ACT Government
Justice and Community Safety

Open Access release outcome decision – Partial access granted

Document Category: Ministerial Briefs

Title of document: Minister for Police and Emergency Services – Quarter 4 2020 briefs

Description of the information: Question Time Briefs provided to the Minister for Police and Emergency Services between 1 October and 31 December 2020.

The original record of this document contained information the release of which would be contrary to the public interest. This information has been redacted from this publicly available version of the document for the reasons outlined below.

Grounds for decision to withhold disclosure

It was decided certain information contained in the document would not be disclosed as, on balance its release would be contrary to the public interest test set out in section 17 of the FOI Act.

I have included below the relevant factors considered in making this decision.

2.1 Factors favouring disclosure in the public interest

(a) Disclosure of the information could reasonably be expected to do any of the following:

(i) promote open discussion of public affairs and enhance the government's accountability;

(ii) contribute to positive and informed debate on important issues or matters of public interest;

(iv) ensure effective oversight of expenditure of public funds;

(viii) reveal the reason for a government decision and any background or contextual information that informed the decision.

I consider that the release of the ministerial briefs may be expected to help inform ongoing discussions and debate on matters of continued public importance. The disclosure of this information additionally helps in promoting government accountability and transparency.

2.2 Factors favouring non-disclosure in the public interest

(a) Disclosure of the information could reasonably be expected to do any of the following:

(ii) prejudice the protection of an individual's right to privacy or any other right under the Human Rights Act 2004.

On balance, I consider the ministerial briefs to be in the public interest to release, with minor redactions. This includes redactions to the personal information of ACT Policing staff where disclosure could reasonably be expected to prejudice their right to privacy.

Review rights

My decision to release or withhold open access information is a reviewable decision as identified in Schedule 3 of the FOI Act. You can seek an Ombudsman review of this outcome under section 73 of the Act within 20 working days from the day that my decision is published on the Justice and Community Safety Directorate website, or a longer period allowed by the Ombudsman.

If you wish to request a review of my decision, you may write to the ACT Ombudsman at:

ACT Ombudsman
Attention: ACT Strategy and FOI Section
GPO Box 442
CANBERRA ACT 2601
Via email: actfoi@ombudsman.gov.au

Further assistance

If you have any queries regarding this Open Access release, please contact JACSFOI@act.gov.au or phone (02) 6207 2167.

Authorised by

L. Callow

Lauren Callow
Information Officer
2 January 2026

ACT Government
Justice and Community Safety

OPEN ACCESS Q4 2020 SCHEDULE
PORTFOLIO: MINISTER FOR POLICE AND EMERGENCY SERVICES

No.	Folio	Description	Date	Status	Reason for non-release or deferral
Question Time Briefs - Sitting Days 2 & 3 December 2020					
1	1-2	Question Time Briefs Index - 2 & 3 December 2020	December		
2	3-5	ACT Policing Covid-19 Response and Preparedness	December	Partial	Sch 2, s2.2 (a)(ii)
3	6-9	Wellbeing and Support for Frontline Emergency Responders	December		
4	10-11	Assaults on Police and Frontline Community Services Providers	December		
5	12-15	Serious and Organised Crime Response	December		
6	16-19	OMCG Incidents	December	Partial	Sch 2, s2.2 (a)(ii)
7	20-21	Safety of Women in our Community	December	Partial	Sch 2, s2.2 (a)(ii)
8	22-25	Property Crime Campaign	December		
9	26-27	Key Data ACT Policing	December	Partial	Sch 2, s2.2 (a)(ii)
10	28-33	ACT Policing Crime Statistics	December	Partial	Sch 2, s2.2 (a)(ii)
11	34-36	ACT Policing Workforce	December	Partial	Sch 2, s2.2 (a)(ii)
12	37-39	AFP Initiative: Mental Health	December	Partial	Sch 2, s2.2 (a)(ii)
13	40-41	Complaints Regarding ACT Policing	December	Partial	Sch 2, s2.2 (a)(ii)
14	42-43	Futures Program - Progress and Transition	December	Partial	Sch 2, s2.2 (a)(ii)
15	44-47	Closed Circuit Television	December		
16	48-52	National Security Issues	December		
17	53-58	2019-20 Bushfire Season	December		
18	59-60	2020-21 Bushfire Season	December		
19	61-65	Key Data ESA	December		
20	66-67	ACTAS Resourcing	December		
21	68	ACTF&R Resourcing	December		
22	69-72	Election Commitments	December		
23	73	ComCen Update	December		
24	74	Blueprint for Change	December		
25	75	Cladding	December		
26	76-81	Cannabis	December		
27	82-83	Chief Minister's Volunteer Fund	December		
28	84-88	Independent Integrity Commission	December		

