

# Even Better Access to Government Services and Information



ACT Government

**ACT Budget 2001-02**

Embargoed until 1 May

Access to ACT Government services and information will get even easier through the 2001-2002 Budget, ACT Chief Minister Gary Humphries said.

"The ACT Government is committed to improving services to Canberrans and to exploring innovative ways of delivering services. We have already put in place a number of initiatives that improve the way people access information and complete transactions, including the new Canberra Connect service," Mr Humphries said.

"Canberra Connect brings together the government shopfronts, switchboard and electronic services into a single access point that will provide Canberrans and local businesses with improved service and greater access and convenience, no matter whether they choose to use shopfronts, the Internet or telephone."

**The 2001-2002 Budget provides funding for the next stage of Canberra Connect, as well as for other projects that will improve access to government information and transactions.**

"The planned expenditure of **\$7 million funding for Canberra Connect and \$4 million in capital funding** will support, among other things, the establishment of a call centre to improve telephone services, so people can do most of their business with government by calling just one phone number. The call centre will be running by September 2001," Mr Humphries said.

"The funding will also be used to streamline a wide range of business processes across the ACT Government to make more information and transactions available via Canberra Connect's services, and in particular over the Internet."

The Canberra Connect web portal already offers a wide range of information about government services like Healthfirst, community facilities, housing, environment, land, planning and building, transport, roads, and law and order. In addition, it offers more than 60 transactions 24 hours a day, with more coming online all the time. The site already undertakes 2500 transactions a month.

The Chief Minister said the 2001-2002 Budget also provides funding for improving the handling of urban services issues such as animals, roads, libraries and traffic lights through Canberra Connect.

In the first year \$200,000 will be used to improve the quality of information provided to Canberra Connect to ensure better feedback to staff and clients.

The Chief Minister said a number of electronic services projects across government will improve access to government services and information over the Internet. The projects include:

- \$1.5 million in capital funding, for an **integrated document management system** to provide a whole of government solution to record and document management. The program will enable

agencies to meet the provisions of the Territory Records Bill, support better client services by improving electronic access to information, and enjoy economies of scale and savings that would not be possible if agencies operated their own records management system.

- Enhancements to the **Canberra Tourism and Events Corporation's website**, including facilities for booking and paying for tourism services over the Internet and specialist information for travelers with mobility, hearing or sight impairment.
- \$500,000 to continue development of an **on-line virtual CIT campus** for delivery of CIT programs through the Internet. This initiative, begun in 2000-2001 with \$250,000, will enable lifelong learners to access vocational education from their home or workplace.
- \$600,000 a year over four years for the development of **online curriculum** that will assist in the improvement of teaching quality through improved access to high quality curriculum materials.
- Improved **information systems for community organisations** - \$100,000 in 2001-02 allowing community services to improve the efficiency of data collection processes and the reliability of data.
- \$647,000 to complete a **database of core geographic data** on service and stormwater easements. This will enable the community, development industry and government agencies to access critical development information electronically, which will greatly improve timeliness and accuracy.
- \$538,000 over four years, to refocus **information systems and technology in ACT courtrooms**, and to move towards a more modern environment.
- \$1.3m over four years, with \$319,000 in the first year, for establishing a **computer-based register of Territory legislation** which will be accessible free over the internet.
- **Community Care Management Information System** - \$8.276 million in 2001-02 (\$17.012 million over four years) for the delivery of a Community Health Information System.

"The Government's vision is to promote Canberra as the 'Clever Capital', and the Government intends to be a leader in this respect, through the smarter delivery of government services to the community," Mr Humphries said.

"The Canberra community has unprecedented access to internet and computer technology at their homes, workplaces and free through Government shopfronts and libraries. They are also the most computer-literate community in the nation.

"These Budget initiatives will make it significantly easier for the community to interact with government, ensuring our services are delivered in the most efficient, timely and intelligent way possible."

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**Statement ends**

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