

Freedom of Information Request –

Documents – Schedule 1 – Sue Chapman

Folio no	Date	Document	Status	Reason for Exemption
1-6	01/12/2013	Email – WIRC and attachment- CSD 22	Full release	
7-9	02/12/2013	Email - Wirc 8 questions and attachment	Full release	
10	03/12/2013	Email - protest scheduled for Thursday	Full release	
11-14	04/12/2013	Email - RE: WiRC media release and Q&A and attachment - CSD WiRC update	Full release	
15-16	05/12/2013	Email - Media release and attachment - CSD Women's services	Full release	
17	10/12/2013	Email - RE: first go at WIRC msg	Full release	
18-19	10/12/2013	Email - RE: first go at WIRC msg	Not released	Copy: refer to Schedule 5, folio 223-224
20-21	12/12/2013	Email- WIRC Function and attachment - WIRC celebration invite	Full release	
22	13/12/2013	Email - WiRC – event	Full release	
23	13/12/2013	Email –All Staff email - Women's information	Full release	
24	16/12/2013	Email - FW: Update on women's information	Not released	Outside of scope

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Callen, Michelle

From: Matthews, David
Sent: Sunday, 1 December 2013 2:15 PM
To: Chapman, Sue
Subject: FW: WIRC
Attachments: CSD 22 - Improving Services for Women in the ACT.DOC

Sue,

An update - Nic has advised that they will have a draft paper of the new model for Monday. I have also talked with Kanchan about an overarching narrative for the changes (see attached).

At this stage I have a meeting with him and Bridie first up on Wednesday to finalise (bearing in mind I will be at the Blueprint event Monday and Tuesday). I can try to bring this forward if needed.

I was not planning on coming to Minister Burch meeting, but can attend if needed. Alternatively, I could ask Nic to attend.

Cheers
David Matthews

-----Original Message-----

From: Howson, Natalie
Sent: Friday, 29 November 2013 10:13 PM
To: Matthews, David; Chapman, Sue
Cc: Daw, Lesley
Subject: Re: WIRC

Pls discuss
Natalie Howson
Director General
Community Services Directorate
Ph:02 62055335

On 29/11/2013, at 6:07 PM, "Matthews, David" <David.Matthews@act.gov.au> wrote:

> I thought you might want to see Susan Helyar's correspondence - we are preparing a response.

>

> -----Original Message-----

> **From:** Susan Helyar [mailto:director@actcoss.org.au]
> **Sent:** Friday, 29 November 2013 10:31 AM
> **To:** Chapman, Sue; Doyle, Bridie
> **Subject:** WIRC

>

>

> Hi Sue here is the letter we will send to the Chief Minister and Minister for women
Cheers Susan

>

>

> WOMEN'S INFORMATION AND REFERRAL CENTRE (WIRC) LOCATION AND ROLE

>

> As the peak body of the community sector, we are writing to you in response to the recent ACT Government decisions regarding the Women's Information and Referral Centre

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(WIRC). This letter and the advocacy asks it contains represents the views of a number of organisations and individuals, including:

- >
- > • Beryl Women Inc.
- > • Canberra Rape Crisis Centre
- > • Domestic Violence Crisis Service
- > • Innana Inc.
- > • Toora Women Inc.
- > • Women's Centre for Health Matters
- > • Women's Legal Centre
- > • YWCA of Canberra
- > • Rianne Williams (representing current providers of WIRC programs) We see this as an opportunity to reorganise and reorient services to support vulnerable and disadvantaged women in the ACT, and we would like to work collaboratively and constructively with the government to achieve this.

>

> We believe there are three key issues to address.

>

> The most urgent issue to address is the location of WIRC post 13 December 2013, and securing a commitment to maintain existing funding levels for women-specific services.

>

> The second issue is a need to develop a service model for information, referral and response services that is appropriate and effective in meeting the needs of women in the ACT and addressing the causes of over-representation of women in disadvantaged and vulnerable groups.

>

> The third matter to deal with is the development of an overall vision and framework for provision of women-specific and trauma-informed services that makes best use of funds, expertise and community linkages available in the ACT.