MINISTER FOR POLICE AND EMERGENCY SERVICES
QUESTION TIME BRIEFS

COVID-19 Related	
1.	ACT Policing COVID-19 Response and Preparedness
Joint QTBs	
2.	Wellbeing and support for frontline emergency responders
3.	Assaults on police and frontline community service providers
4.	Serious and Organised crime response
5.	OMCG incidents
6.	Safety of Women in our Community
7.	Property Crime Campaign
ACT Policing QTBs	
8.	Key Data ACT Policing
9.	ACT Policing Crime Statistics
10.	ACT Policing Workforce
11.	AFP Initiative: Mental Health
12.	Complaints regarding ACT Policing
13.	Futures Program - Progress and Transition
SEMB QTBs	
14.	Closed Circuit Television (CCTV)
15.	National Security Issues

ESA QTBs	
16.	2019-20 Bushfire Season
17.	2020-21 Bushfire Season
18.	Key Data ESA
19.	ACTAS Resourcing
20.	ACTF&R Resourcing
21.	Election Commitments
22.	ComCen Update (UFU issues, recruitment of call techs) (recent developments in NSW)
23.	Blueprint for Change

24.	Cladding 2
Cross-Government	
25.	Cannabis (CMTEDD)
26.	Chief Minister's Volunteer Fund (CMTEDD)
JACS Ongoing Issues	
27.	Independent Integrity Commission

QUESTION TIME BRIEF

MIN:2020/000092-023

Portfolio/s: Police & Emergency Services

ISSUE: **ACT Policing Preparedness and Response to the COVID-19 Pandemic**

Talking points:

- ACT Policing is committed to the safety of our community and will continue to support Canberrans during the current COVID-19 situation. ACT Policing members remain visibile and mobile on our roads and in the community.
- ACT Policing's workforce is flexible and adaptable to emergency situations. Police members are trained and extremely competent in responding and operating in rapidly changing environments.
- ACT Policing has an established COVID-19 Taskforce which continues to ensure its frontline resources remain well positioned and able to continue to provide a 24/7 policing response to the community.
- Since its formation, the ACTP COVID 19 Taskforce has conducted a total of 14325 compliance checks on a total of 3638 individuals in self isolation or quarantine within the ACT (excluding diplomats, as at 29 November 2020).
- Should a breach be identified, police have a discretion in how to deal with the matter, however an educational approach is always considered in the first instance. If there is an intentional non-compliance with self-isolation, the person involved can expect a fine.
- ACT Policing is working collaboratively with ACT Health in relation to the compliance and enforcement of directions under the Public Health Act 1997 (ACT) for COVID-19 measures.
- ACT Policing's Territory Targeting Team has utilised the interactions they have with the community as an opportunity to educate the public on social distancing and compliance measures.
- ACT Policing has received a number of reports of non-compliance, all of which have been referred to ACT Health who remain the lead agency in response to COVID-19.

Cleared as complete and accurate:	30/11/2020	
Cleared for public release by:	Deputy Director-General	Ext:
Contact Officer name:	Sch 2, s2.2 (a)(ii)	Ext:
Lead Directorate:	Justice and Community Safety	
TRIM Ref:	2020/000092-023	

QUESTION TIME BRIEF

- The ACT's existing criminal laws provide a suite of offences. This means the Territory is prepared with the measures needed to ensure people who threaten or harm others with the spread of COVID-19 can be charged.
- Police have made it clear to the community that threats involving COVID-19 and spitting or coughing on emergency workers could end in serious penalties, including jail.
- ACT Policing is also continuing to work with Government agencies and non-government partners to ensure a collaborative approach in providing support to victims of family violence during the current situation.

