



## FACTSHEET No: 9

# A Fairer, Safer Canberra

The Government is committed to ensuring that Canberra remains a fair and safe society now and into the future.

Canberra leads the nation in its protection of human rights, being the first Australian State or Territory to provide legislative protection for the civil and political rights of its citizens. Caring for the vulnerable in our community is a mark of a decent society, and Canberra can be proud of its record.

Our justice system is the community's final guarantee of fairness in resolving disputes and hearing criminal charges. In recent years the Government has introduced innovative measures in our courts and legal system to make them work better for the community, such as restorative justice for young offenders.

## ACHIEVEMENTS

The Government has provided significant funding to make Canberra a fairer and safer place, through:

- an additional 122 police officers protecting Canberra since 2001-02, with greater visibility and increased capacity to fight crime;
- the introduction of a new policing roster, bringing an additional 44 police officers and 16 patrol cars onto the streets at critical times;
- the successful implementation of the Property Crime Reduction Strategy. Burglary, at the end of 2007, was at its lowest level for 10 years and motor vehicle theft has been reduced by 26 per cent since 2003;
- reforms in the area of sexual assault in 2007 which now provides more dedicated support to victims. Victims will soon be able to give evidence

at off-site facilities, saving them from the trauma of facing their assailants in court;

- expenditure on emergency services, which has increased by 89 per cent since 2003-04, keeping Canberra prepared for and ready to respond to emergencies; and
- the introduction of Community Fire Units to provide ACT residents in high risk areas with added protection from the threat of bushfire. Thirty-eight units are now operational.

## ACT BUDGET 2008-09 – READY FOR THE FUTURE

In 2008-09 Budget the Government makes further investments in:

- improvements in court facilities, including updating technology and designing a new Supreme Court building;
- police facilities, such as a new Belconnen Police Station and new Closed Circuit Television monitoring of security in sporting and entertainment venues;
- the expansion of the operational capacity of our emergency services, with additional frontline fire and ambulance officers, and new equipment and facilities; and
- new programs at the new ACT prison that will provide support for education, therapeutic interventions, and work training for prisoners. Half-way house accommodation has also been funded and other supports to manage offenders' reintegration into the community.





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### ACT BUDGET 2008-09 INITIATIVES

INITIATIVE	WHAT DO THESE INITIATIVES DELIVER FOR THE FUTURE?
<b>JUSTICE AND REGULATORY SYSTEM</b>	
\$2.8 million over four years for improved courts technology and case management systems.	New CCTV and playback facilities in the courts, to allow vulnerable witnesses, prisoners, and interstate witnesses to give evidence from remote locations. Updating the court's technology to facilitate e-filing. Modernising the case management system.
\$220,000 in 2008-09 for a feasibility study for a new Supreme Court building.	Scope options for the replacement of the current 40 year old Supreme Court with a modern facility.
\$117,000 in 2008-09 for Supreme Court Jury Payments (\$486,000 over four years).	This first increase for many years will more adequately compensate persons attending for jury service for lost earnings, travel, parking and lunch expenses.
\$4.8 million over four years for a new Forensic Medical Centre.	Modern facilities for procedures involving deceased persons and a more appropriate environment for relatives needing to identify deceased persons.
\$1.5 million over four years for the implementation of new Work Safety Legislation.	Promotion and awareness raising; revision and development of priority codes of practice and regulations; training and development and increased regulatory activities.
A total of \$4.1 million over four years for the establishment of a regulatory scheme to screen people who work with the vulnerable, including children, the aged and people with disabilities.	Assist in increasing the safety of vulnerable people in the ACT by minimising potential for incidents of abuse and harm by people with whom they come into contact.
\$237,000 in 2008-09 for 'guardian of last resort' services (\$984,000 over four years).	This initiative will enable the Public Advocate to provide support and advocacy in the increasing number of cases where the Public Advocate is appointed as the guardian of last resort for vulnerable people.
<b>CRIME PREVENTION</b>	
\$2.4 million in 2008-09 for Prison and Offender Related Initiatives (\$10.1 million over four years).	Targeted programs to address offenders' criminal behaviours and to provide them with the skills and support needed to successfully return to the community.
\$241,000 in 2008-09 for Liquor Regulation (\$1 million over four years).	Increased resources to regulate the sale and consumption of alcohol, benefiting the community through a decrease in alcohol related violence and anti social behaviour.
\$17.7 million over four years for a new Belconnen Police Station.	A new police station at Belconnen adjacent to the existing Winchester facility, providing modern and effective police facilities for the north side of Canberra.
\$8 million over four years for an increased Closed Circuit Television Video (CCTV) network.	Upgrade of CCTV in Civic, installation of CCTV at Manuka Oval, Exhibition Park, and popular entertainment night spots.
<b>EMERGENCY SERVICES</b>	
\$3.4 million in 2008-09 for Operational Response Capacity (\$12.9 million over four years).	12 additional fire fighters and 14 additional ambulance officers; secure storage for chemical, biological, radiological and other hazardous materials; regionalised biomedical safes; and a mobile fleet service unit to maintain specialist emergency services vehicles at stations and incidents.
\$2.2 million in 2008-09 for Station Relocation Design.	Design and planning for refurbishment or construction of new facilities for fire, ambulance and emergency services.
\$100,000 in 2008-09 for Chemical Biological and Radiological Nuclear & Urban Search and Rescue Equipment Replacement & Maintenance (\$420,000 over four years).	Provide ACT Fire Brigade with properly maintained equipment for CBR incidents and major urban rescue operations.

# BUDGET 2008 - 2009

#### Further information

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