



# BUDGET 2008 - 2009 READY FOR THE FUTURE MEDIA RELEASE

No. 7

## SUPPORT FOR INDIGENOUS CANBERRANS

The ACT Government is committed to ensuring that our Indigenous Canberrans have the highest level of support available to close the gap and ease the disadvantage they face compared to other Canberrans, Chief Minister and Minister for Indigenous Affairs announced today.

“The 2008-09 Budget provides \$2.5 million over four years for an Integrated Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Family Support Service,” Mr Stanhope said. “This will provide targeted, intensive family support services to at-risk Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander families through an integrated service delivery model. The model has been jointly developed by the Department of Disability, Housing and Community Services, the Department of Education and Training and ACT Health.

“In 2007-08, the ACT Government announced that an Indigenous Elected Body would be set up to advocate for the interests and concerns of our local Indigenous community to the Government. Following extensive community consultations in 2006 and 2007, legislation for this body is expected to be passed shortly.

“The ACT Government has also committed \$134,000 over four years through the Community Sector Support Fund for NAIDOC week and the United Ngunnawal Elders Council.

“NAIDOC Week will be hosted in the ACT this year and the ACT Government has committed \$30,000 to support this significant event. An important feature of this year’s NAIDOC will be the inaugural introduction and first meeting of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Elected Body.

“The 2008-09 Budget provides \$104,000 over four years to support the United Ngunnawal Elders Council, which meets regularly and reports to the Minister for Indigenous Affairs. The ACT Government also set up the Taskforce on Indigenous Affairs to progress issues of importance to Indigenous people in the ACT.

“The ACT is also progressing Indigenous issues through the Council of Australian Governments Working Group on Indigenous Reform which is developing practical strategies to address indigenous disadvantage, including key initiatives to close the life expectancy gap and improve educational outcomes.

In December last year, the ACT Government committed \$10.8 million to the Indigenous Residential Alcohol and Other Drug Rehabilitation Facility which will provide a culturally appropriate service for the Indigenous community to participate in the rehabilitation and recovery process.

Statement ends

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