ACT Policing Health and Welfare

- ACT Policing COVID-19 taskforce is continuing to ensure that ACT Policing officers have Personal Protection Equipment (PPE), such as hand sanitiser, gloves, protective eyewear and P2/N95 masks readily available as required.
- ACT Policing introduced a COVID-19 app available on all members' UOC phones so important operational and safety information is easily accessible.
- ACT Policing's Territory Targeting Teams have developed a system of checking those in quarantine or self-isolation which keeps officers safe and doesn't expose them to the virus.
    - In the case of those in self-isolation, a spot-check consists of police phoning to advise they are at the location, and asking those in the house to identify themselves and physically produce identification, such as a driver's licence, usually from a window.
- ACT Policing's Welfare Network and the COVID-19 taskforce continue to work together to provide welfare and support mechanisms to members, address any concerns and clarify processes in regards to possible COVID-19 exposure.

Cleared as complete and accurate:	30/11/2020	
Cleared by:	ACT Policing	Ext:
Contact Officer name:	Sch 2, s2.2 (a)(ii)	Ext:
Lead Directorate:	Justice and Community Safety	
Cleared for release	Yes	
Information Officer name:		
TRIM Ref:		

QUESTION TIME BRIEF

Suspension of services

- The following ACT Policing services that were temporarily suspended but returned to routine operations on 2 June 2020.
    - Community bookings for fingerprint services
    - Justice of the Peace services at all five police stations
- ACT Policing attendance at community events and engagements and the Constable Kenny Koala program remain suspended.
- All police stations in the ACT remain open, and people are encouraged to call ACT Policing Operations on 131 444 as a first point of contact in a non-life threatening emergency. In an emergency or a life threatening situation, the community is instructed to call Triple Zero (000).

Social Media

- ACT Policing's social media team has been updating and educating the public through messaging via its Facebook, Twitter and Instagram platforms. This is done in collaboration with partner agencies to ensure there is consistency in messaging.
- ACT Policing has published a spotlight link on its public website landing page as another means by which the public can access relevant information and updates.

Cleared as complete and accurate:	30/11/2020	
Cleared for public release by:	Deputy Director-General	Ext:
Contact Officer name:	Sch 2, s2.2 (a)(ii)	Ext:
Lead Directorate:	Justice and Community Safety	
TRIM Ref:	2020/000092-023	

QUESTION TIME BRIEF

MIN:2020/000090-025

Portfolio: Police & Emergency Services

ISSUE: WELLBEING AND SUPPORT FOR FRONTLINE EMERGENCY RESPONDERS

Talking points:

- The health and wellbeing of emergency services personnel is a key priority for this Government. It is important that they are aware of available support services, and that they know we fully support them in minimising exposure to stressors, and in recovering from any ill effects experienced in their line of work.

ACT Emergency Services Agency

- The ACT Emergency Services Agency (ESA) has delivered a number of initiatives that enable its volunteers and staff to better manage ever-present stressors that are experienced by emergency service personnel as they seek to protect our community.
- The ESA has a Director – Welfare Programs, which is a full-time senior manager position. Their role and responsibility is to work across the ESA to develop welfare and wellbeing initiatives.
- In addition to delivering initiatives internally, the Director – Welfare Programs is also a member of the Council of Ambulances Australia (CAA) Mental Health and Wellbeing Working Group, and the Australasian Fire and Emergency Service Authorities Council (AFAC) Mental Health and Wellbeing Network. This allows the ESA to work collaboratively in sharing resources and developing partnerships with our interstate colleagues.
- Mental health training packages are available for all ESA volunteers and staff, to ensure that we are providing education that will increase the resilience of our workforce. The ESA is currently delivering an advanced program for the ACT Ambulance Service which provides personnel with a psychological first aid framework to support staff when they have been exposed to a potentially traumatic event.

