

- The ACT pays annual membership fees as an associate member of the CRJO. In the 2020-21 financial year, the ACT's fee was \$49,427.40 including GST.
- Following the NSW Local Government elections in 2021 and a number of new Mayors commencing in the Canberra Region, there is an opportunity for the ACT and CRJO to review and renew our MoU. CMTEDD will lead this work in the ACT Government.

#### **Key Information**

- The membership of the CRJO comprises the local governments across South East NSW including: Queanbeyan-Palerang; Yass Valley; Goulburn-Mulwaree; Wingecarribee; Upper Lachlan; Hilltops; Snowy-Monaro; Snowy Valleys; Eurobodalla and Bega Valley.
  - The ACT Government, Wagga Wagga City and East Gippsland (Victoria) are associate non voting CRJO members.

## ISSUE: ACT-NSW MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING ON REGIONAL COLLABORATION

### Talking points:

- Our engagement with NSW and the local government areas surrounding the ACT continues to strengthen and mature through a range of mechanisms and forums.
- The ACT-NSW Memorandum of Understanding on Regional Collaboration (MoU) is the primary framework for that engagement. The provisions set out in the MoU are not legally enforceable and rely on the spirit of cooperation between the two jurisdictions.
- The MoU was first signed in 2011. The two jurisdictions continued the commitment to collaboration for our region with a new MoU in 2020 with refreshed priority action areas.
- The list of priority action areas include:
  - Regional Approach to Health Outcomes
  - Regional Approach to Infrastructure and Transport
  - Regional Approach to Strategic Water and Land Use Planning
  - Regional Approach to the Environment
  - Canberra Regional Economic Development Strategy (CREDS)
  - Parkwood Urban Release Area Governance Framework
- Work has progressed to establish several working groups as detailed under the workplan including the Land and Housing Monitor Working Group and the Steering Committee for the Parkwood Urban Release Area Governance Framework.
- The Parkwood Urban Release Area Governance Framework was established as a component under the MoU to guide ongoing cooperation and negotiation between Yass Valley Council, NSW and ACT Governments. This framework supports governance arrangements and the provision of government services and infrastructure for the Parkwood development in NSW.
- The Canberra Regional Economic Development Strategy has entered the final design stage.

### Key Information

- Since its introduction in 2011, the MoU has advanced the relationship between the ACT and NSW by facilitating a consultative approach between the two jurisdictions on collaborative initiatives, particularly in the areas of economic development and regional planning.
- The refreshed MoU builds on existing cross-agency MoUs, operational arrangements and service-level agreements, which deliver coordinated NSW and ACT Government services across the border for policing, emergency services and human services.
- The most significant adjustment to the MoU is the replacement of the annual work list with annually-reported Priority Focus Area Plans to guide weight of effort.

### **Background Information**

- The ACT's MoU governance, including the development, implementation and progress of the MoU's priorities and initiatives, is overseen by CMTEDD – Economic and Regional Policy – working across government and reporting to the Chief Minister. In NSW, oversight of the MoU is provided by the NSW Cross-Border Commissioner.

## ISSUE: CANBERRA CITY AND REGION DEAL

### Talking points:

- The ACT Government remains keen to discuss with the Commonwealth a potential City Deal for Canberra. A Canberra City and Region Deal could bring together the NSW, ACT and Commonwealth Governments to invest in the Canberra Region.
- A City Deal would seek to establish a collaborative framework to grapple with issues and opportunities to support the National Capital and strengthen the region.

### Key Information

- The ACT wrote to former Prime Minister Turnbull in 2016 with a proposed City Deal Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) and a high-level list of potential inclusions. The ACT has raised the prospect of a Canberra or Canberra and Region City Deal a number of times in the intervening years at both official and Ministerial levels.
- To date the Commonwealth has not agreed to work with the ACT on a City Deal.

### Background Information

- The Australian Government established a program of city deals in 2016. The city deal is described as a mechanism to support partnership between federal, state and local governments to guide planning, investment and governance in Australia's cities.
- To date eight city deals have been agreed: Townsville; Launceston; Western Sydney; Darwin; Hobart; Geelong; Adelaide; and Perth. A city deal has also been announced for South East Queensland.
- The Australian Government has also agreed three "regional deals": Barkly; Hinkler and Albury Wodonga.

**ISSUE: ACT-QUEANBEYAN PALERANG REGIONAL COUNCIL LETTER OF INTENT**

- On 19 August 2016, the Chief Minister and QPRC Mayor Tim Overall signed the ACT-QPRC Letter of Intent which seeks to formalise the working relationship between the ACT Government and QPRC.
- The principles for engagement under the Letter of Intent include optimising best of region outcomes; pursuing a borderless approach to key infrastructure; and sharing information and data to inform planning and policy development and initiatives.
- QPRC and the new Mayor of QPRC endorsed in February 2022 new priorities for incorporation into a renewed ACT-QPRC agreement. These QPRC priorities will be provided shortly to the ACT for consideration.
  - CMTEDD will lead this consideration in the ACT Government.

**Key Information**

- Priority areas of engagement under the Letter of Intent include:
  - improving road and active transport connectivity;
  - collaborating on policy and planning opportunities to consider management of water, sewage, waste and renewable energy on a regional scale;
  - planning and collaborating on major contiguous developments;
  - understanding the infrastructure requirements to support population growth; and
  - coordinating efforts to support major events across the ACT and QPRC.

## ISSUE: JERVIS BAY TERRITORY

### Talking points:

- Under Commonwealth law, ACT legislation is applied in Jervis Bay Territory (JBT).
- The ACT Government is engaged by the Australian Government to provide a range of state-type services in the JBT.

### Review of the JBT Memorandum of Understanding

- The 2012 Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) between the ACT Government and Australian Government for the provision of state-type services to the JBT is currently being reviewed, with the objective of developing a new agreement.
- The ACT Government is working closely with the Australian Government to better understand service priorities and identify opportunities to improve service outcomes.
- The ACT is of the view that it not best placed to deliver services in JBT, and that better outcomes for the community would be achieved if the services were delivered by the NSW Government.
- However, for as long as the ACT continues to provide services, the ACT Government is committed to work with the Commonwealth to achieve the best possible outcomes for the JBT community.
- JBT services are delivered under an “at no cost to the ACT” principle. The total value of funding provided by the Australian Government to the ACT Government for services in Jervis Bay Territory for the 2020-21 financial year was \$4,322,513 (as at the JBT Budget Reconciliation in May 2021).
  - The above figures for 2020-21 may change once the 2020-21 JBT Budget Acquittal process is completed and all final Directorate costs are accounted for 2020-21.

### JBT & COVID-19

- The response to COVID-19 in the JBT remains the overall responsibility of the Commonwealth, delivered through the:
  - Assistant Minister for Territories, the Hon Nola Marino MP;
  - Department of Infrastructure, Transport, Regional Development and Communications (DITRDC);

- JBT Emergency Management Committee and JBT Local Emergency Operations Controller; and
- JBT Branch of the Australian Federal Police.
- For the purposes of responding to COVID-19, the Commonwealth has, under its own powers in JBT, declared a State of Emergency in the JBT and applied its own public health directions and orders under the *Public Health Act 1997* (ACT) to the JBT.
  - The Commonwealth has also applied (as Commonwealth law) the ACT's definitions of COVID-19 'affected area', 'hotspot', and 'affected persons' to the JBT, with the exclusion of the ACT's declaration of Shoalhaven LGA as a COVID-19 affected area as announced on 5 August 2021.
  - The Commonwealth (DITRDC) is also managing its own JBT border permit/exemption system.
- The ACT Government does not provide the services (or powers) of the ACT Chief Health Officer (CHO) or the CHO's Office to the JBT in relation to COVID-19.
  - The ACT CHO is currently heading the ACT response to COVID-19 and does not have capacity to provide COVID-19 related public health services to the JBT. Additionally, this is not an existing agreed ACT JBT service or a proposed future service.
- However, the ACT Government does provide a limited range of agreed remote Communicable Disease Control support services to the JBT, including for COVID-19:
  - phone contact tracing and phone support for people in notifiable disease quarantine or isolation where requested by either NSW Health or the Commonwealth;
  - access to general (ACT-specific) public health advice;
  - access to the COVID-19 hotline (where enquiries are relevant to ACT COVID-19 requirements or the existing ACT JBT service scope);
  - connection to NSW Health primary/emergency/clinical health services.

- The ACT Government continues to review how services will be delivered in a COVID-19 context, including associated impacts on service delivery as a result of the pandemic.
- Where possible and appropriate, JBT services have been postponed or amended during 2020 and 2021 in response to COVID-19, and future changes to the ACT's JBT service profile will continue to be considered by Directorates as required.
  - To date, essential services continue to be delivered to the JBT, e.g., WorkSafe ACT, Corrective Services, Care & Protection, etc.
  - Where possible and appropriate, JBT services will be delivered remotely, or with assistance from NSW or the AFP (subject to the respective agencies' agreement), to reduce the need for ACT Government officials to travel to the JBT.
    - Where it is not possible or appropriate to postpone or deliver services remotely, and should assistance from NSW and/or the AFP be unavailable, ACT officials continue to travel to JBT on a voluntary basis.
    - Some services, such as Corrections and Courts, may also require persons from the JBT to travel to the ACT.
  - Where services are postponed, Directorates continue to consider any risks to the JBT community associated with such delays.
- In the event that the ACT Government is unable or unwilling to continue service delivery to the JBT, it remains the responsibility of the Commonwealth to ensure alternative service delivery options are made available.

### Key Information

- ACT Government services in Jervis Bay Territory fall into the following categories:
  - Primary Education (Jervis Bay Primary School);
  - Home Education Services;
  - Early Childhood Regulation Services;
  - Courts Services;
  - Coronial/Forensic Services;
  - Remote Alternative Dispute Resolution Services;
  - Corrections Services (including Court transport);
  - Care and Protection Services;
  - Central Policy & Coordination Services;
  - Health Protection Services (water testing, food premises inspection, and limited remote Communicable Disease Control services);

- Environmental Monitoring (water testing);
  - Access Canberra Services (licencing and vehicle registration, government services and compliance activities);
  - WorkSafe ACT Services; and
  - Limited ACT COVID-19 Hotline support.
- In addition, the ACT Government agreed to accept and process applications from JBT residents to the Commonwealth's HomeBuilder program, with associated costs to be funded by DITRDC.

**ISSUE: National Cabinet, NFRC, CAF and CCCLM****Talking points:*****National Cabinet***

- The National Cabinet was established on 13 March 2020 to provide a nationally coordinated response to the COVID-19 pandemic. The National Cabinet comprises the Prime Minister and state and territory Premiers and Chief Ministers.
- The National Cabinet meets regularly to collaborate on issues of national significance, however to date its primary focus has been Australia's ongoing response to the COVID-19 pandemic and economic recovery from COVID-19.
- Since its first meeting on 15 March 2020, National Cabinet has met 66 times, most recently on 10 February 2022. At its peak, National Cabinet met three times a week.
  - In the 2020-21 reporting period, National Cabinet met 21 times.
- During the ongoing COVID-19 response, the National Cabinet considered a number of standing agenda items including the COVID-19 vaccine rollout, coronavirus epidemiology and Health System Capacity.
- Notable matters considered by the National Cabinet have included:
  - National Plan to transition Australia's National COVID-19 Response including the reopening of international borders;
  - Public Health and Social Measures (PHSM) and Approaches to Test, Trace, Isolate and Quarantine (TTIQ); and
  - COVID-19 vaccination and booster programs including targeted vaccination programs for vulnerable communities, vaccine mandates for high risk sectors, and vaccination passports.
- The National Cabinet receives regular briefings from a range of experts and expert advisory bodies including the:

- Australian Chief Medical Officer and Chair of the Australian Health Protection Principals Committee;
- Secretary to the Australian Treasury;
- Head of the National COVID-19 Vaccine Taskforce;
- COVID-19 Risk Analysis and Response Taskforce;
- Australian Technical Advisory Group on Immunisation (ATAGI);  
and
- Therapeutic Goods Administration (TGA).

#### National Cabinet Reform Committees

- The following National Cabinet Reform Committees (NCRCs) have been established to progress work in priority areas: Rural and Regional; Skills; Energy; Infrastructure and Transport; and Health.
- Representation on NCRCs includes relevant portfolio Ministers from each jurisdiction. The NCRC is chaired by the relevant Commonwealth portfolio Minister.

#### First Secretaries Group (FSG) and First Deputies Group (FDG)

- The First Secretaries Group (FSG) and First Deputies Group (FDG) facilitate engagement between the Commonwealth and state and territory government senior officials and deputy officials and consider policy issues discussed by First Ministers at National Cabinet.
- FSG is often tasked by the National Cabinet to progress policy issues related to the COVID-19 response and in 2020-21 this included directing and considering COVID-19 modelling undertaken by the Peter Doherty Institute for Infection and Immunity.

#### ***National Federation Reform Council (NFRC)***

- The National Federation Reform Council (NFRC) was established on 29 May 2020 by National Cabinet. It comprises the Prime Minister, First Ministers and Treasurers of all Australian jurisdictions and the President of the Australian Local Government Association (ALGA).

