



ACT Government
2005-2006 BUDGET

MEDIA RELEASE

\$1.29M FOR ESTABLISHMENT OF HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION

The ACT Government will invest an additional \$1.29 million over the next four years in the establishment of the new Human Rights Commission, Chief Minister and Attorney General Jon Stanhope announced today.

The Human Rights Commission will promote human rights and act as a centralised agency for those who have concerns regarding health, disability or community services. The new Commission consolidates the existing Human Rights Office and the Community and Health and Community Services Complaints Commissioner's Office.

Legislation to create the commission was recently introduced into the Legislative Assembly.

"The Government's vision is for a dedicated body to oversee service delivery, educate the public about human rights and deal with service complaints," Mr Stanhope said.

"The process of better protecting human rights began with the introduction of the Human Rights Act last year, dealing with interactions between government and the people of the ACT. That process now continues with the establishment of a dedicated Human Rights Commission.

"The Government intends to recruit a person of high calibre to fill the role of Commission President. This individual will be critical in developing an inspirational commission culture, a culture that will set an example for others to follow".

Mr Stanhope said the President would be responsible for the day-to-day administration of the Commission as well as for coordinating the handling of complaints. The Human Rights Commission would be made up of the President and specialist commissioners for health services, discrimination, human rights, disability and community services, and children.

It is expected that the new commission will be established in the 2005-06 financial year.

Statement ends