Cleared as complete and accurate:	01/12/2020	
Cleared for public release by:	Commissioner	Ext:
Contact Officer name:	Georgeina Whelan	Ext:
Lead Directorate:	Justice and Community Safety	
TRIM Ref:	2020/000090-025	

- This program is modelled on the Victorian Ambulance MANERS Psychological First Aid training. The ESA also arranges Mental Health First Aid courses, which provides education and information on the mental health conditions and disorders that people face in their community and workplace.
- The ESA has made a concerted effort to increase the number of Peer Support Officers that are trained and available across the ESA. Peer Support Officers are volunteers or staff in their respective service who offer early intervention and peer support to personnel. Assistance can be requested by the individual or through a notification process by their manager or service. All four services now have a Peer Support Program, which is a first in the ESA.
- The ESA has three volunteer Chaplains to provide support across the whole of the ESA.
- In addition, the ESA maintains relationships with not-for-profit organisations such as Beyondblue and Soldier On. These organisations provide opportunities for collaboration and wellbeing service provision, such as yoga, counselling, and social activities where staff can engage.
- The ESA has also committed to providing its personnel with access to the Road to Mental Readiness Courses through Lifeline. In addition, the Australian Defence Force has offered the ESA two places on the Arts for Recovery, Resilience, Teamwork and Skills (ARRTS) Program each year. The program assists personnel to address wellbeing issues, individual recovery, and improve confidence and resilience through the medium of arts.
- The ESA also works closely with Fortem Australia. Fortem is an evidence-based community support organisation that offers Australia's national security officials and first responders (working as employees or volunteers) with comprehensive and integrated wellbeing support. The ESA Commissioner, Ms Georgeina Whelan, is a board member of Fortem.

QUESTION TIME BRIEF

ACT Policing

- ACT Policing recognises the stress factors of community policing, and is dedicated to early intervention and support strategies for all ACT Policing members.
- ACT Policing members are routinely exposed to traumatic events in the course of their duties such as attending suicides, fatal motor vehicle accidents, family violence incidents and serious assaults.
- Research has indicated cumulative exposure to traumatic incidents has the potential to increase the risk factors for psychological injury.
- The operational requirement to work a rotating roster of day and night shifts also has an impact on the mental wellbeing of members.
- ACT Policing has three dedicated police officers performing Welfare Officer roles. These Welfare Officers provide support to members for a range of matters including critical incidents, work-place matters, personal matters, and as an initial support contact for the provision of further assistance. These members are available 24/7.
- Through the ACT Government's funding for ACT Policing's transition to a new model of police service, ACT Policing now has two dedicated psychologists who provide a proactive and response support service to ACT Policing members.
- All AFP members also have 24/7 access to a clinician from the AFP Psychological Services team, as well as the AFP Chaplaincy Network.
- ACT Policing is listening and acting on health advice, and strengthening measures to help protect ACT Policing members as well as the community from COVID-19.
- As the situation surrounding COVID-19 continues to evolve, the AFP is providing additional welfare support to members who are self-isolating due to COVID-19.
- In 2017, Australian Federal Police (AFP) Organisational Health commenced a project aimed at reducing the psychological impact of traumatic exposure within the AFP.

QUESTION TIME BRIEF

- An AFP project team conducted a review of the 'early intervention wellbeing support system' implemented by Victoria Police and developed an equivalent AFP wellbeing program which is currently under evaluation.
- In August 2018, AFP Organisational Health commenced this pilot wellbeing program with a number of ACT Policing teams. The program encourages members to seek early assistance with support from supervisors.
- This program is anticipated to assist in facilitating early intervention and support for ACT Policing members where required. The pilot is currently under evaluation and these results will determine appropriate future action.
- Additional resources available to ACT Policing members include a Fitness app and the 'equipt' wellbeing app.
- In 2019, the AFP committed to providing access to the Road2 Mental Readiness courses through Lifeline. These courses were launched in February 2019 and though currently on hold due to Covid restrictions, will be open to ACT Policing members for at least the next two years.
- This is an Australian-first partnership and the program will equip officers with coping strategies and tools to encourage them to address mental health concerns earlier. The program originated with Canadian armed forces before being expanded to first responders with great success ofer 10 years of operation.
- As at 31 December 2019, a total of 238 ACT Policing employees have completed the Road 2 Mental Readiness training since it was launched.
- First responders that have participated in the program have shown an increase in resiliency skills, a decrease in stigmatising attitudes and an increase in mental health wellbeing.