>

> The advocacy ask below proposes a way forward on each of these issues:

>

> 1. The ACT needs a women's safe space located in the community that can be built into a women's centre that is a hub for women-specific, trauma-informed community development, information, and supported referral. This hub would operate using a service model that is strengths-based, community located and led, outreach focused and both leverages existing expertise and expands expertise and capacity in the ACT.

>

> 2. The ACT Government needs to commit to:

>

- > • Provide advice to the community on what problems they have identified with the current operation and model of WIRC, and the evidence and data that underpins the identification of this problem.

- > • Current staff and financial resources for WIRC remaining available to use now and in the future to meet ongoing and growing needs of women, who are over-represented in many domains of disadvantage and vulnerability.

- > • An independent cost-benefit analysis, using available research and evidence, of the service model of WIRC.

> 3. There is a phased approach to implementation of changes in WIRC:

>

> Phase one: Staff in WIRC are not moved to the North building in Civic, but instead to a community-based site where the staff can co-locate with another women's specific organisation.

>

> Phase two: A collaborative approach is used to develop the service model for a women's centre via dialogue between Community Services Directorate (including the Office for Women) and relevant organisations, concerned individuals and citizens associations. The development process should be informed by current evidence regarding the current and emerging needs of women, opportunities to interconnect with existing services, clarification of the gaps in existing provision and the evidence of good practice in addressing these gaps. The outcomes from this phase should be an overarching framework for

current and future provision of women specific services in the ACT and a service model for a women's centre.

>

> Phase three: Development of a plan and evaluation strategy for implementation of the agreed service model, and establishment of a joint community/government steering committee to oversee implementation and evaluation.

>

> Phase four: Development of a plan for full implementation of the framework for women-specific services in the ACT

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>

>

> --

> Susan Helyar

> Director | ACT Council of Social Service Inc. (ACTCOSS) Justice + Equity + Social Inclusion + Reconciliation

> Ph: 02 6202 7200 or 0448 791987 | director@actcoss.org.au PO Box 849, Mawson ACT 2607 | Weston Community Hub, 1/6 Gritten Street, Weston ACT 2611 www.actcoss.org.au | Office ph: 02 6202 7200 | Fax: 02 6281 4192

>

> The ACT Council of Social Service Inc. (ACTCOSS) is the peak representative body for people living with disadvantage and not-for-profit community organisations in the Australian Capital Territory.

>

> ACTCOSS is committed to reconciliation, acknowledges the traditional custodians of the land and pays respect to elders past and present.

Chief Ministers Talkback Brief

CSD 22: Improving Services for Women in the ACT

15 November 2013

Minister responsible:	Directorate:	Contact Officer:
Joy Burch	Community Services	Nic Manikis 62050522

KEY POINTS

- There is an emerging need to change the Womens Information and Referral Centre (WiRC) model that has been in place since the establishment of the Centre 35 years ago.
 - WiRC has served the community well but the way that women access services has changed and we need to reflect that.
 - It is important to note that no services will be stopped as a result of these changes. The aim is to make sure more women can access them by providing them in a greater range of locations.
 - Our research shows that by far the largest forms of engagement involving WiRC were by phone or email and this can be carried out from any location.
 - Throughout December 2013 and January 2014 some of the services housed in WiRC will move to the Theo Notaras Multicultural Centre in the North Building and to other locations in North and South Canberra. The Centre currently houses a number of community groups such as Multicultural Woman's Advocacy and will eventually also house the ACT Office for Women.
 - The changes will reduce duplication in services while providing better outreach so that women have better access to our programs and services.
 - We have been talking to the community sector about this change since it was announced and are continuing this dialogue.
-

Chief Ministers Talkback Brief

CSD 22: Improving Services for Women in the ACT

- These changes will also see savings in administrative costs and an opportunity to reinvest a portion of these savings into the community sector.
- The broader Office for Women will remain and continue to deliver strategic advice.
- The *What's on for Women* calendar is due to be published as normal early next year once input has been finalised.