- The ACT Chief Minister as both First Minister and Treasurer, represents the ACT at the NFRC.
- The NFRC considers issues of national importance not otherwise considered by the National Cabinet and the response to COVID-19.
- The NFRC meets annually and has met twice since its establishment, on 11 December 2020 and 10 December 2021.
- At its most recent meeting on 10 December 2021, the NFRC received briefings and considered a range of issues including:
  - economic and market outlook, productivity enhancing reforms, COVID-19 economic recovery and growth; local government presentation by Councillor Linda Scott, President, Australian Local Government Association; the National Mental Health and Suicide Prevention Agreement and emergency management and the Royal Commission into National Natural Disaster Arrangements.
- The NFRC also considered issues in Indigenous Affairs; Women's Safety; and Veterans' Wellbeing.

#### ***Council of Australian Federation (CAF)***

- The Council for the Australian Federation (CAF) was formed in October 2006 to support and enhance Australia's federal system by providing an intergovernmental forum for State and Territory leaders in Australia.
- Membership comprises all state and territory First Ministers and chairing CAF rotates annually between jurisdictions, with Queensland chairing CAF in 2021. CAF also meets at First Secretaries and First Deputies levels.
- In 2020-21 CAF First Ministers met once prior to the annual NFRC meeting. CAF FSG and CAF FDG have met more frequently throughout this period to discuss positions on policy matters including cross border arrangements and international travel.

### ***Council of Capital City Lord Mayors (CCCLM)***

- Membership of the Council of Capital City Lord Mayors (CCCLM) provides an opportunity for the ACT Government to engage with capital cities, to exchange information on shared issues and to provide a platform to advocate on the importance of Australia's capital cities.
- The CCCLM meets several times per year to support cross-city network building and information sharing at both the Mayoral (and Chief Minister) and senior officer levels.
- The 2020-21 CCCLM membership fee for the ACT Government was \$29,362.50.
- Prior to the impacts of COVID-19, the ACT's annual membership fee was \$52,200. The fee was lowered in recent years as there was a reduction in expected CCCLM activities due to COVID-19.
- The CCCLM also supports aligned engagement with the Australian Government to promote the importance of cities to Australia's prosperity.
  - The CCCLM provides an effective forum within which to call for strong federal cities policy to meet the needs of Australia's urbanised population.
- In addition to regular engagement through CCCLM Lord Mayors' and CEOs' meetings and Working Groups, key CCCLM activities and achievements in 2020-21 include (but are not limited to):
  - The CCCLM Chair for 2021, the Lord Mayor of Brisbane, Cr Adrian Schinner, met with National Cabinet on behalf of the CCCLM to raise the challenges being experienced by cities during the COVID-19 pandemic, and opportunities for the Commonwealth, States and Territories to support cities' recovery.
  - Providing a CCCLM Submission to the Australian Government's consultation process for the 2021-22 federal budget seeking Commonwealth investment and/or support in the areas of pandemic assistance and recovery, city infrastructure, climate action and resilience, homelessness and housing, and support for culture and the arts sectors.

- Providing a CCCLM Submission to the House of Representative Standing Committee on Social Policy and Legal Affairs inquiry into homelessness in Australia, and participation in a subsequent public hearing.
- Releasing the 'Measuring Australia's Night Time Economy Report' for 2019-20.
- Providing a CCCLM Submission to the Commonwealth Future Fuels Strategy Discussion Paper.
- CCCLM priority areas for 2021-2024 are:
  - Economic Development;
  - Infrastructure;
  - Homelessness and Housing;
  - Climate Action;
  - City Safety; and
  - Culture and the Arts.

### **Additional Information:**

#### ***Legislation to amend outdated references to COAG Ministerial Councils and Forums***

- On 23 October 2020, National Cabinet agreed the recommendations put forward by the Review of Former COAG Ministerial Councils and Forums.
- Recommendation 30 which directed the Commonwealth, states and territories to introduce legislation into Parliament to amend outdated references to COAG Councils has not yet been implemented.
- Progress has been delayed on this item due to additional provisions the Commonwealth has initiated to maintain confidentiality of National Cabinet papers and discussion.
  - On 17 September 2021, National Cabinet released a joint statement affirming the importance of confidentiality to relationships between the Commonwealth and the States and Territories.

- The Commonwealth introduced the *COAG Legislation Amendment Bill 2021* (the Bill) into Parliament on 2 September 2021. The Bill has not been considered further at this time.
  - The ACT Government also introduced a *COAG Legislation Amendment Bill 2021* (ACT Bill) to the Legislative Assembly on 4 August 2021. It is not currently scheduled for debate.

**ISSUE: (Non-health) Support to the COVID-19 Response in the ACT****Talking points:**

- The Office for the Coordinator General, Whole of Government COVID-19 (non-health) Response was established in March 2020.
- A newly appointed Coordinator-General was engaged in the role in early 2021.
- The Office of the Coordinator-General, Whole of Government (Non-Health) COVID-19 Response sits within Policy and Cabinet Division and currently incorporates the ACT Government first minister's directorate Commonwealth-State relations function, including supporting the ACT's engagement with National Cabinet and the National Coordination Mechanism of National Cabinet.
  - In 2020/2021 Policy and Cabinet supported the Chief Ministers attendance at 21 National Cabinet meetings and one National Federation Reform Council.
  - National Cabinet has met a total of 66 times since it began in March 2020
- The role of the Coordinator-General draws together the efforts of all ACT Government directorates and agencies, ensuring sound governance, decision-making and other planning work and associated processes are coordinated and working efficiently in response to COVID-19.
- The Coordinator-General works closely with the Chief Health Officer to ensure the health and non-health responses are well aligned and the Chief Health Officer's needs across government are supported.
- The Office of the Coordinator-General also ensures there is clarity across the ACT government on the structures and legal authority underpinning our COVID-19 response.
- In 2020-2021 the Coordinator-General worked closely with all directorates and agencies, including:

- Planning, through the Strategic Board and Coordinator-Generals' Group, for different scenarios that could unfold in response to COVID-19, allowing consideration of the business continuity, health, economic and social implications of different approaches.
  - Since the establishment of the Coordinator General role and the Office of the Coordinator General, the Coordinator Generals Group has met over 168 times, most recently on **18 February 2022**.
  - The Coordinator-Generals' Group continues to meet to facilitate discussion, consultation and collaboration on current and emerging people practices, direction, opportunities and challenges.
- Driving whole of government response and recovery matters such as quarantine arrangements for returning Australians and working closely with other directorates, the Commonwealth and the accommodation sector on quarantine arrangements for the ACT during the 2020/2021 outbreak of COVID-19.

#### COVID-19 legislative measures:

- In April 2020, the *COVID-19 Emergency Response Act 2020* made necessary changes to ACT legislation to ensure continuity of the essential operations of ACT Government and effective service provision.
  - As of 21 October 2021, this Act has been amended to expire at the end of a 12-month period during which no COVID-19 declaration has been in force.
- Other measures temporarily introduced include;
  - *COVID-19 Emergency Response Legislation Amendment Act 2020*,
  - *COVID-19 Emergency Response Legislation Amendment Act 2020 (No 2)*, and

- *COVID-19 Emergency Response Legislation Amendment Act 2021*, to support the ACT Government's emergency and operational response to the COVID-19 public health emergency.
- The *Emergency Response Legislation Amendment Bill 2020 (No 3)* foreshadowed that a future omnibus Bill would be progressed to permanently adopt COVID-19 measures that have continuing benefit, particularly through significant reductions in red tape and affecting operational efficiencies.
  - A Red Tape Reduction and Operational Efficiencies (COVID-19 Legacy) Legislation Amendment Bill is under development for this purpose.
- In response to the lockdown of August 2021, the ACT Government re-instated a temporary measure to protect commercial tenants who were struggling to pay their rent due to the pandemic. **These commercial tenancy support measures concluded as planned on 31 December 2021.**

## Issue: Wellbeing

### Talking Points

- 2020-21 saw significant progress made to embed the ACT Wellbeing Framework across government, including through Budget and Cabinet processes.
  - Over 200 Wellbeing Impact Assessments (WIAs) were prepared across the ACTPS for the 2021-22 Budget process, supporting a wellbeing focus in the 2021-22 Budget.
  - Wellbeing discussion groups, which included representatives from across all directorates, reviewed the WIAs and provided advice to Expenditure Review Committee through Treasury briefs.
- From 1 January 2022, WIAs became mandatory for Cabinet Submissions, replacing the Triple Bottom Line assessment, and contributing to discussion and decision-making based on a fuller understanding of how proposals will impact the wellbeing of our community.
  - Between November 2021 and February 2022, over 1000 ACTPS staff attended WIA information sessions to support and establish the use of the tool across the service.
- In 2020-21 we also prepared the first Wellbeing Data Dashboard, providing an overview of Canberra's performance across measures under the 12 wellbeing domains.
  - The dashboard includes data and information on 90 measures across the 12 domains and 56 indicators that make up the ACT Wellbeing Framework.
  - The dashboard will assist in measuring our progress over time and help to inform the programs and services the ACT Government delivers.
- Looking forward, we are building a new dashboard to better inform the community on the wellbeing of Canberra's children and young people.
  - This dashboard is based on the domains and foundations of the ACT Wellbeing Framework.
  - It brings together local and national data to support all of our community, including government and community partners, to consider how and where they can best contribute to improving the lives of our children and young people in Canberra.

### Key Information

- In March 2020, the Government released the ACT Wellbeing Framework including 12 domains and 56 indicators. In April 2021, the Government released the Wellbeing Data Dashboard which includes data against 90 of the 100 indicators in the Framework. Some measures are still under development and the dashboard will be updated over time – with the expectation of a first update later this year.
- The 10th Parliamentary and Governing Agreement (PAGA) includes a wellbeing commitment:
  - “Ensuring a holistic approach to government budgets, decision-making and reporting, including consistent, meaningful and measurable strategic and accountability indicators based on wellbeing.”
- The 2021-22 ACT Budget was the first where Wellbeing principles have been embedded in Budget proposals and decision-making.
- Following changes to the *Freedom of Information Act 2016* in December 2021, wellbeing impact assessments (WIAs) became mandatory for Cabinet Submissions from 1 January 2022.
- We recognise that embedding a wellbeing approach in the way we consider issues will take time – to better evaluate wellbeing outcomes, build a strong evidence base of what works for wellbeing, shape our investments around priority areas of need identified in conjunction with the community, and create a shared language across government and stakeholders in how we approach and collaborate on these issues.
- Part of the PAGA commitment involves a review of our strategic and accountability indicators. This work will progress through 2022.

#### *Budget*

- For the 2021-22 Budget, the ACT government required a WIA for budget proposals to help decision-makers understand the impact of each proposal on the wellbeing of our community, including who would be impacted and which of the domains under the Wellbeing Framework the impacts most closely related to.
- WIAs provided a tool for drafting officers and managers to develop proposals that included detailed information on wellbeing impacts, and a tool for ERC to provide advice on how proposals would impact wellbeing, including on groups within the community at risk of experiencing lower than average wellbeing.

#### *Data Dashboard and reporting*

- Development of the dashboard released on 1 April 2021 was an extensive whole-of-government process.
- The Framework commits to comprehensive data reporting every two years, with updates in relation to government and community action to support wellbeing being reported periodically in the intervening years.

#### *COVID-19 Reporting*

- The Wellbeing Framework was designed to capture the longer-term changes in wellbeing outcomes.

- Whilst the dashboard has a number of University of Canberra *Living Well* survey measures in it (and so picks up sentiment during COVID-19 intense periods including last year) the Dashboard itself is not designed as a COVID-19 report.

#### *Wellbeing of specific groups in the community*

- As well as providing high-level aggregate data on wellbeing for the community, the Framework commits to, over time and where possible, breakdown of the aggregate indicator and measure information and data by various specific groups to examine the variability of wellbeing outcomes across the community.
- These groups are:
  - Older Canberrans;
  - Children and young people;
  - Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people;
  - Culturally and linguistically diverse people;
  - Gender;
  - LGBTIQ+;
  - People with a disability; and
  - Carers
- The wellbeing team in PCD, the ACT Data Analytics Centre and the Community Services Directorate have commenced work around children and young people and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander wellbeing.

#### *Governance*

- A cross directorate group (the *Wellbeing Policy and Implementation Group* – WPIG) is working with the wellbeing project team in Policy and Cabinet CMTEDD to embed the Framework within government decision-making.
- Strategic Board is overseeing this work during this the current term of the Assembly.

