



ACT Government

2003-2004 BUDGET

POLICE AND EMERGENCY SERVICES

The Stanhope Government's 2003-2004 Budget includes many initiatives to ensure our police and emergency services are able to build on the level of service provided to the people of the ACT, Minister for Police and Emergency Services, Bill Wood, said today.

Emergency Services

"The 2003-2004 budget is providing \$2.1 million in capital to complete the implementation of the new Computer Aided Despatch (CAD) technology and a total of \$23.668 million in capital over the budget and forward years for new radio technology.

"Emergency Services communications infrastructure requires a considerable injection of resources to bring it up to the cutting edge of communications technology – therefore the Stanhope Government has provided the resources to build the communications infrastructure that is needed to protect our Community in the 21st Century, Minister for Police and Emergency Services, Bill Wood, said today.

"The CAD System will provide a significant upgrade of existing systems which take emergency calls and despatch response vehicle to those incidents. The CAD will also incorporate direct turnout arrangements for quicker responses and mobile data information to support responding agencies to plan and understand the potential incident on route to the incident scene.

"The benefits of this initiative is that it will allow for the replacement of older systems with new technology which will be state of the art, improve safety to both the community and field personnel, and provided interoperability between response agencies.

"The Stanhope Government has also announced in this budget funding of \$100,000 for a trial of Community Fire Units in the ACT.

"The Community Fire Units have been successfully established in other jurisdictions to play a proactive role within the community to assist it to support fire services and limit damage and loss.

"A Community Fire Unit trial will be undertaken prior to the next bushfire season and will enable the training of volunteer residents and equipping them with basic firefighting equipment which will allow them to protect property until the Fire Brigade arrives.

"This trial has been strongly supported by residents recently affected by the January Bushfires and Government is confident that this initiative will be supported by the wider community.

Media Release



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Police

“The Stanhope Government has provided \$180,000 in the 2003-2004 budget to identify, research and develop an appropriate program to improve the investigation and prosecution of sexual offences in the Australian Capital Territory. ACT Policing and the DPP will undertake the development of a collaborative interagency approach, which is critical to any implementation of reform.

“\$425,000 is also being provided in the budget to fund the ACT component of the national buyback of prohibited handguns to operate from 1 July 2003 to 1 January 2004.

“ACT Policing will administer the buyback, which is based on there being approximately 1,700 registered handguns in the ACT, and it is estimated that 50% (850) would comprise the newly restricted categories.

“The Stanhope Government has made provision in the budget for a Police and Emergency Services capital works program with a total cost in excess of \$17 million.

“Included in the major works program is:

- an additional \$2.332 million for the Woden Police Station taking the total funding to \$7.332m;
- an additional \$828,000 for the West Belconnen Joint Emergency Services Centre taking funding for that project to a total of \$1.629 million; and
- initial funding for the Belconnen Joint Emergency Services Centre of \$700,000 in 2003-2004 with a total of \$8.3 million being provided over the three financial years to 2005-2006.

“The minor works program for 2003-2004 is as follows:

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| • One Tree Hill Fire Tower | \$150,000 |
| • Dickson Ambulance Station upgrade | \$130,000 |
| • ESB Security & Pavement upgrades at various stations | \$200,000 |
| • AFP Building upgrades | \$200,000 |

“We are all proud of the contribution police and emergency services have made to the ACT in the past year, especially during the devastating January bushfires – the 2003 – 2004 Budget will enable them to get on with the important services they provide,” Mr Wood concluded.

Statement ends