Domestic Violence Support Group

- The Women's Information and Referral Centre conducts 'It's time to talk', a Domestic Violence Support Group. This group consists of an eight week psycho-educational program supporting women to move on from the cycle of violence, to increase their self-esteem and to be able to build respectful relationships in their future, thus aiming to prevent the inter-generational transmission of the cycle of family violence.
- WIRC has also worked in partnership with a number of organisations to deliver the group from other locations including Tuggeranong Child and Family Centre, Northside Community Service, Gunyah Women's Housing and Karralika
- This course will continue to be offered in a number of locations such as the Child and Family Centres and other organisations.

Court Ordered courses at WIRC

- While no formal information is held on the numbers of staff accessing services at the Centre under an ACT court mandate, we estimate that it is around five a year.
 - Our understanding is that courts may direct people to attend particular types of courses not necessarily specify a location or provider. I reiterate our commitment to keeping the range of courses available under the new model.
-

Chief Ministers Talkback Brief

CSD 22: Improving Services for Women in the ACT

- Similarly, the Care and Protection Service offers support and referral to community resources and this may include courses available through the Women's Information and Referral Centre.
- These courses will continue to be run in 2014 depending on demand.
- The courses will be advertised in the publication 'What's on in Canberra Jan-Jul 2014' - this will be available early in the New Year. We are still awaiting on input from some service providers for that calendar.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Women's Information and Referral Centre provides an information and referral service.

Current WIRC services include:

- online directory of women's services and a calendar of what's on for *Women in the ACT*. See Women ACT website at www.women.act.gov.au;
- The ACT Women's Return to Work Grants Program provides women returning to the paid workforce with financial assistance of up to \$1,000 personal and professional development courses, information sessions and support groups;
- Internet access and training through the Broadband for Seniors Program;
- partnerships to deliver support programs; and
- a lending library.

WIRC commenced delivering financial literacy training sessions targeting women on low to moderate incomes, over the age of 60 years; and living in crisis accommodation and government housing

In 2012–13, WIRC staff responded to 12,375 contacts, including 5,693 by telephone, 3,477 by fax, post or email, 1,698 drop-in visits, 380 instances of internet and library use, 398 face-to-face scheduled appointments, and 729 course, support group and/or information session attendees.

Callen, Michelle

From: Manikis, Nic
Sent: Monday, 2 December 2013 11:25 AM
To: Petrova, Biljana; Sermeno, Flor; Rope, Rosemary; Bascomb, Amy; Bejar, Chikee
Subject: wirc 8 questions
Attachments: wirc 8 questions.doc
Categories: Information

Team

As requested, please find attached the answers to the questions you posed in October 2013. Most of the questions have been answered in discussions at our various forums since October 2013.

I apologise for the delay in formally responding in writing.

I am happy to discuss any queries you may have.

Cheers

nic

Q&As on changes Women's information and Referral Centre (WiRC)

Why are you making these changes to WiRC?

The model for the WiRC has been in place since it was established 35 years ago.

In that time the programs that the WiRC offers have evolved with demand but the approach to engaging with women has remained largely the same.

Over recent times, the ACT Government has funded community organisations to provide essentially similar information services to women in the ACT.

The ACT Government remains firmly committed to the continuation of gender services and an enhanced level of access for women to all services to which they are entitled to. The proposal is to ensure that existing services and programs for women will remain but the location from which they are delivered and the organisation delivering the services may change.

It's about offering a more flexible approach in how we engage and support women.

How many staff are affected by these changes?

WiRC office has a headcount of 5 and fte totalling 3.45 positions. Staff affected by the change process will be consulted about the proposed change process and potentially excess staff will be redeployed throughout the Community Services Directorate.

Does this change come down to the need to save money rather than looking to enhance services?

The ACT Government has made clear that in the current financial environment there is a need to examine how we can stamp out duplication and deliver our services in a more efficient way while minimising the impact on service delivery.

The proposed process will enhance service delivery for women in the ACT by ensuring that information and referral services are available in locations that are easily accessible to them and will look at ways to further strengthen and promote existing services for women currently funded by the ACT Government and delivered by community organisations.

What are the savings you anticipate making through this process?

Staff consultations around the best way to integrate the information and referral services into the work of the Community Participation Group and to provide support for relevant community organisations located across Canberra to undertake information services may result in some potentially excess staff who will need to be redeployed across the Community Services Directorate.