**ISSUE: CHILD SAFE STANDARDS & REPORTABLE CONDUCT****ISSUE: CHILD SAFE STANDARDS****Talking points:**

- The ACT Government has agreed in principle to Royal Commission recommendations to introduce a Child Safe Standards scheme and appoint independent oversight.
- Under a Child Safe Standards scheme, organisations working with children and young people would be required to use the Standards to make continuous improvements to child safety.
- Child Safe Standards provide practical guidance to organisations on how to create a culture of safety which protects and empowers children and young people (e.g. improving governance systems, including young people in decisions that affect them, and using child focused processes in responding to complaints).
- Initial community consultation on the design of the ACT Child Safe Standards Scheme was held between November 2019 and February 2020. The consultation highlighted community support for Child Safe Standards, with many organisations providing services to children already striving to deliver safe environments and improve practices.
- Organisations also raised the need for educational materials, supports and time to transition to a new scheme, noting child safety has a complex regulatory environment already.
- Based on what was heard, the Government decided the ACT's Child Safe Standards Scheme will:
  - use principle-based standards;
  - be focused on long-term capacity building and education, rather than prescriptive rules and penalties;
  - be risk-based, recognising that each organisation and sector will be different; and
  - be managed by the Human Rights Commission.

### Key Information

- This work has been impacted by the ongoing public health emergency, starting in March 2020 while efforts were focussed on responding to the emerging pandemic.
- Work has re-commenced on drafting legislation to introduce a Child Safe Standards Scheme in the ACT, but timing will be dependent on the ability to engage with stakeholders on the design of the scheme.
- The work was previously being progressed under the Chief Minister, Attorney-General and Minister for Justice, Consumer Affairs and Road Safety. Under the new Administrative Arrangements of the 10<sup>th</sup> Assembly, the work is overseen by the Minister for Families and Community Services and the Minister for Human Rights.

*Why are Child Safe Standards needed on top of Working with Vulnerable People Checks and the Reportable Conduct Scheme?*

- WWVP and RCS require people to report known incidents of abuse, and prevent known perpetrators from working with children. In contrast, CSS places the emphasis on creating child safe environments that prevent abuse from occurring in the first place.

*What will the impact on organisations be?*

- The scheme will be designed to promote child safety while minimising the burden on organisations.
- There is no ‘one size fits all’ approach to implementing the Standards. Organisations will have flexibility to comply in ways that make sense in their context (considering their size, the nature of their interactions with children, and the administrative resources available to them).
- The Standards encourage continuous improvement over time, not immediate leaps in progress.
- Organisations will not be expected to build things from scratch. ACT and federal oversight bodies (e.g., Australian Human Rights Commission) will provide guidance material, tools and resources, training sessions, telephone and email support.
- While compliance may require work for some organisations, the Standards also present opportunities for small organisations:
  - Investment in prevention is cost effective, as it mitigates exposure to the costs of investigations following incidents.
  - Businesses that comply with the Standards are becoming providers of choice as parents increasingly ask about child safety when making purchasing decisions.

- The guidance and support provided through the Scheme will help ACT businesses to continuously improve alongside businesses in other jurisdictions that have similar schemes (eg NSW and Vic).

### Background Information

- All Premiers and Chief Ministers endorsed the National Principles for Child Safe Organisations in February 2019
- From November 2019 to February 2020, the community had the opportunity to provide input to the following four elements:
  - scope of the scheme (which organisations should be included);
  - types of support to be provided by the oversight body, to assist organisations to comply with the Standards;
  - what monitoring and enforcement powers should be given to the oversight body; and
  - how best to stage commencement of the scheme so that organisations have time to prepare.
- Note there have been delays in delivering the Child Safe Standards Scheme, in line with the ACT Government's response to the recommendations of the Royal Commission into Institutionalised Child Sexual Abuse; however, no commitment has been made about the timing of legislation following delays associated with the 2020 and 2021 COVID responses.
- If organisations wish to start thinking about what Child Safe Standards means for them, the website of the National Principles for Child Safe Organisations (<https://childsafe.humanrights.gov.au>) contains free tools and resources, including videos, self-assessment checklists, online training modules, and sample policy documents.

## REPORTABLE CONDUCT

### Talking points:

- The ACT's Reportable Conduct Scheme has been in place since 1 July 2017. It provides independent oversight, through the ACT Ombudsman, of the way workplaces subject to the Scheme investigate and handle allegations of misconduct involving children.
- Reportable Conduct refers to certain types of misconduct involving children, including ill treatment, neglect, sexual misconduct, and certain types of criminal behaviour.
- The Scheme was introduced as part of the Government's response to the Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse.
- Entities subject to the scheme include all government and non-government schools, all ACT Government directorates, providers of childcare services, health services, out-of-home care services and religious organisations providing care or instruction to children.

### Key Information

- Funding for the Scheme is managed through a single service agreement with the Ombudsman for a range of services they provide for ACT Government.
- This service agreement is managed centrally by the Workforce Capability and Governance division, which now manages payments for the Reportable Conduct Scheme, although Policy and Cabinet Division retain policy responsibility for the scheme.
- The Ombudsmans releases quarterly public reports providing an overview of cases received and resolved during each period.
- CMTEDD works with the Ombudsman to review operation of the scheme, including its legislation, to ensure it continues to operate effectively and efficiently.

**ISSUE: Royal Commissions:**

- 1. General information/ACT Government engagement**
- 2. Disability**
- 3. Veterans**
- 4. Child Abuse**
- 5. Natural Disasters**

**1. General information****Talking points:**

- The ACT Government engages with a range of national Royal Commissions including the current Disability Royal Commission and Veterans Royal Commission, and recent Royal Commissions on Child Abuse and Natural Disasters.
- The ACT, as a Territory, does not issue letters patent to establish and empower Royal Commissions in the Territory like States do. Nonetheless, the Royal Commission has the same powers in the ACT as elsewhere and the ACT Government has committed to supporting and engaging fully with all current Royal Commissions.
- Line agencies are generally responsible for leading work to respond to Royal Commissions, although CMTEDD is typically closely involved in coordination and engagement efforts. The ACT Government Solicitor supports direct engagement with Counsel Assisting Royal Commission(s) on legal notices.

**Key issues:**

- The Commonwealth Governor-General may, by Letters Patent, issue a Royal Commission, requiring or authorising it to make inquiry into and report upon any matters specified in the Letters Patent (pursuant to s 1A of the Royal Commissions Act 1902 (Cth) (Commonwealth Royal Commissions Act)).

- A member of a Royal Commission may summon a person or organisation to appear before the Commission at a hearing to give evidence or produce documents in relation to matters that fall within the scope of the Terms of Reference.
- An issue arose when the Commonwealth was establishing the Royal Commission into Institutional Abuse of Children as to the capacity of the Commission to compel the production of some documents held by departments of state governments and to give evidence through their officials.
- It involved constitutional principles around the capacity of the Commonwealth to significantly curtail or interfere with the capacity of a State to function as a government by the production of material core to governmental activities or otherwise interfering in its operations.
- The solution was for the Commonwealth Commissioners to also be appointed as Commissioners under equivalent State laws. The Governor of each State issues corresponding Letters Patent under that State's analogous laws, requiring and authorising the members of the Royal Commission to inquire into matters that fall within the Terms of Reference.
- The Territories are in a different position to States. The Commonwealth Parliament has a power to make laws with respect to the Territory, pursuant to s 122 of the Constitution. The Commonwealth Parliament does not require a separate source of power to compel the attendance of Territory witnesses or require the production of Territory documents pursuant to a power in a Commonwealth law.
- Typically, line agencies are responsible for monitoring, engaging with and responding to Royal Commissions. However, CMTEDD (PCD) has played a significant role in most recent Royal Commissions due to the complex and cross-portfolio nature of those Royal Commissions.
- The ACT Government does not typically share the cost of Royal Commissions that the Commonwealth chooses to establish, but nonetheless support and engage with Royal Commissions as needed.

## 2. Disability

### Talking points:

- The ACT Government has welcomed the *Royal Commission into Violence, Abuse, Neglect and Exploitation of People with Disability*, which will provide a much-needed platform for some of the most vulnerable members of our community
- The Royal Commission is expected to inform governments, institutions and the wider community on how to prevent, and better protect, people with disability from experiencing violence, abuse, neglect and exploitation in the future and promote a more inclusive society that supports the independence of people with disability.
- The Community Services Directorate is the lead directorate for disability matters in the ACT. CMTEDD works closely with CSD to ensure a seamless response to the Royal Commission

### Key issues:

- The ACT Government has received a number of notices to give information from the Royal Commission relating to health, justice and education settings.
- There are meetings across government as needed to ensure the ACT Government has a coordinated approach to responding to issues from the Royal Commission. Regular meetings are also held to discuss the response with our colleagues in the Australian Government and all other jurisdictions.
- On 13 May 2021 the Commonwealth Government granted the Royal Commission a 17 month extension to deliver its final report. The ACT will consider its response to any recommendations in due course.
- The Disability Royal Commission has so far published four progress reports which document the findings and evidence from the public hearings. These progress reports do not contain recommendations for the ACT.
- A specific report on the response to the COVID-19 pandemic was tabled in the Australian Parliament in late November 2020. The Commonwealth response to the COVID-19 Special Report was tabled in Parliament on 27 April 2021. The recommendations from this report were all matters for the Australian Government.

**Background:**

- The Disability Royal Commission was established on 4 April 2019. The establishment of the Royal Commission was the result of efforts by disability peak bodies and advocates, from an initial proposal in 2012, and a Commonwealth Senate Community Affairs References Committee Inquiry and Report in November 2015, which recommended a Royal Commission into violence, abuse and neglect of people with disability.
- Since its inception the Royal Commission has held 17 public hearings in locations across Australia. The hearings have covered a wide range of issues of importance to the community including: the experiences of people with cognitive disability in the criminal justice system, the experiences of First Nations people with disability and their families in contact with child protection systems and a specific hearing on the experiences of people with disability during the ongoing COVID-19 Pandemic.

## 2. Veterans

### Talking points:

- The ACT Government has welcomed the *Royal Commission into Defence and Veterans Suicide*. The Royal Commission is expected to inform governments, institutions and the wider community on how the mental health of defence personnel and veterans can be better cared for.
- The Community Services Directorate is the lead directorate for veterans matters in the ACT, while mental health policy is the responsibility of Health Directorate. CMTEDD works closely with CSD as the lead agency on this Royal Commission to ensure ACT Government engagement is timely and coordinated.

### Key issues:

- The Veterans Royal Commission is the most recent commission established by the Commonwealth.
- CSD (the Office for Seniors and Veterans Affairs) is the lead agency for engaging with the Royal Commission, supported CMTEDD and GSO.
- The ACT Government has received one formal notice to give information from the Royal Commission.

### Background:

- The Royal Commission into Defence and Veteran Suicide was established on 8 July 2021 by the Australian Government. Among other things, the Royal Commission will inquire into:
  - Common themes and issues among defence and veteran suicides or lived experience of suicidal behaviours and risk factors.
  - The role of non-government organisations, including ex-service organisations, in supporting defence members, veterans, their families and others within the community.
  - Issues that exist within, and the availability and effectiveness of, support services for families and others.
  - Common themes and issues among defence members' and veterans' experiences in accessing claims, entitlements, and support services from

government, including trying to engage with multiple government organisations.

- To date, the key issues presented in the first hearing include:
  - a. an emphasis on the need for more robust data captured both during a Defence member's service and following their discharge, coupled with stronger mechanisms for sharing such data across relevant stakeholders;
  - b. a call for change in culture, particularly of the leadership structures in the Australian Defence Force in order to remove stigma relating to mental health and encourage members who are struggling to seek help without fear of jeopardising their career;
  - c. a focus on a supportive transition out of Defence into civilian life, noting the effect discharge has on a defence member as they leave behind their 'tribe';
  - d. a need to further investigate numbers and circumstances of Veterans in incarceration and Veterans who are facing homelessness;
  - e. a call for Defence to involve family members in the support of Veterans who are unwell, acknowledging the enormous role families play in providing protective factors and the inherent impact on loved ones who care for unwell Veterans, and
  - f. a need for many and varied support options for Veterans, both with specific defence knowledge and within the mainstream system to cater for the individuality of members of the Veteran population. These systems, however, should be supported by coordination and collegiality amongst service providers.
- Further Hearing Block sessions are schedule as follows, although subject to change:
  - a. Hearing Block 2, Sydney, 14–25 February 2022;
  - b. Hearing Block 3, Sydney, 7–18 March 2022; and
  - c. Hearing Block 4, Canberra, 4–14 April 2022.
- The Royal Commissioners are required to provide an interim report by 11 August 2022, and a final report by 15 June 2023.

### 3. Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse

#### Talking points:

- Progress continues towards implementing the 307 recommendations of the Child Abuse Royal Commission.
- The COVID-19 public health emergency has changed some planned approaches to implementing the recommendations of the Final Report.
- Despite these challenges, significant progress has been achieved across the four themed domains:
  1. Making Institutions Child Safe
  2. An Oversight System that Responds to Child Safety
  3. Services for Children and Young People
  4. Tailored Support through Specialist Services.
- As described in the ACT Government's Third Annual Progress Report, as at the end of 2020, 167 of the recommendations are complete, 123 are in progress and the remaining 17 were noted.

