research;
- accessible, safe and affordable housing; and
- community involvement in health, disability and housing issues and planning.

Canberra's health system faces many challenges. It has been clear for some time that existing arrangements for the health sector must be improved - reforms are critical. This Government made a number of commitments before the election and has already begun implementing them.

Examples of the Government's preparedness to act include the conduct of the health summit and the development of the resulting action plan; injection of an extra \$8.7 million to The Canberra Hospital through the Second Appropriation in 2001-02, together with \$11.8 million in 2002-03 for pay increases for nurses working in the public health system, and initiatives to attract and retain skilled nurses particularly in the much needed areas of renal care, mental health, oncology, critical care, orthopaedics and neurology. The ACT now offers pay levels that are competitive with other hospitals in Australia.

The structure and governance of the ACT health system has been reviewed and informed by the findings of the Inquiry into the Disability Services and the Reid Review of the ACT Health system.

The Government has announced major reforms to the provision of health services to take effect from 1 July 2002:

- restructuring of the Health portfolio into a simplified departmental model with clear lines of accountability and advice;
- abolition of the ACT Health and Community Care Board;
- phasing out of the purchaser-provider model of service delivery in health;
- co-location of the palliative care program with the ACT Hospice; and
- creation of a effective consultative mechanism, involving consumers and health professionals.

This budget will ensure that services better meet the needs of the disadvantaged in our community. An additional \$4.1 million in 2002-03 will be provided to assist non-government organisations to meet the costs associated with increases in the SACS Award across the health and community services sector.

Reflecting our commitment to support acute hospital services, the budget allocates \$1.26 million in 2002-03 to fund the anticipated growth in demand for a range of medical and surgical needs at both The Canberra Hospital and Calvary Public Hospital.

\$3.9 million will be provided in capital in 2002-03 to refurbish the Emergency and Paediatric Departments at the Canberra Hospital; and \$1.77 million in 2002-03 to upgrade the Calvary Hospital Emergency Department and observation unit.

\$300,000 will be provided to Calvary Hospital Emergency Department in 2002-03 to support the continuing increase in demand for services, allowing continued high quality services for people on Canberra's north. Additional radiotherapy services receive \$330,000 in the 2002-03 Budget to provide a comprehensive cancer service on both sides of the city.

We have also funded a program of 'step down' support for people returning home following acute hospital care. The program will receive \$600,000 in 2002-03 and will include a range of transitional services based on strengthening and building on existing partnerships with the health and community service sector. Through this program, we anticipate a reduction in unplanned readmissions and increased client satisfaction with hospital discharge planning and community link services.

In addition, this budget will provide \$1 million for services to allow carers of people with disabilities, mental illness and the frail aged to access respite care services, as identified in the Assembly Inquiry *Respite Care Services in the ACT*.

The support of health services is also about maintaining the highest possible standard of health care for the community, as well as contributing to the training of the health professionals who provide that care.

For these reasons the ACT Government has decided to support the establishment of the Canberra Medical School to be operated by the Australian National University. Operating cost funding support including \$3.95 million in 2003-04 and \$3.55 million per annum thereafter has been included in the Budget and Forward Estimates.

Through these initiatives and our broader approach to health reform, we are delivering on our commitment for a quality health sector for the ACT.

Work is well underway to address the issues of housing affordability through the work of the Housing Affordability Taskforce. To support the growth of the community housing sector, \$1.2m is being provided over four years to support alternative models for the expansion of community housing and to provide a greater range of affordable housing models in the community. In addition, \$1.4 million is being provided over four years to meet repair and maintenance costs at Ainslie Village and to support community housing management at the village.

Consistent with our election commitment to develop a comprehensive Indigenous housing policy, \$1.4 million is to be provided over four years to provide better access and wider housing choices for Indigenous people.

The Government is committed to improving on the range of support services available for people with a disability and their carers, and will progress its agenda for disability reform in the 2002-03 financial year.

A new Department of Disability, Housing and Community Services will be established on 1 July 2002, reporting to its own Minister.

The Government has provided an indexed \$2.5m a year from 2002-03 to provide additional services and support for people with disabilities and their families.