How will you know whether your changes have improved services?

Our aim is to offer a range of options for women to access services across several locations in a way which they are most comfortable. The changes are designed to improve access to services and this could be measured by the extent to which women utilise services at the various locations across the city.

The annual survey previously administered by the Community Services Directorate to gauge satisfaction by clients of the previous WiRC information and referral services will continue to be administered.

Do these changes spell the end of WiRC?

These changes will mean the cessation of a centrally located WiRC as its own entity but will also mean a broader front of service delivery for women in the ACT supported by the Community Participation Group. The former WiRC services and programs will be continued and enhanced by increasing their reach into the community – they will be managed differently.

Why are you deciding to bring these changes in now?

The ACT Government has been engaged in a long-term process of reviewing the effectiveness and efficiency of the services it delivers. This has seen programs enhanced and improved so that they meet the needs of people today. The changes to WiRC are in line with this long-term process.

In recent weeks the Community Services Directorate has announced the closure of the Elouera respite centre and now the WiRC site, both without consultation. Is this the best way to carry out changes of this type?

These two issues should not be confused with each other. Having said that, the way we deliver our services has to be continually reviewed to ensure that it is meeting the needs of Canberrans.

Governments have to make decisions that may cause some concern in the short term but that in the longer term are done in the best interests of the community.

I reiterate that with WiRC, this process is not about cutting jobs nor services but about greater opportunities for more women in need to benefit from the services and programs that will be on offer from a wider range of locations.

Callen, Michelle

From: Manikis, Nic
Sent: Tuesday, 3 December 2013 11:37 AM
To: Chapman, Sue; Matthews, David
Subject: FW: protest scheduled for Thursday

Categories: Information

FYI....Apparently being organised in front of Legislative Assembly.

Cheers

nic

From: Wensing, Veronica
Sent: Tuesday, 3 December 2013 11:06 AM
To: Manikis, Nic
Subject: protest scheduled for Thursday

Hello Mick

I have just been informed by member of the public that there is a protest planned on Thursday about the W IRC closure. Not sure exactly what time.

I understand that women are being asked to bring along \$.20 cents that has been calculated to be the savings gained by the closure.

Veronica Wensing

Community Participation Group | Office for Women | Community Services Directorate | ACT Government
Phone 02 6205 9847 | Fax 02 6207 5682 | Email Veronica.wensing@act.gov.au
Level 2, Theo Notaris Building, 180 London Cct
GPO Box 158, Canberra ACT 2601 | www.act.gov.au

Please note

I work part time.



Callen, Michelle

From: Matthews, David
Sent: Wednesday, 4 December 2013 5:18 PM
To: Dutt, Kanchan; Chapman, Sue; Manikis, Nic; Doyle, Bridie; Callen, Michelle; Aguilera, Alicia
Subject: RE: WiRC media release and Q&A
Attachments: CSD WiRC update.doc
Categories: Information

I have a couple of suggestions on the release for you to consider.

Regards
David Matthews

From: Dutt, Kanchan
Sent: Wednesday, 4 December 2013 4:42 PM
To: Chapman, Sue; Matthews, David; Manikis, Nic; Doyle, Bridie; Callen, Michelle; Aguilera, Alicia
Subject: RE: WiRC media release and Q&A

Hello all,
Thanks for feedback, I have reworked the media release and Q&A. Appreciate it if you could take a look.
Hoping to get to Min's Office in the morning.
Cheers,
Kanchan

Kanchan Dutt | Senior Manager
T: 02 6205 0282 | M: 0478 301 615
Media and Communications | Community Services Directorate | ACT Government
Level 8, 11 Moore St, Canberra City | GPO Box Canberra 158 | www.communityservices.act.gov.au



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From: Chapman, Sue
Sent: Wednesday, 4 December 2013 12:34 PM
To: Dutt, Kanchan; Matthews, David; Manikis, Nic; Doyle, Bridie; Callen, Michelle; Aguilera, Alicia
Subject: RE: WiRC media release and Q&A

Kanchan
Can we include the WiRC info line details please.