#### Key issues:

- As per recommendation 17.2 of the Final Report, the ACT will continue to provide an Annual Progress Report for five years, from 2018 to 2023, responding to the recommendations of the Royal Commission.
- The Fourth Annual Progress Report will be released in early 2022.
- An effective response to implement the Royal Commission's Final Report recommendations depends on careful consideration, extensive consultation and cooperation between jurisdictions.
- Responsibility for implementation of the recommendations of the Royal Commission are spread across directorates in the ACT, including CMTEDD in some cases.

- CMTEDD also plays a role to coordinate reporting on the Royal Commission and intergovernmental engagement on some recommendations spanning multiple jurisdictions.

**Background:**

- The Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse (the Child Abuse Royal Commission) was established in 2013, in response to allegations of sexual abuse of children in institutions across Australia over many years.
- The Royal Commission handed down its Final Report on 15 December 2017. The Final Report contained 189 recommendations, of which 105 affect state and territory governments.
- The Royal Commission has previously released:
  - The Working with Children Checks Report in August 2015, containing 36 recommendations: 35 are relevant to the ACT.
  - The Redress and Civil Litigation Report in September 2015, containing 99 recommendations: 84 are relevant to the ACT.
  - The Criminal Justice Report in August 2017, containing 85 recommendations: 83 are relevant to the ACT.
- The ACT formally responded to the Royal Commission's Final Report on 15 June 2018. Of the 307 recommendations for the ACT Government, we accepted or accepted in principle 290 of these, and noted or took under further consideration the remaining 17.

#### 4. National Natural Disaster Response and Recovery

##### Talking points:

- The Bushfire Royal Commission made 80 recommendations in its final report across a wide range of topics. Many recommendations require cooperation and coordination across multiple jurisdictions, directorates and/or non-government stakeholders to implement.
- The Australian Government announced its response to the recommendations on 13 November 2020, agreeing or agreeing in principle to all recommendations directed at the Australian Government.
- On the same day, National Cabinet decided that all jurisdictions would collaborate to implement the recommendations of the Royal Commission through the newly created National Emergency Management Ministers' Meeting (NEMMM).
- On 24 March 2021, the ACT Government released its response to the final report.
- The ACT is supportive of all recommendations of the Royal Commission. No time has been wasted in progressing the recommendations, many of which overlap with work already underway in the ACT. These include:
  - progressing climate change initiatives;
  - strengthening bushfire fuel load management information;
  - strengthening recovery policy in line with national policy; and
  - sharing information about critical infrastructure.
- The ACT Government has implemented 32 of the recommendations, with significant effort being undertaken across all areas of government to implement the remaining recommendations.
- The ACT is also working closely with the Commonwealth and all states and territories to progress six priority recommendations as determined by the National Federation Reform Council.

**Key issues:**

- In response to the Black Summer Bushfires, the Prime Minister announced on 20 February 2020 that a national Royal Commission would be established to inquire into the bushfires. The specific focus of the Royal Commission included natural disaster management coordination; improving Australia's preparedness, resilience and response; and the legal framework for the Commonwealth's involvement in responding to emergencies.
- The *Royal Commission into National Natural Disaster Arrangements* (RCNDA) commenced proceedings in April 2020. The ACT provided evidence into the RCNDA over the following months and made a submission on the draft propositions that were received on 31 August 2020. Overall, the ACT was supportive of the majority of the draft propositions.
- The final recommendations are wide ranging and address a diverse range of areas, including, among other things: national emergency coordination arrangements, data and decision making, declaration of national emergency arrangements, enhancements to national emergency response capability, emergency planning and evacuation, emergency information and warnings, land management and indigenous land and fire management, coordinating relief and recovery and delivery of recovery services and financial assistance measures.
- All Emergency Management Ministers agreed that ahead of the 2021-22 high-risk weather season, the states and territories and Commonwealth governments would focus on progressing priority actions against seven recommendations relating to:
  - the Australian Warning System
  - the Australian Fire Danger Rating System
  - nationally consistent pre-agreed Disaster Recovery Funding Arrangements
  - a review of the path to expeditiously deliver the Public Safety Mobile Broadband capability
  - making substantial progress to reform fundraising laws
  - making substantial progress to improve natural disaster risk information to support decision-making such as land-use planning for new developments, and the construction code, and
  - share hazard reduction data and information across jurisdictions to maximise its utility and value for hazard risk reduction.

### **Background**

- The Royal Commission into National Natural Disaster Arrangements was established in response to the Black Summer bushfires of 2019-2020 which resulted in devastating loss of life, property and wildlife, and environmental destruction across the nation. Commission Chair, Air Chief Marshal Mark Binskin AC (Retd) presented the Royal Commission's report to the Governor-General on Wednesday, 28 October 2020. The report was tabled in the Federal Parliament on 30 October 2020.
- In December 2020, March, May and July 2021, Tasmania, Victoria, South Australia and Queensland respectively released their formal responses to the Royal Commission recommendations. It is expected that most other jurisdictions will release their responses in the coming months.

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**ISSUE: POLICY INNOVATION TEAM (Policy Design and Evaluation Team)****Talking points:**

- The 2018-19 Budget provided \$5.57m over four years for the initiative *Policy Innovation Team*. This included ongoing funding from 2018-19 for the Regulatory Reform Team and also new funding for three years (from 2019-20) to establish a new function in Policy and Cabinet for Policy Design and Evaluation (PDE team).
- The initiative funded two full-time equivalent positions in the PDE team. The PDE Team commenced work in the second half of 2019, and has focussed on supporting evaluation planning and policy design capability across the ACTPS.
- The team has a whole of government role with three key areas of focus:
  - **Supporting Priority Evaluations** across the service
  - **Capability building** including practical supports and advice across the ACTPS
  - **Improving access to research and expertise** by facilitating connections across the Service and to external research organisations
- The priority evaluations to date have included the mid-term review of the Office for Mental Health and Wellbeing (2020); the *Nurses and Midwives: Towards a Safer Culture (TASC) Strategy* Evaluation (2021); an after-action review of acute response teams in the disability sector (2021); and the Safewards post-implementation review (2021).
- To support capability development, the team established the ACT Evidence and Evaluation Academy in March 2021, which is a six-month ACTPS-wide program that links formal training in evaluation to work projects. 17 participants completed the program in 2021 and a further 23 have just been offered places for the Academy in 2022.
  - Contract in 2021 was for \$96,800 incl GST; 2022 Academy cost is expected to be similar.
- The PDE Team is also working closely with CMTEDD's Wellbeing Team to embed the Wellbeing Framework in practices and processes across the ACT Public Service.

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### Key Information

- As the team is only small, the approach is not to centralise policy or evaluation functions within CMTEDD, but to work *with* directorates and other stakeholders to build capability. The PDE team does this by supporting directorates with advice and capacity when needed, building mutually beneficial relationships and creating a supportive authorising environment across government to engage in this work.
- There is sometimes confusion about how evaluation functions differ from other functions such as expenditure reviews or performance audits. The focus of the PDE team's evaluation work is to understand whether policies and programs are achieving their intended outcomes, not to identify savings or to specifically examine governance and management issues with particular issues.
- The PDE team is working with the Wellbeing team to support the embedding of evaluation in the implementation of the Wellbeing Framework. It is proposed to release a new version of the ACT Evaluation Policy (2010) in 2021-22 to support and align with the implementation of the ACT Wellbeing Indicators.
- From 2021-22 the PDE Team will be funded on an ongoing basis through a merger with the Wellbeing Team in Policy and Cabinet Division in CMTEDD. This will bring together the work of both teams to improve policy design and evaluation across the service in close alignment with the Wellbeing Framework.
- The ACT Evidence and Evaluation Program has been developed for the ACT by Dr George Argyrous from the University of Technology Sydney with Dr Duncan Ritoul of Rooftop Social. A request for quote procurement process was used and included local providers.
  - The program evaluation showed very significant improvement in evaluation skills following the six-month program during which the participants attended six three-hour workshops and worked on individual evaluation projects with 1:1 coaching from mentors.
  - Total cost of contract was \$96,800 incl GST which is extremely good value for money considering this ensured significant practical progress on 17 ACT Government evaluation programs.
  - Offers have just been made to 23 participants for the 2022 Academy, covering 20 projects (three projects involve pairs of two participants). The 2022 Academy has added an Indigenous Evaluation session led by an experience facilitator Skye Trudgett. Costs will be similar to 2021.
  - By the end of 2022 a total of 40 candidates will have completed the Academy program (taking 2021 and 2022 together).

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## 3.8

- Priorities for 2021-22 include:
  - Continuing to support evaluation capability and culture across the ACTPS with the second year of the ACT Evidence and Evaluation Academy commencing in March 2022.
  - Delivering a refresh of the ACT Evaluation Policy (2010).
  - Developing online resources and materials to support policy design and evaluation planning across the Service.
  - Completing the Mid-Term Review of the *Healthy Canberra: ACT Preventive Health Plan 2020-2025*, and a review of the Office for Climate Action.
  - Continuing to review the process for identifying and commissioning major evaluations in collaboration with directorates.
- The team also works with a range of areas across Directorates to build evaluation planning into the design and implementation of new initiatives, and to support evaluations.

**ISSUE: NATIONAL SECURITY AND PUBLIC SAFETY**

**Australian Government Critical Infrastructure Reforms** Critical infrastructure is essential to the function of our daily lives in the ACT.

- The ACT is supportive of the focus by the Australian Government to strengthen the security of Australia's critical infrastructure.
  - Some of these reforms have already been introduced by the Australian Government and officials are working closely across directorates on how this will apply to the ACT.
  - Additional reforms are still to be introduced by the Commonwealth, and the ACT remains engaged with the Commonwealth and state and territory governments to support these reforms.
- The ACT maintains its own critical infrastructure arrangements and relationships between government and non-government owners and operators.

**Foreign Interference**

- The ACT values its open and transparent international engagement with other governments to progress matters of mutual benefit.
- Unfortunately, some foreign actors are pursuing opportunities to interfere in a range of areas such as with decision makers, intellectual property, and IT systems in Australia. The ACT is not immune to this interference.
- Foreign interference activities go beyond routine diplomatic influence practiced by governments. Interference may be coercive, covert, deceptive and clandestine in nature and can cause harm to the ACT's interests.
- The ACT partners with the Australian Government and other states and territories on efforts to protect our systems of government, democracy, critical infrastructure, education, and media.

- Concerns about foreign interference should be reported to the National Security Hotline on 1800 123 400.

### **Counter Terrorism**

- The ACT is a successful, diverse and inclusive society. This is one of our greatest strengths against acts of terrorism and violent extremism occurring in Canberra.
- The ACT supports community leaders and activities to promote our vibrant, inclusive, and culturally diverse community while maintaining the rule of law and protecting human rights.
- The Government is committed to ensuring the safety and security of the community, working closely with ACT Policing and other law enforcement and intelligence agencies to counter terrorism and violent extremism.
- Terrorism is a national issue, and we work closely with our interstate and Commonwealth partners on the existing and emerging national security challenges, considering how our legislation and capabilities are best able to meet these evolving issues.

### **Ideologically motivated violent extremism and religiously motivated violent extremism**

- The best defence to violent extremism is maintaining the ACT as a harmonious, inclusive and cohesive community.
- The ACT's laws and arrangements focus on threat and criminality regardless of ideology or motivation.
  - Ideologically motivated violent extremists, specifically nationalist and racist extremists, are motivated by a wide variety of social, economic and political grievances.
  - Religiously motivated violent extremism and the violent narrative of some groups will continue to appeal to a small number of people in Australia.

### **Cyber Security and Online Safety**

- Cyber security remains a top priority for the ACT Government.
- The cyber threat is persistent. State actors, criminal syndicates, issue motivated groups and self-motivated individuals continue to target children, families, businesses, online critical infrastructure, and intellectual property.
- The government has been briefed on the Australian Cyber Security Committee's Annual Cyber Threat Report for 2020-21. The government notes the increased frequency and sophistication of cybers attacks in 2020-21 in comparison to previous years.
- Our specialist teams work to protect information managed by the ACT Government and regularly meet with the National Cyber Security Committee to monitor the cyber threat environment.
- The ACT remains engaged with the Commonwealth about proposed reforms to the enhance the security of critical infrastructure in Australia. A significant focus for these reforms is the strengthening of cyber security arrangements as they apply to critical infrastructure and systems of national significance.

### **Fixated Threat Capability**

- In the ACT Budget 2019-20, the Government announced \$1.08 million over three years to establish and trial a fixated threat capability for the ACT.
- This capability has been established and is referred to as the FLAG – (Fixated, Lone Actor and Grievance Fuelled Violence) assessment team. The ACT FLAG has specially trained officers from ACT Policing, and mental health professionals from Canberra Health Services co-located and working closely together to assess and manage fixated individuals in the ACT. The ACT Government is also undertaking a two year review of the capability to ensure it is best practice and meets the requirements of the ACT.

- A fixated individual is a person with an unhealthy obsession or perceived grievance with another person. In many cases, a fixated individual may have undiagnosed or untreated mental health issues.
- A focus for the ACT's fixated threat capability is to reduce harm to the community by engaging (or sometimes re-engaging) fixated individuals with appropriate mental health or other community support services.