Background Information

- Nil

Cleared as complete and accurate:	01/12/2020	
Cleared for public release by:	Commissioner	Ext:
Contact Officer name:	Georgeina Whelan	Ext:
Lead Directorate:	Justice and Community Safety	
TRIM Ref:	2020/000090-025	

QUESTION TIME BRIEF

MIN:2020/000095-058

Portfolio: Police & Emergency Services

ISSUE: ASSAULTS ON POLICE AND FRONTLINE COMMUNITY SERVICE PROVIDERS

Talking points:

- Police and frontline community service providers are regularly exposed to a risk of assault and injury as an unfortunate reality of their jobs.
- Assaults on police and emergency services personnel warrant a strong response from Government.
- The *Crimes (Protection of Frontline Community Service Providers) Amendment Act 2020* commenced on 10 June 2020. The Act creates a new offence specifically for assaults against frontline workers including:
    - Police officers;
    - Protective service officers and special protective service officers;
    - Corrections workers;
    - Paramedics
    - Firefighters and volunteer firefighters; and
    - Emergency services employees and volunteers.
- This new standalone offence sends a clear message that violence against workers providing critical frontline services will not be tolerated.
- Previously, offenders have been charged with common assault when an assault has been committed against a frontline worker. The new standalone offence will improve accountability by ensuring that the true nature and seriousness of the crime is described on a criminal record.
- The Amendment Act also creates new offences for driving at police and ramming police vehicles to send a clear signal that those who engage in this dangerous behaviour will be held to account.
- Emergency first responders are required to step forward to face risks that others are expected to step away from, and it is appropriate for the law to specifically reflect this and support them.

Cleared as complete and accurate:	30/11/2020	
Cleared for public release by:	Executive Branch Manager	Ext:
Contact Officer name:	Stephanie Johns	Ext:
Lead Directorate:	Justice and Community Safety	
TRIM Ref:	2020/000095-058	

- The Government is also committed to ensuring a safe and healthy work environment through policies, procedures, and strategies to mitigate the risk of assault and injury. This includes training all of our emergency services personnel, to assist in identifying and managing potentially high risk situations.

Key Information

Background information

Prior to the passage of the The *Crimes (Protection of Frontline Community Service Providers) Amendment Bill 2020*, there were no specific ACT offences for assaulting police or emergency service workers while executing their duties.

All other jurisdictions in Australia have introduced specific offence provisions for assaulting police.

Between 30 June 2011 and 16 March 2020, ACT Policing recorded 374 instances of assaults upon police.

The Queensland Sentencing Advisory Council recently conducted a review of penalties for assaults on police and other emergency service workers, corrective services officers and other public officers. Terms of Reference were issued by the Queensland Attorney-General and Minister for Justice, the Honourable Yvette D'Ath MP in early December 2019. The Council publicly released the Final Report on 1 October 2020 (https://www.sentencingcouncil.qld.gov.au/__data/assets/pdf_file/0004/657742/final-report-assault-public-officers.pdf).

QUESTION TIME BRIEF

MIN:2020/000095-025

Portfolio/s: Attorney-General

ISSUE: SERIOUS AND ORGANISED CRIME RESPONSE

Criminal gangs are involved in illegal activities across Australia, including serious drug offences, fraud and property crime, vehicle rebirthing, firearms offences, money laundering, extortion and serious assaults.

TALKING POINTS

- Countering serious and organised crime and maintaining public safety is a primary focus for the ACT Government.
- Outlaw motorcycle gangs (OMCGs) have been identified as having high involvement in serious criminal activities. A February 2020 report by the Australian Institute of Criminology found that violent and profit-motivated offending is common among members of OMCGs, and that there is evidence that joining an OMCG increases a person's propensity to commit crime.
- As at 19 November 2020, there are four known OMCGs operating in the ACT. The total number of members associated with the ACT chapters of these gangs is approximately 30-40 people. This is a decrease from previously reported numbers of approximately 70 members in 2018-2019 and is a result of members being deported, imprisoned or fleeing interstate.
- Between January 2019 and September 2020, in the ACT, 57 OMCG members were charged with a total of 124 offences. In this period, 46 search warrants were executed and 17 firearms seized.

