



ACT Government

2002-2003 BUDGET

PROVIDING IMPROVED HOUSING OUTCOMES

The 2002-03 budget introduces a range of initiatives to expand the housing choices available to those most in need in our community and facilitates ongoing partnerships with industry and the community sector.

Urban Services Minister Bill Wood said the Government's priority is to develop a sustainable, affordable and appropriate housing system to meet a range of accommodation needs.

"There will be an expansion of the ACT's community housing sector. The budget allocates \$3m for progressing the recommendations of the Affordable Housing Taskforce (due to report in October), with a further \$1.2m over the next four years going towards providing a greater range of community housing.

"Annual funding of \$0.35m over four years will go towards the Indigenous housing program to provide affordable and appropriate accommodation for the ACT's Indigenous population.

"An Emergency Accommodation Fund of \$0.125m will also be established to assist people with short-term emergency accommodation where no other options exist. The Fund will provide increased accommodation options for people in housing crisis. Funding of \$0.080m will also be provided to Lifeline to establish a 24-hour, seven-day-a-week information and referral service for people in need of crisis accommodation.

"We will be continuing the Accessible Units Program to provide more suitable dwellings for older people and people with disabilities. The Program, which commenced in 2001/02, will provide 200 accessible units by 31 December 2005," Mr Wood said.

"Funding of \$1.4m over four years will address fire and safety issues at Ainslie Village and assist long-term residents who wish to find independent housing options.

"The announcement has already been made that \$16m over two years will also be spent on implementing a program of fire safety improvements at ACT Housing's major flat complexes.

"The fire safety program is a necessary and sensible precaution to bring up to modern standards properties that in some cases were built more than 40 years ago," Mr Wood said.

The Government is also keen to build on the Community Linkages Program, where staff from the YWCA will be working with ACT Housing and its tenants to improve access to services and to help build a strong sense of community at large flat complexes.

To this end, \$0.3m will be provided for community-initiated projects in 2002/03.

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Media Release



The first round of projects will include:

- providing financial planning workshops;
- expanding the IT project at the Bega, Allawah, Currong (BAC) flats to enable more tenants to improve their IT skills and employment opportunities through access to additional computers and IT training;
- establishing a creative arts program for women residents of the BAC flats;
- purchasing a mobile mediation service to assist with conflict resolution;
- assisting ACT Housing tenants to access family support services; and
- community development projects at the multi-unit sites in Oaks Estate and Red Hill, including workshops and training in areas such as financial management, nutrition, parenting skills, mediation, child development and literacy.

“The Government realises the important role housing plays in social well-being and sustainable development – and this 2002/03 budget will greatly assist in addressing the issues of housing affordability and housing choice for those in need,” Mr Wood said.

Statements ends 25 June 2002