From: Dutt, Kanchan
Sent: Wednesday, 4 December 2013 12:29 PM
To: Chapman, Sue; Matthews, David; Manikis, Nic; Doyle, Bridie; Callen, Michelle; Aguilera, Alicia
Subject: WiRC media release and Q&A

Hello all,
Please find attached a draft media release and Q&A on WiRC. With the media release, I've attempted to offer a definite picture of where the programs will be based. Appreciate it if we can add any more to this so that we can reduce any uncertainty.
Cheers,
Kanchan

Kanchan Dutt | Senior Manager

T: 02 6205 0282 | M: 0478 301 615

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Media Release

5 December 2013

New model for women's information to provide better support

Deleted: services

The relocation of the ACT Government's women's information and referral services is nearing completion, Deputy Director-General of the Community Services Directorate Sue Chapman said today.

Ms Chapman said the information and referral services previously based at the Women's Information and Referral Centre (WiRC) will now be based at the nearby Theo Notaras Multicultural Centre.

"The information and referral services were the core business of WiRC and these will continue as before, with the same phone number of 02 6205 1075," Ms Chapman said.

"Women are also able to access a full range of government and community organisations providing information and support services"

The ACT Government announced last month that the services provided through WiRC would be relocated as part of a longer term review of how to most effectively provide support and information to women.

"Our data shows that some of the key groups of women we want to focus on were not accessing the various programs as much as we would want," Ms Chapman said. "These include women with disabilities, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Women, younger women and older women.

"Our aim is to better engage with these women by providing access to these services in a greater number of locations throughout Canberra."

Deleted: with this review

Ms Chapman said the new approach to delivering the information and referral services was based on an identified need to improve women's access to them and reduce duplication.

The full range of courses and programs for women will be included in the *What's on for Women* calendar due out early next year as usual.

Statement ends

Media contact Kanchan Dutt: 6205 0282 / 0478 301 615 / kanchan.dutt@act.gov.au

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Callen, Michelle

From: Dutt, Kanchan
Sent: Thursday, 5 December 2013 11:32 AM
To: Dutt, Kanchan
Subject: Media release: New model for women's information to provide better support
Attachments: CSD women's services.pdf

Summary: The relocation of the ACT Government's women's information and referral services is nearing completion, Deputy Director-General of the Community Services Directorate Sue Chapman said today.

Kanchan Dutt | Senior Manager

T: 02 6205 0282 | M: 0478 301 615

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Media Release

5 December 2013

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The full range of courses and programs for women will be included in the *What's on for Women* calendar due out early next year as usual.

Statement ends

Media contact Kanchan Dutt: 6205 0282 / 0478 301 615 / kanchan.dutt@act.gov.au

Callen, Michelle

From: Dutt, Kanchan
Sent: Tuesday, 10 December 2013 10:18 AM
To: Aguilera, Alicia; Callen, Michelle; Chapman, Sue; Doyle, Bridie; Manikis, Nic; Matthews, David
Subject: RE: first go at WiRC msg
Importance: High

Hello all,

We have revised the WiRC message based on feedback received, please see below.

The Minister's Office has asked for some suggestions on what we propose to call the new service. I mentioned that one option was calling it *Women's Information and Referral Services*.

Would another option be the *Women's Gateway*? Or *Women's Information and Referral Hub*

Appreciate any other suggestions and if we can get some options to Min's Office by CoB today that'd be great.

Colleagues

As you are aware today is the last operating day of the Women's Information and Referral Centre (WiRC) on London Circuit. From next week some information and referral services previously based at WiRC will be relocated to the Theo Notaras Multicultural Centre. This is part of a longer term look at how we can better provide services throughout Canberra so that they are better used by women.

I would like to acknowledge all the achievements of WiRC since the centre was established 35 years ago. The information and referral services run out of the centre have served the community extremely well over the years, but the time has come to review how to better provide support and information to women.

I would also like to take this opportunity to sincerely thank the staff at WiRC, who have made a difference everyday to their clients. Your commitment and dedication is to be commended.

Throughout the remainder of this month and January staff will be relocating to their new positions while the services will be moved the Theo Notaras Multicultural Centre. The *What's on for Women* calendar is due to be out in January 2014 as normal.

