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Investing in community safety in Canberra nightspots

The ACT Government has allocated \$1.624 million over the next four years for the monitoring of closed circuit television (CCTV) at Manuka, Kingston and Civic which will increase safety for the people of Canberra, Minister for Police and Emergency Services, Simon Corbell, said today.

The funding in the 2009-10 ACT Budget will allow monitoring of CCTV systems in real time during peak periods at the purpose built CCTV Monitoring Centre, and fulfils a 2008 election commitment.

Mr Corbell said the additional funding for monitoring the CCTV network would help create a safer environment for Canberrans, particularly those visiting the Territory's popular nightspots.

"The cameras can act as a deterrent to anti-social behaviour and will be an important tool for fighting crime in our city's major entertainment areas," he said.

"As part of this funding, staff will use active virtual patrolling techniques to keep a watch on the entertainment precincts, allowing beat and patrol police to respond to events as they develop.

"The systems will also allow the monitors to track suspects as they move within the precinct, and aid facial recognition of suspects to identify and prosecute offenders as needed.

"The additional funding for monitoring CCTV systems cements the ACT Government's commitment to use the technology to improve public safety and protect places of mass gathering.

"This funding is in addition to the almost \$8 million provided in the 2008-09 Budget to improve and expand the Territory's CCTV systems, as well as funding in the 2007-08 2nd Appropriation which enabled the installation of CCTV systems at Canberra Stadium and the Jolimont Bus Terminus," Mr Corbell said.

The Manuka and Kingston systems are expected to come on line by July this year.

The CCTV systems use state of the art cameras connected through an extensive network to a monitoring centre, where footage can be recorded 24-hours a day, seven days a week.

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