In addition, statutory powers will be put in place to determine and review disability service standards and to protect the physical wellbeing of the clients of disability services.

Planning

A strategic, integrated vision for the city is needed for a sustainable Canberra. The Government will consult and collaborate with Canberrans to develop this shared vision which involves a strategic planning framework for an attractive city. The outcomes of the Government will be:

- sustainable redevelopment within inner Canberra, particularly in the centre and on transport corridors;
- balanced land supply and use;
- sustainable transport systems;
- quality municipal services;
- an independent planning authority that works to protect the garden city/bush capital image of Canberra and has the confidence of the building industry and the community; and
- quality redevelopment design.

Investing in planning is about investing in our common future. This is a future that will involve maintaining Canberra's unique and world-class built amenity, as well as addressing issues of sustainability and equity.

The Canberra Spatial Plan will set a planning vision for the next 25 to 30 years. The 2002-03 Budget allocates \$ 350,000 to deliver on our commitment to establish a strategic planning framework that will take account of transport, population growth, employment location, land availability, retail and leisure activity, ecological constraints and community and environmental values.

Work has already begun to establish the Independent Planning and Land Management Authority. \$300,000 has also been provided for the comprehensive transport plan, which will consider the infrastructure and service requirements for the ACT community to 2020.

The Spatial Plan and the transport plan will also be important enablers for economic growth, as they will complement the proposed Economic White Paper and address issues such as locations for industries, the proximity of people to their workplace and the most efficient transportation interface with markets outside the ACT.

The Garden City Draft Variation will provide the fundamental framework upon which the highly-valued open space and leafy garden character of Canberra's suburbs can be maintained while allowing re-development in appropriate areas.

The Government has commenced the process of involving residents in neighbourhood planning processes. This initiative will focus initially on Inner North and Inner South Canberra. This is an important part of giving people a say

in the strategic development of their local areas and will be a key input to our objective of sustainable redevelopment in inner Canberra.

The Government is also well advanced on its plan to provide a more considered and independent planning system for Canberra and to resume Government land development in the ACT to re-establish the conditions for sustainable future development and for the preservation of Canberra's unique planned environment.

Through our approach to sustainable planning, and the initiatives being progressed in 2002-03, the Government will deliver on its commitment to maintaining Canberra's unique built amenity.

Sustainability

The Government is committed to achieving a balanced approach to meeting economic, social and environmental goals. We will preserve those things Canberrans love about the Territory and enhance our legacy to future generations. The outcomes of the Government will be:

- a sustainable community with a belief in fairness and equity, support for those in need and a respect for cultural heritage and the natural environment;
- social, economic and environmental initiatives that recognise the needs of all;
- a commitment to equity within and between generations;
- preserved bio-diversity and a protected and managed natural environment;
- prudent use of resources; and
- greater use of efficient, sustainable and low polluting energy sources.

Sustainability – economic, social and environmental sustainability - is about development that meets the needs of today's generation without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their needs. Sustainability is essential in order to protect and enhance the qualities we value most about the ACT and to protect our quality of life.

Sustainability cannot be achieved overnight – it requires a long-term approach, one that builds upon experience and an expanding knowledge base.

As a first step, the Government has established the Office of Sustainability at an average cost of \$380,000 per annum. The Office has already begun work to ensure that sustainability will be incorporated into all government programs and initiatives. This will add rigour to decision-making across government.

The Government's long-term vision for a sustainable Canberra will be progressed through strategic initiatives, such as the Economic White Paper, Social Plan and the Spatial Plan. These plans will comprise an overarching 'Canberra Plan'.

Social sustainability is important for the fabric of our society, and the Government is committed to developing a fairer and more sustainable community. We are demonstrating this commitment through a range of initiatives that will provide access to affordable, high quality health, community services, housing and education.

The Government has consistently demonstrated its commitment to supporting those who are disadvantaged in our community and to removing the barriers to participation in community activities. This Budget targets disadvantage while at the same time assisting people to participate more fully in the community. Initiatives such as more funding for emergency childcare (\$103,000 in 2002-03) and substitute care (\$1.54 million in 2002-03) will enable real progress to be made.