Key Taskforce Nemesis figures (Criminal Motorcycle Gang related figures)	**2018**	**2019**	**2020***
Criminal gang members charged**	27	37	20
Offences charged	78	85	39
Search warrants executed	100	37	9
Firearms seized	20	12	5

**As of 30 September 2020*

***A person may be charged more than once in a year

Cleared as complete and accurate:	30/11/2020	
Cleared for public release by:	Executive Branch Manager	Ext:
Contact Officer name:	Stephanie Johns	Ext: 59908
Lead Directorate:	Justice and Community Safety	
TRIM Ref:	2020/000095-025	

- The ACT Government is strongly committed to targeting, disrupting, and prosecuting organised criminal gang members and ensuring the safety of all Canberrans.
- ACT Policing'sTaskforce Nemesis continues to focus on operational and investigative responses to criminal gang activity. Through the Taskforce, ACT Policing continues to proactively disrupt criminal gang members to deter and detect criminal activity. The Government has provided continued investment to ensure that ACT Policing has the resources it needs to combat criminal gangs in the ACT.
- In the 2018-19 Budget, $1.6 million over four years was provided to Taskforce Nemesis. These resources fund two specialist officers – a forensic accountant and surveillance team member – to bolster the ability of the taskforce to combat organised crime, strip criminal wealth and improve surveillance capability to monitor the activity of criminal gangs.
- The 2019-20 Budget delivered a further $2.8 million over four years to the ACT Director of Public Prosecutions to assist with efforts to combat serious and organised crime including to strip criminals of their criminal profits.
- During the 2019-20 financial year, almost $1.5 million was forfeited to the Territory under the *Confiscation of Criminal Assets Act 2003*. These funds came from the seizure of cash, 16 motor vehicles and 6 real estate properties and mostly involved offenders convicted of serious drug offences. The funds will be used by the ACT Government to fund projects related to criminal justice activities, crime prevention and assistance to victims of crime.

<u>Recent legislative reform</u>

- The *Confiscation of Criminal Assets (Unexplained Wealth) Amendment Act 2020* was passed on 23 July 2020. The Act introduces an ACT-specific unexplained wealth scheme to more effectively prevent and investigate organised crime and target the criminal profits of organised crime groups.

- The new scheme complements existing confiscation of criminal assets laws in the ACT. The new unexplained wealth scheme allows the police and Director of Public Prosecutions (DPP) to intervene when there is a suspicion that part of a person's wealth was not lawfully acquired. The court must make an unexplained wealth order if it is satisfied that there are reasonable grounds to suspect that a person's total wealth exceeds the value of the person's wealth that was lawfully acquired and that the whole or any part of the person's wealth was derived from serious criminal activity.
- The unexplained wealth scheme allows ACT Policing and the DPP to more effectively target those involved in drug trafficking or other serious organised criminal activity and those masterminding or directing criminal activity at arms-length.
- The Commonwealth *Unexplained Wealth Legislation Amendment Act 2018* passed Parliament on 19 September 2018. The Act extends Commonwealth unexplained wealth orders to certain ACT offences.
- The *Crimes (Disrupting Criminal Gangs) Legislation Amendment Act 2019*, which was passed in November 2019, introduced a range of measures to improve public order and safety in the Territory including:
    - New tiered offences of serious affray;
    - Increased penalties for offences of fighting (section 391 of the *Crimes Act 1900*) and offensive behaviour (section 392 of the *Crimes Act 1900*);
    - Increased maximum penalties for specified offences committed in connection with a criminal group or by a person associated with a criminal group;
    - A civil exclusion order scheme under the *Liquor Act 2010* that allows the Chief Police Officer to apply to the court for an order to prohibit a certain person from entering or remaining on licensed premises for a stated period; and
    - A licence cancellation scheme under the *Liquor Act 2010* and the *Construction Occupations (Licensing) Act 2004* that allows the Chief Police Officer to make an application for the cancellation of a person's licence on the basis of their criminal activity.