#### **Public Spaces and Venue Safety**

- Canberra's public places and events remain a safe and attractive place for communities and families.
- The ACT Government and ACT Policing continually monitor the security threat environment.
- The Government remains focused on promoting and supporting safe public events within the current COVID environment.
- The Government continues to expand and enhance the ACT's Public Safety CCTV Network, as well as making use of portable CCTV capability, vehicle protection barriers and other measures as appropriate to protect Canberrans.

**ISSUE: OFFICE OF LGBTIQ+ AFFAIRS****Talking points:**

- The Office of LGBTIQ+ Affairs (the Office) was established in January 2017 to coordinate and support strategic government projects and policy to promote Canberra as the most LGBTIQ+ welcoming and inclusive city in Australia.
- The Office plays a critical role in progressing the Government's social inclusion agenda, ensuring people with diverse sexuality, sex, gender and bodies are:
  - safe to participate in our community;
  - able to access the services they need; and
  - valued for their achievements and contributions to the life of the city.
- During the reporting period, the Office worked across government and the community to implement Canberra's first LGBTIQ+ inclusion strategy, *Capital of Equality*, and First Action Plan which set out the changes government and the community want to make to improve the lives of LGBTIQ+ Canberrans.
- A Second Action Plan under the *Capital of Equality* Strategy is being finalised in consultation with the community and a cross-directorate working group. The Second Action Plan is due to be released in the coming months.
- The Office is collaborating with intersex people, human rights organisations and healthcare professionals on a major project to establish a new framework to regulate deferrable medical interventions on intersex people.

**Key Information**

- The Office's total budget:
  - for 2018-19 was \$637,000;
  - for 2019-20 was \$704,000;
  - for 2020-21 was \$735,674; and
  - for 2021-22 is \$810,000;
- In 2021-22 this consists of:
  - Office for LGBTIQ Affairs (staff etc) - \$434k;
  - LGBTIQ+ Services (Meridian services agreement) - \$126k ongoing;
  - LGBTIQ+ Grants Program - \$100k ongoing; and
  - A Gender Agenda Deed of Grant - \$150k (four years; ending 2025).
- The Office consists of one permanent SOG B and one permanent SOG C.

- The Office has \$100,000 to fund community projects under the Capital of Equality Grants Program. The three rounds of grants between 2019 and 2021 have delivered 30 community-led projects across Canberra.
- The Office's key activities include:
  - Managing the services agreement with Meridian for targeted, peer-led services to support and strengthen LGBTIQ+ Canberrans;
  - Managing a grant agreement with A Gender Agenda to deliver services for trans, gender-diverse and intersex people;
  - Administering the Capital of Equality Grants Program;
  - Providing support to major community events celebrating LGBTIQ+ communities;
  - Engaging with relevant project and policy work across government, such as improving collection and dissemination of sex, gender identity and sexual orientation data;
  - Coordinating and providing input into government policy development on key issues affecting the LGBTIQ+ community; and
  - Implementation and development of the action plans of the *Capital of Equality Strategy* including priorities such as regulation of deferrable medical interventions on intersex children.

#### ***Implementation of the First Action Plan, Capital of Equality Strategy***

- The First Action Plan, released in 2019, outlined tangible actions towards implementation of the *Capital of Equality Strategy*.
- There were 21 actions planned in the First Action Plan. Most actions have been implemented or are nearing completion. Four actions were not implemented, but will continue to be considered in the context of ongoing priorities.
- Some of the most prominent achievements of the First Action Plan include;
  - Legisating a ban of sexuality and gender identity conversion practices (*The Sexuality and Gender Identity Conversion Practices Act 2020* came into effect on 4 March 2021).
    - It is now illegal for someone to perform conversion practices on people who do not consent or who consent because of misleading or deceptive claims about the efficacy of conversion practices, including practices on children or people with impaired decision-making ability in relation to their health or welfare.
    - The 2021-22 Budget increased the Human Rights Commission's capacity to respond to complaints about sexuality and gender identity conversion practices (among other services) by providing funding for

additional staff for the Discrimination, Health Services, Disability and Community Services Commissioner.

- Questions about implementation of the new scheme should be directed to the Commissioner.
- A review of implementation of the scheme is due in 2023.
- Amendments to the *Births, Deaths and Marriages Registration Act 1997* to improve processes for changing birth registration and birth certificates for trans and gender-diverse young people.
- Completion of the LGBTIQ+ Health Scoping Study (this action was led by the ACT Health Directorate).
- Investment in the ACT component of the *Writing Themselves In 4* study. We now have comprehensive research into the health and wellbeing of 300 young sexuality and gender diverse Canberrans.
- Two actions (“Support initiatives that allow mainstream services to pledge they are LGBTIQ+ inclusive” and “Assess the feasibility of establishing a community of legal practitioners to support LGBTIQ+ people”) were not implemented due to resourcing constraints. During the Second Action Plan development consultations, community stakeholders did not express a need for these actions to progress.
- The action aimed to reflect the voices of LGBTIQ+ populations in delivering the Welcoming Cities Standard for migrant and multicultural communities was not implemented as the level of accreditation that the ACT government self-assessed for does not mandate an intersectional inclusion of LGBTIQ+ populations.

#### ***Development of the Second Action Plan under the Capital of Equality Strategy***

- The Office has led work across government to develop the Second Action Plan spanning the two year period 2022-2023. The Second Action Plan will build on the progress achieved in the First Action Plan.
- The Second Action Plan is being informed by the priorities outlined by the LGBTIQ+ Ministerial Advisory Council and community consultations held in 2021 and early 2022.
- To run the community consultations, the Office engaged ACT based organisations working with LGBTIQ+ communities including those working with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander LGBTIQ+ people and culturally and linguistically diverse LGBTIQ+ people, as well as organisations working in the area of settlement and refugee support.
- The cross-directorate working group has been closely consulted.
- Finalisation and release of the Second Action Plan is expected in the coming months.

### **2021 New budget measures**

- A Gender Agenda has received \$150,000 per year (ongoing, four years) to continue its work with trans, gender-diverse and intersex people.
- There is a new commitment with redirected funds (Health Directorate, CHS; an ERC approved budget bid, with identified offsets) to begin implementation of the LGBTIQ+ Health Scoping Study recommendations.
- In August 2021, an additional \$40,000 was allocated to Meridian to scale-up existing services to support at-risk Canberrans in the LGBTIQ+ community at particular risk of heightened mental ill-health.

### **Other Background Information**

- A ministerial statement on progress under *Capital of Equality's* First Action Plan was delivered by the Chief Minister to the ACT Legislative Assembly in November 2021.

## Issue: Cabinet and Document Release

### Talking points:

- Following an Executive Document request, the Canberra Times [published an article](#) on 30 January 2022 critical of the ACT's arrangements for release of information about executive documents. The article was critical of the time taken to complete the request and advocated for the proactive release of all executive documents.

#### Timeframes

- In the 2020-21 financial year:
  - six applications were made for executive documents;
  - 60 executive documents were requested in total;
  - Executive document requests were fulfilled, by average, in 267 days;
  - there are currently no outstanding executive document requests.
- There is no statutory timeframe for the release of executive documents in the *Territory Records Act 2002*. However, the Cabinet Office has previously indicated 8-12 weeks as an indicative timeframe for applications.
- The time taken to respond to requests can increase due to the need to consult with directorates, the Government Solicitor's Office and relevant third-parties. Support provided by Cabinet Office to the ongoing COVID-19 response has also broadly contributed to delays.

#### Proactive Release

- Executive Records are not proactively released as they must be assessed by the ACT Government in accordance with the *Territory Records Act 2002* to determine whether information contained in them is suitable for release. Factors that may preclude release of information include personal information about any person (including a deceased person), information that is contrary to the public interest, or information that is protected under Legal Professional Privilege.
- The most recent listing of ACT Executive documents released on Canberra Day 2021, included 595 items.
- The article made comparisons with models in other jurisdictions, such as the Australian Government. Commonwealth Cabinet records are released on New Year's Day when they are 20 years old. The National Archives of Australia assesses many of the available documents prior to the release date and makes some of these available online in full on 1 January. It employs a historian to investigate the records and holds an embargoed release event for journalists prior to the 1 January public release.
- The ACT Government approach is largely reflective of the low number of requests received in response to the release of the list of accessible executive documents, and therefore Cabinet Office does not have specific resources for this purpose.
- ACT Government Executive Documents can be sensitive and complex, requiring a high degree of consultation across government. Administrative Arrangements can mean that a single Cabinet submission may span many areas of responsibility across

government agencies. In addition, the shorter 10 year timeframe increases the likelihood that the release of records may adversely impact on current legal, personal or public safety issues.

- Records generally become less sensitive with the passage of time. The effort to examine records for release after 10 years, and the quantity of material likely to require exemption from public access, will be greater the less time has passed since the records were created.
- Cabinet Office currently undertakes the proactive release of the Cabinet decision summary, title, date of decision and Triple Bottom Line Assessment/Wellbeing Impact Assessment of decisions made by Cabinet in accordance with the *Freedom of Information Act 2016*.

### Key Information

- The National Archives of Australia does not proactively release all Cabinet documents. There are 2716 submissions, memoranda and minutes included in the Cabinet records from 2001, released on 1 January 2022. Approximately one third of these (947) are available digitally. Around 43 per cent (1159) had been assessed for release prior to 1 January. The remaining 1557 document are listed in the National Archives' online database, and members of the public can apply to have them assessed for public access. Of those examined 70 (6 per cent) were wholly closed, and 94 (8 per cent) were partially closed, meaning that 14 per cent of those records examined required closure for some reason.
- The National Archives has a dedicated team of specialist access examiners which works on the release, both proactive and reactive, of Cabinet and other documents.
- In past years the Territory Records Office worked with the Cabinet Office to promote the availability of Executive Documents on Canberra Day, and a small group of documents was proactively examined for release. These events attracted little media or public interest.
- The National Archives employs a contract historian to research the records being released and to brief the media at the embargoed release event. The National Archives' spending on the consultant historian for the 2022 release was \$11,000.
- The Commonwealth's *Archives Act 1983* requires the National Archives to respond to requests for public access within 90 business days. The National Archives has in recent times attracted criticism for its access backlog and the number of requests taking significantly more than 90 days to fulfil. The National Archives has responded by noting that the majority of access requests are fulfilled within 30 days, and it is primarily the most complex and sensitive records, and particularly those requiring consultation with third parties, that are significantly delayed.

### Background Information

1. Cabinet documents become accessible to the public after 10 years under Part 3A of the *Territory Records Act 2002*. Under section 31C of the Act, the list of records that are available must be published electronically every Canberra Day.
2. An accessible executive record must be assessed to determine whether it contains information that would, or could reasonably be expected to:
  - a) endanger the life or physical safety of a person; or
  - b) be an unreasonable limitation on a person's rights under the *Human Rights Act 2004*; or
  - c) significantly prejudice an ongoing criminal investigation.
3. The principal officer, the Head of Service as Cabinet Secretary, may determine (by a release restraint determination) that for any information (protected private information) that would, or could reasonably be expected to, disclose personal information about any person (including a deceased person) and is contrary to the public interest information—
  - (i) That the part containing the information is only to be released on or after the later release day; or
  - (ii) That the part containing the information is not to be released at all.

## 1. Division overview

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### Key facts:

#### *How well informed is the community*

- **90%** of the community feel well informed about COVID-19 by the ACT Government based on research conducted in October 2021 with a sample of n=1,900 Canberrans.

#### *Key talking points*

- The focus of ACT Government communications in 2021 was to respond to the key Government priorities – **Health, Education, Climate, Jobs and recovery, Services**.
- CMTEDD Communications has been tasked by the Chief Minister with implementing the **'One Gov with One Voice'** communication approach:
  - Content and user experience on government websites was overwhelmingly seen as the highest priority for government communications, so required information is available easily, when people go looking for it.
    - The ongoing focus will be on user research and analysis, developing a whole of government content structure and a common design system to build consistency and establish standards of governance.
    - This work will simplify and streamline our digital channels to create a simple, unified and customer focussed digital experience.
    - It will also significantly reduce and simplify more than 100 separate ACT Government websites (including 230,000+ pieces of content) and over 100 social media accounts.
  - Increased oversight of key public information campaigns to align with key Government priorities. This will enhance the user experience, target the community more effectively and streamline the procurement of media buying.
- WHOG channels (e-newsletters and social media) continue to increase followers.
- Emergency Communications Coordination, PIC, PICC and ACT Community Communications and Information Plan

### Financial implications:

#### *Staffing profile*

- Budgeted for 46.71 FTEs, Actual FTEs being 57.72. Variance being due to COVID-19 and the PICC team, which required extra staff and responsibilities for CMTEDD C&E.
- CMTEDD C&E supports Access Canberra, all CMTEDD divisions, and WHOG strategic C&E services, COVID-19 PICC and design and publishing services for all government agencies.