The 2002-03 Budget also targets public transport, recognising that the provision of an accessible, affordable and reliable public transport system is a key to achieving social and environmental sustainability.

Accessible, affordable and reliable public transport helps reduce greenhouse gases, provides better access to services and jobs, and can even affect the level of poverty in the ACT, with a recent report finding that the high cost of transport in the ACT contributes to poverty.

Public transport is just part of the Government's approach to a sustainable transport strategy. This plan is designed to address infrastructure and service requirements for the ACT community to 2020. It will have social, environmental and economic benefits, and will include pricing initiatives to encourage use of public transport, such as:

- the provision of additional funding to meet the operating costs of ACTION, with \$4.07 million in 2002-03;
- the introduction of a single zone fare structure at a cost of \$2.2 million per annum;
- the introduction of paid parking at the Belconnen and Tuggeranong town centres at an initial cost of \$1.41 million (including \$1.12 million in capital) to match the arrangements already in place at Civic and Woden and at some group centres; and
- the progressive replacement of ACTION's bus fleet with wheelchair accessible buses potentially fuelled by environmentally friendly fuel, with a total of \$17.2 million provided over the next five years.

'A Sustainable Bush Capital in the New Millennium - a New Focus for Nature Conservation in the ACT' will provide a comprehensive conservation management plan to ensure we have the appropriate resources, both human and technical, to conserve our natural heritage for future generations. \$250,000 was provided through the Second Appropriation in 2001-02 and an additional \$1.25 million will be provided over the next three years.

The Government will continue to address waste issues, primarily through the *No Waste by 2010 Strategy*. In line with our objective to achieve sustainability, this will include a waste pricing strategy that sets tip disposal charges at levels that provide incentives to reuse and recycle. This will be supported by an education strategy. \$320,000 has been provided in 2002-03 for these initiatives.

To support the important work of the Commissioner for the Environment, an additional \$125,000 in 2002-03, 2003-04 and 2005-06 has been provided for his Office.

These budget initiatives will help Canberra move towards economic, social and environmental sustainability. However, no government can achieve sustainability on its own. It will be necessary to work closely with the community to deliver the sustainability agenda.

Economic Growth

Canberra is a place where business can flourish. The Government will continue to actively foster a diversity of economic activity and development, maintaining a leadership role. The outcomes of the Government will be:

- an economic climate where creativity, innovation and entrepreneurship flourish;
- growth in the diversity of economic enterprises;
- greater opportunities for meaningful employment and for individuals to achieve a good standard of living;
- support for maintaining wages, working conditions and benefits and increasing productivity;
- support for centres of excellence, emerging enterprises and infrastructure projects to foster economic activity;
- reduced dependence on government activity; and
- facilitation of regional and overseas economic opportunities.

The Government is committed to economically sustainable growth, taking account of the triple bottom line of the economic, environmental and social impacts of development. We are also committed to a vibrant private sector to complement the steadfast public sector that is the foundation of our economy.

Following the election last year, it became plainly clear that economic growth was one of the issues of most concern to Canberrans.

The Economic White Paper will provide a forward-looking strategic approach to the sectors the Government should be nurturing and those areas in most need of attention. It will inform the Spatial Plan by providing an economic context for future development.

The Economic White Paper will focus on the ACT's areas of competitive strength, such as smart industries, in order to foster sustainable economic growth.

This budget funds initiatives that will encourage employment and growth benefits in knowledge-based industries, with a five year \$20 million support package for the Information and Communication Technology Centre of Excellence and ongoing support for a new Knowledge Fund, which will receive \$1.5 million of additional funding in 2002-03.

Tourism is an important industry for the ACT. It directly contributes about \$1.1 billion dollars of visitor expenditure to the local economy each year, and supports some 14,000 jobs. Canberra's tourism industry is being supported through funding for projects to generate greater visitation, such as \$200,000 per annum for the National Capital Education Tourism Project.

