



## ACT Government

# 2003-2004 BUDGET

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### MEDIATION SERVICE FOR ADMINISTRATIVE APPEALS TRIBUNAL

Budget 2003-04 will help streamline planning appeals to the Administrative Appeals Tribunal, Chief Minister and Attorney General, Jon Stanhope, said today.

The planning appeals process will be simplified and streamlined with the attachment of mediators to the Administrative Appeals Tribunal (AAT) and the appointment of additional members with planning expertise.

The requirements for mediation and for appeals to be heard by three person tribunals were contained in the Administrative Appeals Tribunal Amendment Bill 2002, introduced into the Legislative Assembly in November 2002.

Budget 2003-04 provides funding of \$1.428 million over four years to meet the requirements of the legislation.

Mr Stanhope said the reforms to the Administrative Appeals Tribunal Act created an appeals system that was fair, accessible and timely, and which placed an emphasis on mediation as a means to reach solutions.

“Land and planning related applications account for a significant portion of the Administrative Appeals Tribunal caseload.

“By requiring that mediation be considered for each appeal, we will be able to resolve some disputes or differences early in the process and reduce the need for formal, costly and time-consuming hearings.

“When mediation is not successful, the appointment of additional members to the AAT will help expedite the appeals process, giving all parties greater certainty and enabling earlier resolution of planning issues and disputes.

“This Budget gives effect to very important policy reforms introduced by my Government to deliver better planning outcomes for the community and allow people to have disputes resolved quickly and with a minimum of legal formality,” said Mr Stanhope.

**Statement ends.**