- These measures address serious public safety concerns about the risk to community safety posed by organised crime.
- The *Crimes (Fortification Removal) Amendment Act 2017* commenced on 1 September 2018. The Act introduced provisions that allow the Chief Police Officer to apply to the Magistrates Court for an order that an occupier remove fortifications from their premises. The Act also introduces provisions which prohibit the establishment of fortifications on certain premises.
- These laws work to make the ACT a hostile environment for criminal gangs by preventing the establishment of fortified premises such as criminal gang club houses.
- The *Crimes (Police Powers and Firearms Offence) Amendment Act 2017* commenced on 8 December 2017. The Act introduced statutory crime scene powers to allow police officers to preserve evidence in a timely manner at crime scenes in both public and private places while taking the least restrictive approach to limiting a person's right to privacy.
- The Act also creates a new offence of 'drive by shooting' which deals with people shooting at a building, including a home, whether from a car or otherwise. The offence is punishable by a maximum of 10 years imprisonment.

Background

A review of the effectiveness of ACT policing powers to target, disrupt, investigate and prosecute criminal gang members in conjunction with a statutory review of the ACT crime scene powers was undertaken by Dr Terry Goldsworthy of Bond University in late 2019. The Report on this review was tabled in the Assembly on 20 February 2020. The Report highlights that the ACT Government has successfully implemented legislative responses to combat serious and organised crime to date, and that these legislative tools are effective and proportionate. The Report does not indicate a need for further significant legislative reform, other than an ACT-specific unexplained wealth scheme which has now been introduced.

QUESTION TIME BRIEF

MIN: 2020/000092-019

Portfolio: Minister for Police & Emergency Services

Attorney-General

ISSUE: CRIMINAL OUTLAW MOTORCYCLE GANG INCIDENTS

TALKING POINTS:

- The ACT Government and ACT Policing are committed to countering serious and organised crime by criminal gangs, and maintaining public safety.
- Taskforce Nemesis is focussed on combating criminal motorcycle gang behaviour in the ACT. The taskforce often collaborates across whole-of-government to create innovative strategies to disrupt criminal gang behaviour.
- In 2016, the ACT Government provided $6.4 million over four years for the expansion of Taskforce Nemesis to target organised crime syndicates including Criminal Motorcycle Gangs. This funding included eight staff: four investigators, two intelligence officers, one Forensic Accountant and an Investigative Assistant.
- In the 2018-19 Budget, ACT Government committed a further $1.594 million over four years to bolster the capability of Taskforce Nemesis in providing funding for one Forensic Accountant, one Surveillance Team Member and associated equipment and training.
- ACT Policing will continue to ensure an appropriate police response to target and disrupt those seeking to cause harm in our community.
    - ACT Policing is also in a unique position as it can call on specialist and surge capabilities from the broader AFP to meet changing operational environments.
- In 2017, the Federal Government provided funding to combat organised crime through the National Anti-Gangs Squad (NAGS). Taskforce Nemesis has an embedded NAGS member, enabling interoperability and liaising on matters of operational and strategic importance. NAGS bring together the resources and expertise of Federal and state/territory agencies to cooperate and share information to identify, target, disrupt and deter gang-related crime.

Cleared as complete and accurate:	30/11/2020	
Cleared for public release by:	Deputy Director-General	Ext:
Contact Officer name:	Sch 2, s2.2 (a)(ii)	Ext:
Lead Directorate:	Justice and Community Safety	
TRIM Ref:	2020/000092-019	