#### *Division budget*

- The division had a total discretionary budget of \$10.2m for 20-21
- This includes \$5.4m for employee expenses
- \$4.8m for supplies, services, grants and purchased services

### ***Creative Services expenditure***

- In 2020-21, the ACT Government procured just over \$22m in creative services. Since August 2021 a number of creative services activities have paused due to COVID-19.
  - This includes off-panel expenditure consisting of a range of creative services related expenditure not covered under the Territory's Creative Services Panel. These are primarily identified in the areas of signage, research and event management.
- During 2020-21, CMTEDD spent a total of \$3.337M through the WHOG Creative Services Panel.

### **Background notes:**

### ***Supplies, services, programs and grants***

<b>Activity</b>	<b>Stats 31 December 2021</b>		<b>Editions/posts published</b>
Our Canberra monthly newsletter	203,238 households 49,860 e subscribers	Increase in households in Canberra Decrease in e-subscribers of 0.2% from 1 Jan	Print edition: 9 20-21 5 ytd 21-22 EDM:
Our Canberra Website	348,601 page views	Page views decreased 22% in 2021 compared with 2020. Production was impacted by lockdown and staff resourcing redirected to COVID-19 PICC.	199 articles published
ACT Gov social media	Facebook 40,122 followers Twitter 21,161 followers LinkedIn 22,868 followers WeAreCBR 14,306 followers	Up 28.5% in 2021 Up 24.7% in 2021 Up 20.2% in 2021 Up 14.0% in 2021	Posts published in 2021: Facebook: 1,133 Twitter: 601 LinkedIn: 355 WeAreCBR: 95
ACT Health social media*  *As of 3 December when we finished at the PICC (from when lockdown commenced on 12 August)	Facebook 105,209 followers Twitter 27,461 followers	Up 59.5% Up 60.3%  *As of 3 December when we finished at the PICC (from when lockdown commenced on 12 August)	Facebook: 1,165 posts published Twitter: 3,904 posts
Your Say Website	618,358 page views to the website. Over 108,897 unique visitors 14,805 members 40 projects.	increase of 47,905 users and 292,280 page views compared to 2020	
WHOG and CMTEDD websites	50 +	Most visited: COVID-19, Access Canberra, Jobs ACT, ACT.gov.au	

Your Say Panel	5,700 members	increased by approximately 2,000 members since January 2021	
Your Say Panel	13 Your Say panel surveys conducted and independently reviewed this calendar year	22,000 individual survey responses (10,000 responses relate to COVID-19)	
Chief Minister's Community Support Fund	In 2020-21, 28 organisations/initiatives received funding totalling \$183,172 . A further 12 organisations received funding totalling \$90,000 in the 6 months to 31 December 2021.	Donations were primarily to support food relief during COVID19 lockdown	
Community Councils	Administration of Government funding arrangement	Oversight of new Molonglo Valley Community Council commencement in 2021	
Protocol services	At least seven honours and awards processes; Ceremonial events; Management of the territory's flags, emblems and other first minister responsibilities.		

### **Facebook Spend**

*The below table relates to spend on Facebook boosted posts on the ACT Government channel between 1 January – 31 December 2021.*

*Total Spent - \$21,331*

<b>Directorate</b>	<b>\$</b>
TCCS	\$14,901
CMTEDD	\$5,030
Major Projects	\$700
EPSDD	\$600

### **Summary of hard-to-reach groups**

#### *Young people*

- Trialled new forms of media to get young people – TikTok, Spotify and SnapChat

### *Culturally and Linguistically Diverse*

- Increased use of translated materials – up to 14 languages for some projects
- Partnerships with community leaders to improve targeted communications
- Increased promotion of the TIS service for translated materials

### *Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people*

- Worked with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander liaison officers to improve the content and visuals of materials
- Commissioned an indigenous artist for the creation of COVID-19 and vaccination specific artwork to increase visibility

### *Disability and accessibility*

- Production of Easy Read materials to improve the readability
- Content review of websites to improve the content readability and accessibility
- Increased the use of Auslan interpreters for all press conferences and in some videos

### ***Cross government services and programs***

- Coordinated Communications Network (CCN)
- ACTPS Engagement Network
- Media monitoring across government
- Shootsta video editing service
- Libris photo library
- Government Agencies Campaign Advertising Act and Independent Reviewer
- WHOG Creative Services Panel and priority campaign management
- Owner of WHOG C&E policies and guidelines including YourSay engagement, Branding, Signage, Photography, Social Media, approvals processes
- Supported directorates on major engagements (Wellbeing Framework, cannabis legislation, ACT Planning System Review and Reform, Canberra Hospital Master Plan) and public information campaigns (COVID -19), connecting the community to policy and decisions shaping ACT Government through digital and face to face activities.

## 2. COVID-19 PICC

- The PICC is activated under the Community Communications and Information Plan (CCIP), a sub plan of the *Emergency Plan (2014)*, to deliver public information to the community and the media, before, during and after a major emergency or incident. As designated in the Plan, CMTEDD EGM Communications and Engagement is the Public Information Coordinator, responsible for coordinating a WHOG approach.
- The PICC supports the CHO/Incident Controller and Coordinator-General (non-Health) and works across government for coordinated COVID-19 public information.
- Its primary responsibility is to inform the community on the public health emergency.
- The COVID-19 PICC was stood up on 4 March 2020 and completed its formal capacity in December 2021.

### 2021 ACT OUTBREAK

- The ACT went into lockdown on the 12 August 2021.
- From a core PICC team of **10**, staff surged in from CMTEDD and other directorates to support the work immediately.
- Over the critical period from 12 August to 15 October, there have been an additional **71** surge staff supporting the work of the PICC.
- This included a total of **41** staff drawn from CMTEDD to lead the teams in public information, social media, web, media, graphic design and support.
- **30** staff were drawn from other directorates providing relief shifts.

The PICC has supported the emergency response in the following ways.

### MEDIA MANAGEMENT

Stats: 12 August – 24 December

- **69** media conferences were held.
- Almost **400** media enquiries.
- PICC is responsible for management of media conferences, online streaming, Auslan management, speaking notes, briefing and coordination across Ministerial offices.
- Media enquiry handling, drafting and approval of enquiries.

### SOCIAL MEDIA

Stats: 12 August – 3 December

- **3904** social posts have been published.
- **300,000+** comments have been received, monitored and responded to.
- The Facebook page has a total of 105,209 followers, a growth of 60% since the outbreak began.
- The total impressions of the communications on Facebook have been over 30 million.

- The primary source for publishing social media Covid-19 communications is the ACT Health Facebook and Twitter accounts.
- PICC are responsible for drafting and publishing all public health information including exposure locations, daily case updates, testing information and informing and educating the public on the public health directions.

### OUR Canberra EDM

There were 55 COVID-19 e-newsletters distributed to the Our Canberra EDM mailing list of 49,000 people during 2021. These newsletters contained important restriction updates, public health advice and case statistics.

### WEBSITE

Stats: 12 August – 31 December

- **38,685,051** page views.
  - **5,352,261** unique visitors.
  - **Exposure sites** and the **homepage** are the most visited pages.
  - **Thursday 12 August** saw the highest daily page views with a total of **1,391,221**.
- PICC manage and maintain the Covid-19 website in house.
  - It is the source of truth for Covid-19 information across all aspects of the response.
  - Due to the evolving situation this requires constant refreshing and updating of information.
  - The website is being regularly reviewed to ensure accessibility and ease of navigation for audiences.

### CALD AND INDIGENOUS COMMUNICATIONS

Stats: 12 August – 15 October

- *Key public health information has been translated in to **20** languages on the website. (See background)*
  - *Media conference broadcasts were available by multilingual media in **11** languages on the Covid-19 website. See background languages denoted with an \*.*
  - ***54** Covid-19 media updates were provided in audio format to local Canberra community radio stations, who broadcast in 20 languages.*
  - ***10** Community Partner EDMs delivered to **650** subscribers. (Community organisations, Community Service partners, NGOs (Seniors, Carers).*
- PICC worked closely with CSD and HECC Community Engagement to develop a tailored suite of communications materials for ACT multicultural communities to help build their understanding of the risks of COVID-19 and the benefits of vaccination.
  - PICC continues to work on developing relevant content for these communities to help them understand the gradual easing of restrictions.
  - PICC developed culturally specific videos using community leaders communicating key information to identified communities.
  - PICC supported the delivery of Indigenous forums on the ACT outbreak.
  - Artwork was commissioned from a local Indigenous woman and is now being used across all Covid-19 and vaccination communication materials targeted at this audience.

- We have captured the artist detailing the story behind the artwork in video which will be made available on the website.
- PICC continues to tailor communications options to support CALD and ATSI opportunities.

## HARD TO REACH AND VULNERABLE COMMUNICATIONS

*Stats: 12 August – 15 October*

- **9** EDMs delivered to **1,160** subscribers with responsibility for people with disability (Disability service providers, NGOs, people with a disability and their families)
- PICC worked with CSD and non-government community partners to provide comprehensive communications support for vulnerable sites that experienced outbreaks (eg. Ainslie Village, Condamine Court), ensuring that residents and staff on site in these settings were well informed about the rapidly changing health situation.
- This information included details on testing, quarantine requirements, meal deliveries and mental health and wellbeing support available.
- PICC supported the communications and engagement with Aged Care facilities in the event of outbreaks.
- Development of easy read resources of key public health information published on the website.
- PICC supported the in reach/popup testing program for vulnerable settings.
- PICC continues to tailor key messages as required.

## BUSINESS COMMUNICATIONS

*Stats: 12 August – 15 October*

- *Industry specific factsheets and letters distributed to businesses and associations about the restriction changes.*
  - *To educate and inform businesses on COVID-19 restrictions throughout the ACT lockdown, Access Canberra coordinated **10** mailouts to a total of over **43,000 recipients**. These mailouts covered a range of topics including the announcement of the ACT Lockdown Health Direction, Check In CBR app, mask restrictions and the easing of restrictions.*
- *Access Canberra facilitated webinars to provide information to businesses ahead of restriction changes including:*
  - *a webinar with registered businesses (including Licensed Venues, Cafes, Restaurants and Food Courts, Hairdressing, Beauty and Personal Services, Gaming & Gambling Venues and Fitness sector) on Wednesday 13 October to provide information on COVID-19 restriction changes for 15 October and answer questions from businesses.*
  - *a webinar with businesses in the Retail Sector on Thursday 21 October to provide information on COVID-19 restriction changes for 22 October and answer questions from retail businesses.*

- **22 Covid-19 Business update EDM distributed to local businesses (the list grew over time to 8,000)**
- *This included direct communications to businesses that had expressed an interest in the two support programs (COVID-19 Business Support Grants and Hardship Fund)*
- *Economic Development facilitated regular business engagement sessions with peak bodies to provide information and answer questions up to 3 times per week.*
- PICC supported Economic Directorate and Access Canberra in providing timely and detailed information to the business community.

## CAMPAIGNS

Stats: 12 August – 15 October

- *The PICC has an Always On campaign media buy in place with Tilt media agency from 1 August – 31 December.*
- *This media buy covers Facebook, radio, digital advertising and search.*
- *The Always On media buy allows the PICC to run public health messaging quickly into market as the situation evolves.*
- **3 Covid-19 specific campaigns were run as part of the Always On media buy during lockdown. To date the total invoiced cost for these campaigns is \$25,809.85.**
- *The total impressions of the paid campaigns on Facebook were 1,547,563.*
- *Road signs across the ACT ran lockdown messaging, including on highways inbound and outbound, along with to the snow and coast.*
- *The COVID-19 campaign media buy was also used during the lockdown period for vaccine messaging.*
- PICC developed creative in house for the following Covid-19 campaigns:
  - ACT Lockdown (2 weeks)
  - Getting tested (3 weeks)
  - Masks (3 weeks)
- The Facebook advertising also included a language translation option.

## KEY AUDIENCE COMMUNICATIONS

- PICC supported the delivery of Covid-19 information to key audiences and stakeholders across the community, including:
  - Business information and advice through Economic Development and Access Canberra
  - Public health information for teachers and parents on school exposure sites through Education Directorate
  - Information for affected staff and customers through Transport Canberra
  - Provision of Covid-19 materials and templates to all ACT Government directorates to ensure consistent whole of Government messaging during the outbreak.

## BUDGET

- Funding in the 2020-21 Budget set out a provisioned amount for the 2021-22 Financial Year of \$1.9m. This included a provisioned 10 FTE.
- A total of \$.4m was deferred from the 2020-21 FY to 2021-22 FY.
- In recognition of the ongoing work in response to the pandemic and required the ongoing staffing, the 2021-22 Budget provided:
  - Funding of \$4.1m, including provision for 10-12 FTE and a new website.

### Expenditure from January - September 2021

	Expenses (ex GST) 20-21 FY (Jan – Jun)	Expenses (ex GST) 21-22 FY (Jul – Sept)
Non Employee	457,124	227,039
Employee	886,135	477,041
<b>Total</b>	<b>1,343,259</b>	<b>704,080</b>

- Under the Australian Governments National Partnership on COVID-19 Response up to 50 per cent of additional expenditure associated with managing the public health response to COVID-19 may be reimbursed.

