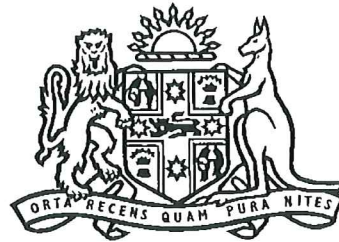


Australian Capital Territory and New South Wales

Memorandum of Understanding

for Regional Collaboration



Australian Capital Territory Government
New South Wales Government

Introduction

The Australian Capital Territory (ACT) Chief Minister, Andrew Barr MLA and the New South Wales (NSW) Premier, The Hon. Mike Baird MP reaffirm the ACT and NSW Governments' commitment to strengthen collaboration between the two jurisdictions.

This agreement builds on the collaboration between the two jurisdictions including the inaugural Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) signed by the respective first Ministers in 2011. It applies to the ACT and the Local Government Areas (LGAs) in South East NSW (hereafter referred to as ACT and South East NSW region).

Purpose

The ACT and NSW enjoy a close relationship as a result of their unique cross border circumstances. Canberra's location in the centre of the South East NSW region makes it the main service centre for the surrounding LGAs in NSW.

The ACT Government acknowledges the importance of the South East NSW region and is keen to continue to work closely and collaboratively with the NSW Government to improve service delivery, build local communities and further develop the region economically.

Sustained population growth, interdependent economic relationships and the complex issues of service delivery require a coordinated approach to support the region's future. Promoting targeted service delivery, sustainable regional growth and future economic prospects offered by infrastructure investments are important priorities for both jurisdictions.

A close working relationship between the NSW and ACT Governments offers a range of benefits which include:

- enabling cooperative leadership and management of strategic growth issues throughout the ACT-South East NSW region; and
- recognising the cross-border relationships in service delivery, economic development and resource management.

Terms of Reference

The ACT-NSW MoU for Regional Collaboration will allow governments to:

- develop and implement shared proposals for policy change, planning and service delivery initiatives;
- consult with communities, business and industry groups, relevant NSW and ACT Ministers, local government, government agencies and regional organisations; and
- identify key regional issues that impede efficient and consistent service delivery to communities, where attempts to resolve such issues at a local level have been unsuccessful, or where a strategic government-to-government approach is required.

Objectives

The MoU is based on the following objectives for the ACT and NSW Governments:

- improving community well-being in the ACT and South East NSW region;
- fostering a closer working environment between the two governments;
- advancing issues within the ACT and South East NSW region through coordinated cross border policy development and service delivery planning;
- establishing agreed consultation and notification mechanisms between the State, Territory and local governments within the region;
- developing a process for identifying and dealing with impediments to coordination;
- establishing mechanisms to identify and address potential issues before they escalate;
- enabling information sharing and networking opportunities between government agencies;
- developing a model of long-term strategic regional management and cooperation.

Priority Areas

The ACT and NSW Governments agree that the priority actions under this MoU in the first instance include:

Economic Development

- develop a joint regional economic development guide based on the *Strategic Regional Direction Statement* that identifies actions to maximise economic development;
- examine opportunities from regional infrastructure to enhance economic growth and stimulate employment across the region; and
- work towards the automatic mutual recognition of occupational licences across the region to facilitate improved business opportunities.

Built and Natural Environment

- identify transport priorities and develop a delivery program to progress actions which improve infrastructure connectivity and transport links;
- progress options for the sharing of funding and delivery arrangements for cross-border developments which have impacts in both jurisdictions;
- identify appropriate sequencing of strategic infrastructure; and
- integrate approaches for sustainable management of the region's natural resources including catchment management.

Integrated Service Planning

- continue to share information on the trends in demographics and population for the ACT and South East NSW region;
- coordinate emergency services and disaster recovery activities in a cross border setting;
- examine opportunities for integrated planning of health care services;
- progress a person-centred approach to the access and delivery of health care services;
- progress options for the sharing of funding and delivery arrangements for community members requiring services across jurisdiction boundaries; and
- expand training placements across the region for health professionals.

Annual Work List

The ACT and NSW governments agree that there will be a work list, updated annually, with actions covering the Priority Areas. The work list will be drafted collaboratively by each Governments' First Ministers' agencies.

The MoU in Operation

Roles and Responsibilities

Recognising the need to identify the roles and responsibilities of the ACT and NSW Governments under this MoU, it is agreed that:

- First Ministers' agencies will serve as the key contacts and respective secretariats with regard to this MoU and any matters contained within;
- taskforces will be convened as necessary to consider specific issues and make recommendations to the First Ministers;
- State and Territory Ministers and their agencies remain responsible for the planning and delivery of State and Territory services; and
- Government Ministers and their agencies may refer matters to their respective First Ministers' agencies where appropriate.

NSW Department of Premier and Cabinet and the ACT Chief Ministers Department will jointly chair a quarterly meeting of the combined NSW and ACT regional leadership groups to discuss progress. The NSW Cross-Border Commissioner will participate in these meetings.

Engagement

The ACT and NSW Governments recognise the importance of ongoing engagement with regional stakeholders, in particular local government and regional entities. These groups assist both Governments meeting the MoU's objectives and delivering on priority action areas. Where appropriate the ACT and NSW Governments will engage with regional stakeholders to achieve common regional outcomes.

NSW Cross-Border Commissioner

The NSW Cross-Border Commissioner was created by the NSW Government in 2012 to provide support for businesses, organisations and residents in border communities. The Commissioner is ideally placed to inform the work under the MoU and identify emerging cross-border issues within the ACT and South East NSW region.

Status of the Memorandum of Understanding

The ACT and NSW Governments acknowledge the MoU provisions are not legally enforceable but rely on the spirit of cooperation between the two jurisdictions.

This agreement is not intended to remove power from either government to make policy decisions.

Final policy decisions remain with each jurisdiction.

Review of this Memorandum of Understanding

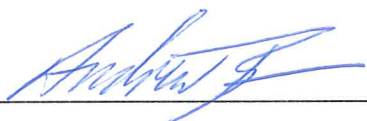
The MoU will be reviewed with a view to a formal update every three years. The MoU may be amended at any time by agreement in writing of the parties.

Dispute Resolution

Where any dispute arises under this MoU, the ACT and NSW Governments will take all necessary steps to resolve the dispute expeditiously by mutual agreement.

Commencement

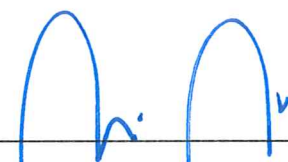
This MoU commences on the date of execution.

A blue ink signature of Andrew Barr, written in a cursive style, positioned above a horizontal line.

Andrew Barr MLA

ACT Chief Minister

Date: 9.12.2016

A blue ink signature of The Hon Mike Baird, written in a cursive style, positioned above a horizontal line.

The Hon Mike Baird MP

NSW Premier

Date: 09.11.2016