In this budget, the Government is also restructuring its business support and development programs to better target priority areas, such as the development of small and micro businesses, for which \$250,000 is being allocated in 2002-03. \$461,000 has also been provided in 2002-03 to substantially upgrade the Business Gateway website, the Government's most comprehensive website, a key information tool for the business community.

The Government's \$20 million support package for the national Information and Communication Technology (ICT) Centre of Excellence will bring important economic benefits to the Canberra community by accelerating the development of the local ICT industry. It will further position Canberra as a major originator and developer of ICT technologies and will significantly increase commercial R&D expenditure, driving company formation and employment.

The Government's capital works program, totalling \$91.25 million in 2002-03, will also be a generator of economic activity in the Territory. The capital works program continues to address the need for additional and improved physical infrastructure for the Territory. Major projects include the Gungahlin Primary and High School, the continuation of the Traffic Congestion and Road Safety program, the Woden Police Station and the Periodic Detention Centre upgrade.

The capital works program and the other initiatives in the budget, in conjunction with the broader strategic approach to industry development, will foster a diversity of economic activity and development. The Government will work closely with business, industry and professional organisations to grow Canberra's economy.

Community Engagement and Safety

Community engagement and safety are major concerns of the Government and all Canberrans. The Government will promote Canberra as a safe place to live and work. The outcomes of the Government will be:

- a vibrant, diverse, safe and just community with high rates of community participation;
- the engagement of young people, women, older people and those from Indigenous and multicultural backgrounds in decision-making;
- increased police capacity and responsiveness;
- a criminal justice system based on human rights principles which protects the community, supports victims, treats accused persons justly and provides offenders with the opportunity for rehabilitation and reintegration; and
- a strategic approach to addressing the impacts of drugs on the community.

The Government came to office with a commitment to involve Canberrans in the decision-making process. We have shown this commitment through appointment of a range of consultative bodies to assist Government with its policy-making, including disability reform, women, older people, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander and multicultural affairs and business.

For example, a short-term working group is being established to work with the new Office of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Affairs, comprising representatives of the Government's four key Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander consultative and advisory groups as well as government executives at the most senior levels. The first stage involved mapping Government funded or delivered services for young people, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders and women. A more comprehensive process for mapping service location and access is under way. Preliminary mapping highlighted that there was a lack of comprehensive and reliable data to support service planning and delivery, consequently an overall approach to guiding services delivery is not in place.

A new ACT Office for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Affairs is being formed in the Chief Minister's Department to take a stronger whole of government strategic approach to policy development.

The Government's commitment to human rights is being advanced by an examination of the need for an ACT Bill of Rights. The 2002-03 Budget allocates \$89,000 for the committee to gather views on the proposed Bill.

The consultation mechanisms proposed for the Canberra Spatial Plan, the Social Plan and the Sustainability Framework will provide opportunities for Canberrans to provide advice on long-term strategic planning for Canberra's future.

The Government is committed to a greater level of coordination of services and policy for older people in the ACT. This is demonstrated by the recent establishment of a new Ministerial Council on Ageing. This group will take a whole of government view in ensuring that services are appropriately targeted. The Government currently funds a range of health, housing, transport, personal support and home assistance programs for older people and will work closely with this community to ensure that these respond to those most in need.

This Government has a clear commitment to ensuring Canberra's young people are provided with effective and appropriate support services and programs. This Budget has provided funding for areas which have experienced growth in demand over the past few years, in particular mental health, support and outreach services, and students at risk of not achieving satisfactory education outcomes.

The 2002-03 Budget also includes a number of initiatives to support people's involvement in decision-making. For example, the budget provides \$154,000 in 2002-03 for Youth InterACT, an innovative mechanism for young people providing advice to Government. A mental health education program for young people and youth outreach services for West Belconnen will also receive funding.

The Government has taken positive steps to foster understanding of differences through establishment of signage to acknowledge the Ngunnawal people's traditional ownership of ACT land. In 2002-03, \$120,000 has been provided for ongoing support for the management and operation of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Cultural Centre, which will be administered by a community-controlled organisation.

