



ACT Government

2003-2004 BUDGET

BUDGET CONTINUES SUPPORT FOR TOURISM, PROVIDES BOOST TO CONVENTIONS INDUSTRY

The \$4 million previously allocated to the V8 Supercar race has been redirected to maintain tourism funding under the 2003-04 ACT Budget, which also provides a significant boost to the convention industry, Minister for Tourism Ted Quinlan said.

“The ACT Government is committed to the continued support of the tourism industry which contributes almost \$1 billion to the ACT economy, and supports about 11,000 jobs,” Mr Quinlan said.

“International events have highlighted the need for a focused and strategic approach to tourism in the ACT.

“The \$4 million from the V8 Supercar race, together with the maintenance of CTEC’s ongoing funding, will allow CTEC to adopt a targeted approach to both the international and domestic markets, focussing on research, product and industry development, marketing, logistics and community programs.

Mr Quinlan said the conventions industry would receive a great deal of support from the ACT Government in the 2003-04 Budget.

“The conventions industry contributes about \$344 million to the ACT economy each year, and the ACT has only 6.2 per cent of the market,” Mr Quinlan said.

“Canberra’s status as the national capital places us in a unique position to take a greater share of the conventions market, as long as we significantly upgrade our facilities to compete on a national scale.

“This budget allows us to do just that. We have included a \$40 million planning provision in the 2004-05 financial year for the planning or construction of a new or upgraded convention centre.

“This provision is in addition to \$250,000 in the 2003-04 capital works program for further feasibility and design works.

“In addition, we are providing \$696,000 in the next financial year to the Canberra Convention Bureau. This money will support the Bureau in its efforts to attract more conventions and exhibitions.

Mr Quinlan said a number of other tourism-related initiatives were continued in the budget.



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Inquiries: Narelle Luchetti 6205 0145 or 0418 448 660

“As committed in the last budget, we have allocated \$200,000 in 2003-04 to continue the National Capital Education Tourism Project, which attracts about 130,000 students to Canberra each year, as part of their school curriculum.

“This project showcases the ACT’s many attractions and generates accommodation bookings and return visits, with more than 40 per cent of students returning to Canberra with their families within two years.

“The Event Assistance Program will again receive \$200,000 for grants and sponsorships providing support for events that bring tourists to Canberra.

“\$200,000 will go to the ACT Festival Fund, which will enhance existing festivals, provide seed funding for new and innovative festivals and develop opportunities for the festival sector.” Mr Quinlan concluded.

Statement ends.