



ACT Government

BUDGET 2007-2008

Taking the Territory forward

MEDIA RELEASE

No. 15

PROGRESS TOWARDS INDIGENOUS ELECTED BODY

The 2007-08 ACT Budget delivers on the Government's commitment to establish an elected Indigenous representative body in the ACT, with another \$100,000 to finalise the proposed model, in consultation with local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders.

"Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders across Australia had been further marginalised from decision-making and political processes since the Commonwealth abolished the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Commission," Minister for Indigenous Affairs Jon Stanhope said today. "The ACT Government believes it is essential that Indigenous members of our community have a strong elected voice, delivered through a representative body which is aware of and able to represent their specific interests and aspirations.

"Significant work has been undertaken by the ACT Office of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Affairs, the ACT Government Solicitors Office and the Chief Minister's Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Consultative Council to develop an appropriate model. The desire is to develop a model that not only reflects the expectations of the local Indigenous community, but also addresses outcomes expected by the Government. The process has been complex and we have been conscious of the need to get it right, first time.

"The funding of \$100,000 in the 2007-08 ACT Budget will allow for finalisation of the model, and provide further opportunities for the local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people to have input into shaping the representative structure. This money is in addition to the \$200,000 announced in the 2006-07 ACT Budget, taking funding for this year to \$300,000."

Mr Stanhope said he hoped the result would be a broad, representative voice for the ACT Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community on issues affecting its members and that the advice provided by the body would help the Government better deliver holistic services and would enhance cooperation between government and community agencies.

5 June 2007

Enquiries: Penelope Layland
Paul Kindermann

6205 9777
6205 1690

0438 289 714
0403 600 955

penelope.layland@act.gov.au
paul.kindermann@act.gov.au