The Budget contributes \$416,000 over four years to sustain multicultural community radio in Canberra, with \$100,000 in 2002-03. Community language schools will receive \$208,000 over four years (\$50,000 in 2002-03), as a way of celebrating difference and also encouraging cultural expression.

The support of a vibrant arts community is also important to the social fabric of the ACT. This Budget recognises the need to continue support for such activities through the provision of \$800,000 per annum for the National Institute of the Arts, additional general arts funding rising from \$350,000 in 2002-03 to \$507,000 in 2005-06, as well as \$160,000 per annum over the next four years to address the maintenance of arts facilities.

\$1 million has been provided for improvements to sports grounds and sports facilities.

The Budget contains a number of initiatives to address community safety - for example the budget allocates \$678,000 in 2002-03 for 20 more police and \$766,000 funding for operating costs over four years and \$750,000 for capital to upgrade the emergency services communications system. \$5 million has been provided to build a new Woden police station.

The Budget also provides \$1.82 million for staffing costs and \$3.1 million in capital works associated with the upgrade of the Periodic Detention Centre to a Remand Facility; while \$1.26 million is provided to design an ACT Correctional Centre which incorporates best practice in rehabilitation.

The Government has made clear its commitment to taking a strategic approach to addressing the impact of illicit drugs on the community through taking early steps to develop a comprehensive strategy recognising the mental and other health implications of drug use. It has also provided \$170,000 in the 2002-03 Budget for practical measures to address alcohol and drug use by Indigenous young people.

Public Service Capacity

Traditional values need to underpin the ACT Public Service. The Government will revitalise the Public Service, giving it the respect and confidence to undertake its vital role. The outcomes of the Government will be:

- a skilled, innovative and experienced Public Service;
- governance and accountability frameworks;
- improved accountability in budgeting and reporting;
- evidence based policy development; and
- recognition and reward for high achieving staff.

The Government is committed to investing in the Public Service - the staff and infrastructure - to ensure the community's expectations on public administration are met.

The Government has the highest regard for the general quality of the ACT Public Service and faith in its ability to serve the ACT community to the highest standard, given an appropriate environment.

This Government is keen to uphold the standards and status of its public service based on five key principles: culture; values; demonstrating respect for the Public Service by the Government; enhancing capability within the service, and re-affirming the traditions of the Westminster system.

These principles support our commitment to good governance – our *Code of Good Government* – that is itself derived from Labor's traditional values that we share with the Canberra community – fairness, integrity, openness, honesty,

compassion, responsibility, accountability, and leadership. This budget identifies a number of initiatives to achieve these outcomes.

The budget provides an additional \$165,000 in 2002-03 to enhance the capacity of the Director of Public Prosecutions. In addition, \$336,000 in 2002-03 has been provided to support the Government Solicitor's Office to replace a system which assists the Office to provide timely and robust advice in relation to the Government's activities.

Additional funding of \$600,000 is also being provided to enable the implementation of the Auditor-General's recommendations in regard to strengthening financial management and administrative procedures within the Department of Treasury.

Importantly, the base level funding for Canberra Connect has been restored so that this major service provision initiative can continue to operate and be developed to provide quality service for all Canberrans through multiple delivery channels. This commitment totals \$10.7 million over four years.

Another key part of the capacity of the Public Service is the systems that support its activities and the services it provides to the community. The necessary costs of providing such quality services have been neglected for too long. This budget addresses these issues.

Capital funding of \$7.8 million and operating cost funding of \$6.19 million over four years has been provided for the Management Infrastructure Review Project to replace the current Government human resource and payroll system with an enhanced Human Resource Management System. This will provide the mechanism to improve human resource management efficiency and effectiveness in a broad range of human resource functions, including pay calculation and disbursement, retrieval of workforce statistics, and the implementation of strategic workforce planning enabling the Public Service to better serve the Government and the community.

Similarly, capital funding of \$5.28 million and operating cost funding of \$1.6 million in 2002-03 has been provided to upgrade the Government's financial systems. \$12.8 million has been provided in 2002-03 for a range of initiatives that will ensure that InTACT has the necessary infrastructure and systems support to provide the core capabilities on which most Government activities and services depend.