## PICC COMMUNICATIONS PRIOR TO THE ACT OUTBREAK

- Prior to the ACT outbreak the PICC provided communications support to the Chief Health Officer and Health Emergency Coordination Centre as well as ACT Health on a range of issues:
  - Individual jurisdictional lockdowns and outbreaks, communicating the impacts of travel restrictions and any quarantine requirements for return travellers.
  - Of particular focus was the escalating situation in NSW and Victoria
  - Easing of restrictions for businesses
  - Check In CBR education and behaviour change, embedding checking in into daily lives
  - Reiterating Covid Safe behaviours to the community and tackling complacency of these due to the lack of community transmission in the ACT at the time.
  - Working with CSD and Economic Directorate on specific stakeholder communications around Covid Safe behaviours and responsibilities

## BACKGROUND

### Translated languages

- Arabic\*
- Bangla\*
- Burmese
- Simplified Chinese\*
- Traditional Chinese\*
- Dari

- Dinka
- Persian
- French\*
- Greek\*
- Hindi\*
- Karen
- Korean
- Rohingya
- Spanish\*
- Tagalog\*
- Tamil
- Thai
- Urdu\*
- Vietnamese\*

## 3. EXPENSES 2020-21

Communications expense items	\$ Annual (Ex GST)	Status update
<p>WhoG Media Monitoring Service (<b>Isentia</b>)</p> <p>Isentia provide WhoG media monitoring services to all Territory Directorates (and their subunits, ACT Public Sector Bodies and the ACT Legislative Assembly.</p> <p>The service monitors and summarises coverage of key Territory issues and content in local, national and international media and social media.</p> <p>The service includes curated email briefings, access to a range of self service tools to allow real-time monitoring and reporting and independent insights reporting.</p>	<p>2020-21 Total: \$202,333 (inc GST)</p> <p>2021-22 Total year to date: \$118,731 (plus \$6,900 additional insights reporting)</p>	<p>Contract awarded on 31 Jul 19 following RFT process.</p> <p>Contract: 31061.210 (27 Jul 2019 - 26 Jul 2022) :</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• \$620,000 (36 months inc GST)</li> <li>• \$202,333 annually (inc GST)</li> <li>• \$183,939 annually (ex GST)</li> </ul>
<p>WHOG Editing Service (<b>Shootsta</b>)</p> <p>The Shoosta video editing service delivers edited videos with a 24 hour turnaround time.</p> <p>The service also provides video equipment kits, a digital portal, training and an on-call content strategy advice team.</p>	<p>\$770,880.00 (36 months inc GST)</p>	<p>Contract awarded on 6 Aug 19 following RFT process.</p> <p>Contract: 31082.210 (1 Aug 2019 to 31 July 2022)</p> <p>Most Directorates and agencies take part and contribute financially to the service.</p>
<p>Strategic research and advice on vaccine hesitancy (<b>Kantar Public Consulting</b>)</p>	<p>\$161,425 (Two months inc. GST)</p>	<p>Advice received, implementation phase.</p> <p>Contract: CM2211649 Kantar (19 August 2021 – 18 October 2021)</p>
<p>Climate Action Market Testing (<b>Faster Horses</b>)</p>	<p>\$25,790 (Six months inc. GST)</p>	<p>Market testing of Climate Action narrative ideas, and Everyday Climate Choices brand vs Actsmart brand.</p> <p>Contract: 28062021 Faster Horses (28 June 2021 – October 2021)</p>
<p><b>Creative Services Panel</b></p> <p>The WHOG Creative Services Panel (CSP) is a whole of government arrangement for the purchase of creative services, including marketing, production, communications, engagement, digital, design, photography and media buying.</p>	<p>FY 19-20 total panel expenditure approx. \$7.26m</p> <p>FY 20-21 total panel expenditure approx. \$3.337m</p>	<p>6-year contract (3 year with 3 one-year options).</p> <p>A number of providers were recently extended to September 2022 with the Territory also opting into several Services Australia panels from 1 October for 2 years.</p> <p>The Territory will approach the open market for its Media Buying and Advice requirements during in 2022 prior to expiry of existing arrangements in September 2022.</p>

		<p>Campaign advertising accounted for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• \$3.4m in FY19-20</li> <li>• \$2.25m in FY20-21.</li> </ul> <p>Non-campaign advertising accounted for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• \$713k in FY19-20</li> <li>• \$1.3m in FY20-21.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Community Councils</b></p> <p>An annual grant is provided to each of the eight community councils in order to enable them to communicate the views, expectations and concern of community members to the ACT Government.</p>	<p>\$102,568 budget for 2021-22 Deeds of Grant.</p> <p>\$12,821 for each council.</p> <p>Belconnen Community Council has advised that they will not accept the 2021-22 funding, and will operate from existing funds:</p> <p>\$89,747 adjusted budget for 2021-22 Deeds of Grant</p>	<p>The Molonglo Valley Community Council (previously Molonglo Valley Community Forum) was formally recognised as a new community council in 2021.</p> <p>Eight 2021/22 Deeds of Grant have all been offered (previously seven)</p>
<p><b>Our Canberra Print and Delivery</b> (Shared Services)</p>	<p>\$529,295 in last FY (inc GST). (Approximately \$55,609 per month. \$24,935 for printing, \$33,511 for delivery.) FY 21-22 to date is \$364,049 inc GST for 6 editions including a 6 page edition in July and November 2021 and February 2022.</p>	<p>Delivered to 203,238 households.</p> <p>9 delivered in 2020-21 financial year, due to longer than forecast Caretaker period that prevented editions in October and November being distributed.</p> <p>6 have been delivered this financial year.</p>
<p>WHOG photographic library (<b>Libris</b> Photoshelter)</p>	<p>US \$7,499</p>	<p>Annual subscription</p>
<p>WHOG photography (Paper Monkey) <b>Photography for WhoG use including OC</b> (not registered invoices)</p>	<p>Up to \$19,800 annually</p>	<p>Costs vary based on needs. Max \$2,000 per month for 10 shoots.</p> <p>Through Creative Services Panel. Not required to be added to the ACT Government Contracts Register as under \$25K, due to WHOG procurement guidelines.</p>
<p><b>Independent Reviewer</b> of Campaign Advertising - Prof Dennis Pearce AO</p> <p>The acting Independent Reviewer, Mr Bill Campbell replaced Mr Ian Govey AM from November 2021.</p>	<p>In 2020-21, we paid \$12,250 for campaign advertising reviews. Costs are recovered from relevant business areas across WhoG.</p> <p>We also paid \$6,100 for Your Say Community Panel reviews and administration.</p>	<p>Mr Pearce is the appointed Independent Reviewer through a motion in the Assembly in Feb 20 following an EOI for the position.</p> <p>\$875 per diem for a minimum 5 hours of advice. Employed as Statutory Part-Time Officer Holders.</p> <p>Mr Pearce was also appointed to review market research activities for the Your Say Community Panel since Jun 19.</p> <p>1 Jan 2021 - 30 Jun 2021 – 14 campaigns reviewed, total \$1,232,212</p> <p>1 Jan – October 2021 – 13 surveys have been reviewed</p> <p>1 July 2021 – present (to date) – 8 campaigns reviewed, total \$627,874</p>

Engagement expense items	\$ Actual	Status update
Rollover from 2017-18 for online panel	\$590,000 from 2017-18 rollover due to delays with the project	See below.
<b>YourSay Community Panel</b> (Potentiate)	\$666,000 over three years includes:  \$112,200 annual fee for software licence (Potentiate)  Includes up to \$20,000 annual for incentives and promotions	Panel launched July 2019.  Currently in 3 <sup>rd</sup> and final year of contract with Potentiate.  Contract: 2019 30183210 (29 March 2019 – 29 March 2022).  New tender has been released.
<b>YourSay Community Conversations website</b> (Harvest)	\$132,000 annually  \$660,000 total contract value, August 2020 to August 2025.	Procurement undertaken in 2020. Harvest reappointed for a further 5 years.
<b>CATI Community Views Research</b> (Orima)	\$447,028.31 over three years	Initial contract \$219,010 (four rounds 1 year) Variation \$228,018 (+ 6 rounds over 2 years)  Contract with ORIMA has now expired.  Contract: 2018.29272.210
<b>CRM</b> (Consultation Manager)	\$140,000 over three years  Contract ends November 2021.	For use by Whole of Government Contract: Consultation Manager Platform and Associated Services. In January 2021, we migrated from C3 to C4 of the platform.
<b>Strategic Engagement staff</b>	4 FTE \$2,490,747 over four years	
<b>Resizing exec positions</b>	2 resized positions \$347,774 over 4 years	
<b>Offset</b>	\$400,000 over four years	Reducing the Community Views CATI telephone surveys each year until they are phased out completely in 2021-2022.
<b>Community Support Fund</b> The Community Support Fund is designed to meet emerging community needs, fund initiatives that do not meet any existing ACT Government grants program eligibility requirements, and make donations to charitable organisations on behalf of the ACT Government.	In 2020-21, 28 organisations/initiatives received funding totalling \$183,172	In 2021-22 to date, 9 organisations/initiatives have received funding totalling \$67,000 (as at 20 Oct 2021)

## Community Support Fund recipients 2020-21:

Organisation	Purpose	Amount (ex GST)
ACT Deafness Resource	Donation to upgrade coffee making equipment for clients	\$1,000.00
Anglicare NSW South NSW West & ACT	Donation to support Gordon Community Centre to improve signage	\$5,000.00
Anti Poverty Week	Sponsorship of Anti-Poverty Week 2021	\$15,000.00
Australian Red Cross	Donation to Beirut appeal	\$5,000.00
Australian Red Cross	Donation to 2021 Red Cross Calling appeal	\$10,000.00
Carer's ACT	Donation to support flying street flags for 2020 Carers Week	\$3,000.00
Dennis Rose	Donation to support educational visits to Well Station	\$400.00
Friends of the Grasslands	Donation to support work controlling invasive weeds at Hall Cemetery	\$1,500.00
Friends of the National Arboretum Canberra	Donation towards fundraising for new gazebo	\$20,000.00
Hawker Men's Shed	Donation towards fundraising for a workshop space	\$5,000.00
India Australia Association of Canberra	Donation to provide support to community in response to COVID-19	\$5,000.00
Indian Australian Multicultural Sports Association	Donation to support coaching activities and equipment	\$4,000.00
Karen Champion	Donation to support NRG discos	\$1,500.00
Lake Ginninderra Sea Scouts	Donation towards new motor for safety boat	\$10,000.00
Lifeline Canberra	Donation to Lifeline Canberra Gala Ball fundraiser	\$10,000.00
Order of Australia Association ACT Branch	Donation to support receptions for ACT recipients	\$2,000.00
Palliative Care ACT	Donation to support the introduction of recreational activities.	\$3,000.00
Pegasus Riding for the Disabled ACT	Donation to support Riding for the Disabled of the ACT services	\$15,000.00
Pegasus Riding for the Disabled ACT	Donation to scholarship program	\$3,000.00
Rotary Club of Canberra	Donation to Beirut Calling appeal	\$5,000.00
Roundabout Canberra	Donation to support services	\$15,000.00
Special Children's Christmas Party	Donation to Mix 106.3 Special Children's Christmas Party 2021	\$1,909.09
St Vincent de Paul Society Canberra/Goulburn	Donation to 2021 Vinnie's Winter Appeal	\$12,000.00
The Salvation Army	Donation to 2021 Red Shield Appeal	\$12,000.00
The Santos Science Experiment	Sponsorship of students to attend STEM outreach programs	\$863.64
The Smith Family	Donation to 2020 Christmas Appeal	\$10,000.00
Weston Scout Group	Donation to support 50th anniversary celebrations	\$2,000.00
YWCA Canberra	Donation to Support Mura Lanyon Youth and Community Centre	\$5,000.00
	<b>Total:</b>	<b>\$183,172.73</b>

## Community Support Fund recipients 2021-22 (to date):

Organisation	Purpose	Amount (ex GST)
ATN Canberra	Donation to support first aid training	\$5,000.00
Australian Bravery Association	Donation to support reception prior to Australian Bravery Conference	\$2,000.00
Capital Muslim Welfare Association	Donation to support food relief during COVID-19 lockdown	\$7,500.00
Eastlake Football Club	Donation to support jersey for Pride Round	\$1,500.00
Helping ACT	Donation to support food relief during COVID-19 lockdown	\$10,000.00
Meridian	Sponsorship of 2021 Fair Day	\$10,000.00
Mr Garry Malhotra	Donation to support food relief during COVID-19 lockdown	\$7,500.00
Mr Garry Malhotra (Ken Behran's Helping Hands)	Donation to support food relief during COVID-19 lockdown	\$7,500.00
National Heart Foundation	Donation to Give With Heart Day 2021	\$12,500.00
STEP (Southern Tablelands Ecosystems Park)	Donation towards improving community access to garden	\$3,500.00
	<b>Total:</b>	<b>\$67,000.00</b>

## 4. Financial statement

### Output 1.3: Coordinated Communications and Community Engagement

Budget Statement B Page: 25	2020-21 Original Budget \$'000	2020-21 Interim Outcome \$'000	2021-22 Budget \$'000
<b>Total Cost</b>	13 018	12 643	15 773
Variance \$		-375	3 130
Variance %		-3%	25%
<b>Controlled Recurrent Payments</b>	9 799	10 292	11 065
Variance \$		493	773
Variance %		5%	8%

#### Reconciliations

##### Total Cost

1. The decrease of \$0.375 million in total costs from the 2020-21 Budget to the interim outcome is mainly due to the deferral of expenditure from 2020-21 to 2021-22 associated with the *COVID-19 Public Health Response* initiative (\$0.4 million).
2. The increase of \$3.130 million in total costs from the 2020-21 interim outcome to the 2021-22 Budget is mainly due to the introduction of new initiative *COVID-19 Response – Continuing the COVID-19 Public Health support package* (\$4.074 million).