ENDS

Cheers,
Kanchan

Kanchan Dutt | Senior Manager

T: 02 6205 0282 | M: 0478 301 615

Media and Communications | Community Services Directorate | **ACT Government**

Level 8, 11 Moore St, Canberra City | GPO Box Canberra 158 | www.communityservices.act.gov.au



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Community Services Directorate

Callen, Michelle

Subject: WIRC Function
Location: Function Room, Theo Notaras Multicultural Centre

Start: Thu 12/12/2013 3:30 PM
End: Thu 12/12/2013 5:00 PM
Show Time As: Tentative

Recurrence: (none)

Meeting Status: Not yet responded

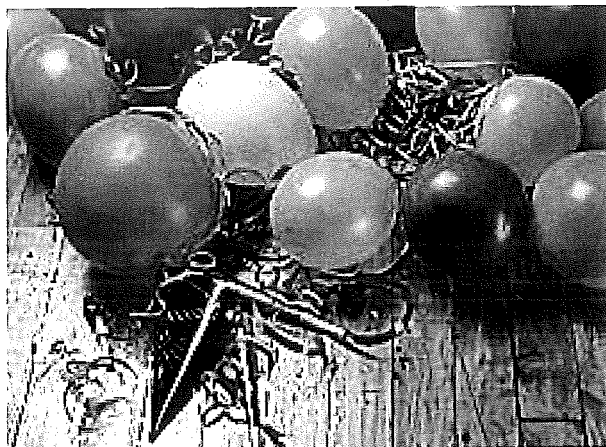
Organizer: Petrova, Biljana
Required Attendees: Howson, Natalie; Chapman, Sue; Hosie, Donna; Callen, Michelle; Manikis, Nic



WIRC Celebration
invite.docx

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Women's Information & Referral Centre
(WIRC)
Invites you to their Celebration



Dear Friends and Associates of the Women's
Information and Referral Centre,

We would like to cordially invite you for an afternoon
tea to celebrate the WIRC and share our stories
of collaboration and achievement.

When: Thursday 12 December 2013

Where: Theo Notaras Multicultural Centre, Function Room
Level 2, North Building, 180 London Circuit
Canberra City

Time: 3.30pm – 5.30pm

RSVP: by Monday 9 Dec to 6205 1075/6
or Email: wirc@act.gov.au

Callen, Michelle

From: Callen, Michelle
Sent: Friday, 13 December 2013 12:56 PM
To: Chapman, Sue
Subject: WiRC - event

Categories: Information

Hello Sue

A quick note to let you know how the WiRC event went yesterday. It was a small gathering of staff, former clients and associates of the centre. The focus of the event was to acknowledge the staff and its associates with a general atmosphere of sadness although no anger in the room. There were a number of montages prepared by WiRC staff and a course supervisor and MC for the event asked the audience to contribute to a women's history of the service by lining up and sharing your association with the service. I did not stay to the end. There was an article in today's Canberra Times about the close of the office site.

Regards Michelle

Michelle Callen | Executive Officer to the Deputy Director-General |
Phone: 02 6205 3568 | Fax: 02 6207 1552
Community Services Directorate | ACT Government
Level 8 11 Moore St Canberra City | GPO Box 158 Canberra ACT 2601 | www.act.gov.au

Callen, Michelle

From: Chapman, Sue
Sent: Friday, 13 December 2013 5:07 PM
To: ##All Staff Community Services Directorate
Subject: Women's information

Colleagues

As you are aware today is the last operating day of the Women's Information and Referral Centre (WiRC) on London Circuit. From next week information and referral services previously based at WiRC will be relocated to the Theo Notaras Multicultural Centre. This is part of a process of change to ensure we provide services throughout Canberra so that they are better accessed by vulnerable women.

I would like to acknowledge all the achievements of WiRC since the centre was established 35 years ago. The information and referral services run out of the centre have served the community extremely well over the years, but the time has come to refocus the support and information provided to women most in need.

I would also like to thank the staff at WiRC for their commitment and dedication to the Canberra community. I know they will continue in this way in their new roles.

Sue Chapman
Deputy Director General