This is partially offset by the net impact of the deferral and change in expenditure profile of the 2020-21 Budget initiative associated with *COVID-19 Public Health Response* (\$1.157 million).

##### Controlled Recurrent Payments

3. The increase of \$0.493 million in controlled recurrent payments from the 2020-21 Budget to the interim outcome is mainly due to the timing of accessing Controlled Recurrent Payments appropriation to pay for accrued expenditure.

This is partially offset by the rollover from 2020-21 to 2021-22 associated with the *COVID-19 Public Health Response* (\$0.4 million).

4. The increase of \$0.773 million in controlled recurrent payments from the 2020-21 interim outcome to the 2021-22 Budget is mainly due to additional funding associated with the *COVID-19 Response – Continuing the COVID-19 Public Health support package* initiative (\$1.867 million).

This is partially offset by the impact of the deferral and change in funding profile of the 2020-21 Budget initiative associated with *COVID-19 Public Health Response* (\$0.157 million); and the impact of the timing of accessing CRP appropriation to pay for accrued expenditure in 2020-21 interim outcome.

## 5. Budget Accountability Indicators – 1.3

### Output 1.3: Coordinated Communications and Community Engagement

**Table 36: Accountability Indicators Output 1.3**

	2020-21 Targets	2020-21 Interim Outcome	2021-22 Targets
a. Annual numbers of ACT Government Digital Mail Service newsletters	11	31	20
b. Annual number of ACT Government Our Canberra newsletters	10	9	11
c. Annual whole of government Communications and Engagement Plan	1	1	1
d. Annual number of YourSay Community Panel surveys conducted	n/a	n/a	16

**Accountability Indicator Descriptions and Variance Commentary:**

- This accountability indicator covers the total number of ACT Government messages distributed during the year to subscribers of the ACT Government Digital Mail Service. The 2020-21 interim outcome is above target because the Our Canberra electronic direct mail newsletters were sent with higher frequency due to the number of COVID-19 updates sent to the subscriber list.
- The Our Canberra newsletter is distributed to all Canberra households during the year. Editions are published for the five main regions of Canberra - Belconnen; Inner North/Inner South/City; Gungahlin; Tuggeranong and Woden/Weston Creek/Molonglo. The 2020-21 interim outcome is below target as one fewer edition was published due to a longer than anticipated caretaker period.
- This accountability indicator relates to the annual Whole of Government Communications and Engagement Plan which outlines the Government's communications and engagement priorities, to provide advance notice and to enable genuine and meaningful opportunities to participate in consultation and engagement activities.
- New accountability indicator. This accountability indicator relates to surveys conducted through the YourSay Community Panel, which are weighted to provide a representative summary of views and opinions on topics relevant to the work of the ACT Government.



# Top 10 Communications and Engagement

## 1 January – 15 October 2021

	Community Priorities	Access Canberra call centre (calls received)	Websites (unique page views)	Traditional media themes (volume of stories)	Social media posts (impressions, \$boosted)	YourSay Panel (Completed surveys)	Campaigns (total media cost)
1	Health services	Travel – interstate (COVID) <b>42,881</b>	COVID-19 <b>41,635,680</b>	COVID-19 <b>15,550</b> (91.78%)	Lockdown extended to 15 Oct (ACT Health) <b>566,307</b> \$0	Lifestyle Survey (first survey completed by members) <b>4,622</b>	VisitCanberra: Masterbrand Phase 3 <b>\$477,416</b>
2	Housing affordability	Registration establish/transfer <b>19,282</b>	Access Canberra <b>5,708,789</b>	Health <b>10,679</b> (94.11%)	Face masks to become mandatory (ACT Health) <b>522,806</b> \$0	COVID-19 Lockdown Wellbeing Survey <b>2,602</b>	VisitCanberra: Masterbrand Phase 2 <b>\$277,426</b>
3	Providing essential services (waste, roads, parks)	Housing – tenancy management <b>17,864</b>	Jobs.act.gov.au <b>4,223,171</b>	Community safety <b>2,633</b> (93.11%)	Disability advocate gets vaccinated (ACT Health) <b>430,900</b> \$0	Community Priorities Survey <b>2,149</b>	TCCS: Mobile detection cameras <b>\$137,450</b>
4	Taking climate action	Registration - renewal <b>16,906</b>	Transport Canberra <b>3,092,541</b>	Transport <b>2,046</b> (78.89%)	Two doses of a vaccine are needed (ACT Health) <b>416,441</b> Nil	COVID-19 Round 10 Survey <b>2,130</b>	CMTEDD: JobTrainer <b>\$106,947</b>
5	Assisting disadvantaged groups	Wrong number/ No response <b>15,470</b>	ACT Health <b>2,503,120</b>	Economic Growth and Diversification <b>1,949</b> (83.56%)	ACT to enter 7-day lockdown (ACT Health) <b>382,591</b> \$0	COVID-19 Round 9 Survey <b>1,911</b>	VisitCanberra: Masterbrand <b>\$92,894</b>
6	Community infrastructure	Exemptions - COVID <b>15,376</b>	ACT.gov.au <b>2,159,906</b>	Land, Planning and Urban Renewal <b>1,833</b> (74.78%)	Lockdown extended to 17 Sept (ACT Health) <b>343,420</b> Nil	E-scooters Survey <b>1,907</b>	VisitCanberra: Always On Search <b>\$66,343</b>
7	Public transport infrastructure	Registration – unregistered vehicle permit (UVP) <b>9,722</b>	VisitCanberra <b>1,762,907</b>	Supporting Families <b>1,632</b> (76.44%)	Daily COVID update 16 Aug (ACT Health) <b>297,028</b> \$0	COVID-19 Easing of Restrictions Survey <b>1,900</b>	VisitCanberra: Winter <b>\$55,555</b>
8	Planning and building system	Registration - inspections <b>9,669</b>	City Services <b>1,678,173</b>	Environment <b>1,561</b> (86.22%)	Exposure locations update Aug 12 (ACT Health) <b>292,176</b> \$0	Transport & City Services Survey <b>1,766</b>	EPSDD: Heritage Festival <b>\$47,520</b>
9	Education opportunities	Quarantine (COVID) <b>8,782</b>	Education <b>1,314,962</b>	Canberra Community <b>1,521</b> (89.33%)	Exposure locations update Aug 15 (ACT Health) <b>281,846</b> \$0	Coat of Arms Survey <b>1,720</b>	CRA: More Than Braddon <b>\$44,905</b>
10	Protecting and creating local jobs	Bus - timetable <b>6,782</b>	Emergency Services Agency <b>975,711</b>	Education <b>1,364</b> (81.44%)	AIS to open as mass vaxx clinic (ACT Health) <b>281,338</b> \$500	Mixed Topic Survey <b>1,617</b>	SLA: Belconnen Lakeshore <b>\$41,981</b>

## 7. Acting Independent Reviewer Appointment 2021

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### Key facts:

- Prof Dennis Pearce AO is the appointed Independent Reviewer of Campaign Advertising through a motion in the Assembly in Feb 2020 following an EOI for the position.
- Mr Pearce was also appointed to review market research activities for the Your Say Community Panel since Jun 19.
- Mr Bill Campbell was appointed as Acting Independent Reviewer from 12 November 2021 through a motion in the Assembly following an EOI for the position to replace Ian Govey AM who resigned due to limited availability to undertake the role.
- Mr Campbell is a Public International Lawyer with a distinguished career history and extensive experience in law and interpretation of legislation. He has advised successive Australian Governments and is highly qualified to undertake the role.

### Financial implications:

- The Independent Reviewer is remunerated on a per diem basis, at a rate determined by the Remuneration Tribunal which is currently \$875 per diem for a minimum 5 hours of advice.

### Background notes:

- The Independent Reviewer for ACT Government Campaign Advertising is important in ensuring integrity, transparency and trust in the use of public funds for government communications, by ensuring government campaigns comply with the [Government Agencies \(Campaign Advertising\) Act 2009](#).
- The Acting Reviewer can exercise the role of Reviewer when the Independent Reviewer, Professor Dennis Pearce AO, cannot for any reason exercise the functions of the position (for example, illness, leave, absence, unavailability or where a conflict of interest exists).

## 8. YourSay Panel Insights and Metrics

### Key facts:

- From 1 January – 31 December 2021, the CMTEDD Research and Insights team conducted **16 major research studies** via the YourSay Panel. Six of the studies conducted this year were directly related to informing government decision-making on COVID-19.
- Major research topics in 2021 included: e-scooters and public transport usage; major events in Canberra; the Canberra coat of arms; community priorities (in terms of services and programs) and business communications and engagement needs.
- Over **28,000 individual survey responses** were received in 2021. Approximately, 13,000 of those survey responses related to COVID-19 research alone.

Research topic	Dates	No. responses	Client	Purpose
COVID-19 Wellbeing and Support (Round 11)	13-19 Sept '21	2,602	ACT Health; PICC; CMO	To ascertain how well Canberrans are coping (inc. their mental health) with COVID-19 lockdown restrictions and identify any additional support needs.
Light Rail Construction Survey	15-21 November '21	2,541	Major Projects, TCCS	To gauge community awards of potential disruption and perceived impact on travel behaviours from light rail construction.
Community Priorities	30 July-5 Aug '21	2,149	CMO	To rank community priorities for the ACT Government and preferred channels for receiving important information.
COVID-19 Round 10	2-6 July '21	2,130	ACT Health; PICC; CMO	To gauge community views on the use of face masks and to help inform public health messaging.
COVID-19 Round 13	9-14 November '21	1,913	ACT Health; PICC; CMO	To gauge community perspectives as restrictions are lifted and the ACT adapts to 'living with COVID'.
COVID-19 Round 9	18-24 May '21	1,911	ACT Health; PICC; CMO	To ascertain likely uptake of COVID vaccines in the ACT and to inform public health messaging.
E-scooters	8-14 April '21	1,907	TCCS	To help inform a government review into a pilot e-scooter scheme operating in the ACT.
Easing of COVID-19 Restrictions (Round 12)	7-11 October '21	1,900	ACT Health; PICC; CMO	To ascertain community views around lifting of COVID-19 lockdown restrictions including planned return to on campus learning.

Member Profiling Survey	20 July – 3 August '21	1,859	CMTEDD	To ensure Panel member details are up to date and accurate.
TCCS Insights	24 Feb – 1 Mar '21	1,766	TCCS	To ascertain community views on a range of TCS services including public transport usage during the COVID-19 pandemic.
Coat of Arms	1-11 April '21	1,720	CMTEDD	To help inform design options for a Territory Coat of Arms.
Mixed Topic Survey	10-15 Mar '21	1,617	Various clients	Topics of interest included community views on cat containment, drugs policy and police body worn cameras.
Panel Member Experience	11-24 Jan '21	1,600	CMTEDD	To measure community satisfaction with their Panel experience and develop strategies to strengthen engagement and boost panel recruitment and retention.
COVID-19 Round 8	29 Jan-7 Feb '21	1,417	ACT Health; PICC; CMO	To ascertain likely uptake of COVID vaccines in the ACT and to inform public health messaging.
Canberra Major Events	4-10 June '21	1,347	Events ACT	To ascertain community views on the use of fireworks at major events and inform future planning of major events in the ACT.
Business Characteristics	1-11 Mar '21	282	Economic Development	Help understand the type and nature of business owners on the Panel and identify potential avenues to engage with and target businesses in the ACT.

- There are currently **5,858 “active” Panel members** aged 16 years and over. We started 2021 with approximately 3,700 members; meaning we achieved a **net increase of over 2,000 members** in the past twelve months. Members is highly representative of the ACT’s population (age, gender, region, income level).
- One area for improvement is the representation of young Canberrans (specifically Canberrans aged under 25 years). This has been exacerbated by COVID-19 and the reduced number of opportunities for face-to-face engagement and recruitment.
- There are a **minimum of 495 Panel members from the seven regions** across the ACT as per below:
  - Belconnen (1,333)
  - Inner North (1,133)
  - Tuggeranong (1,017)
  - Gungahlin (857)