QUESTION TIME BRIEF

Recent operational activity

- On Thursday 19 November 2020, Taskforce Nemesis conducted a search warrant on a member of the Rebels Criminal Bikie Gang and seized approximately 300 grams of cocaine, cash, paraphernalia associated with the sale and supply of illicit substances, and two firearms.
- **Michael Wayne Clark, National President of the Nomads Criminal Bikie Gang,** was arrested during a joint ACT Policing/NSW Police operation on 19 August 2020.
    - On 20 August 2020 NSW Police successfully applied for his extradiction. He remains remanded in NSW and is expected to apply for bail in the NSW Supreme Court in December.
    - Mr Clark has been accused of supplying guns used in three shootings in the Bateman Bay area in 2019. Investigations are still ongoing in relation to ACT specific offences.
- The investigation into the death of **Comanchero Commander Pitasoni Ulavalu** at a Civic nightspot early on Sunday 19 July is ongoing. The investigation will include any links to Criminal Motorcycle Gang activity.
    - ACT Policing has charged one male with murder and five males with affray. Four defendants have been bailed with two remaining in custody.
    - One defendant is set to appear before court on 15 December 2020, with the remaining five defendants set to appear before court on January 12, 2021.

Operational successes

Taskforce Nemesis Criminal Motorcycle Gang related figures (at 22 Nov 20)	**2018**	**2019**	**2020**
Criminal gang members charged *(person may be charged on numerous occasions)*	27	37	21
Offences charged	78	85	48
Search warrants executed	100	37	12
Firearms seized	20	12	5

Cleared as complete and accurate:	30/11/2020	
Cleared for public release by:	Deputy Director-General	Ext:
Contact Officer name:	Sch 2, s2.2 (a)(ii)	Ext:
Lead Directorate:	Justice and Community Safety	
TRIM Ref:	2020/000092-019	

QUESTION TIME BRIEF

- ACT Policing has established a whole-of-government interagency working group, with representatives from a number of local and Commonwealth government agencies to consider all aspects of criminal gang behaviour in the ACT. The group is based on the Commonwealth NAGS model that brings a whole-of-government approach to addressing this issue.
- An example of the results achieved through close collaboration with partner agencies to disrupt Criminal Motorcycle Gang activity was in August 2019 when Taskforce Nemesis and ACT Worksafe conducted a compliance operation at a building site. The formwork company at the building site was operated by the ACT chapter Commander of the Comanchero Motorcycle Gang. This operation resulted in the issuance of a compliance notice and ensured no employee of the company could work on a construction site until all compliance issues were rectified.
- The confiscation of criminal assets is an effective tool to assist in the prevention and disruption of serious and organised crime and prevents the reinvestment of illegally obtained wealth into criminal activity.
- It is anticipated additional agencies will be invited to future working groups to further drive Taskforce Nemesis' ambitions to disrupt Criminal Motorcycle Gang activities.

<u>OMCGs in Canberra</u>

- As at 19 November 2020:
    - There are four known Criminal Motorcycle Gangs, two of which have increasingly limited influence, operating in the ACT.
    - The total number of members associated with ACT chapters of these Criminal Motorcycle Gangs is estimated at approximately 30-40 people.
    - This is a decrease from the previously reported numbers of approximately 70 members in 2018-19 and is as a result of members being deported, imprisoned or fleeing insterstate.
- Criminal Motorcycle Gang membership has traditionally been relatively stable, however, changes to criminal gang membership in recent years highlight a shift towards more fluid concepts of membership.

Cleared as complete and accurate:	30/11/2020	
Cleared for public release by:	Deputy Director-General	Ext:
Contact Officer name:	Sch 2, s2.2 (a)(ii)	Ext:
Lead Directorate:	Justice and Community Safety	
TRIM Ref:	2020/000092-019	

- Serious and organised crime is not limited to openly-identifiable criminal gangs and ACT Policing will continue to proactively target, prosecute and disrupt those involved in serious and organised crime in the ACT - regardless of their individual affiliations.

Background information

- While 'patch-overs' have been known to occur from time to time, large numbers of patch overs have occurred in recent years. These changes to club numbers can affect the structure and strength of a Criminal Motorcylce Gang, and has had a significant impact upon the strength and rivalry between Criminal Motorcycle Gangs in the ACT.
- Appropriate legislative frameworks are an essential component to enable police to effectively disrupt and dismantle criminal organisations. A number of legislative amendments have been made to increase the tools available to police and enhance the response capacity of police officers. Most recently, these have included legislation passed on fortifications, drive-by shootings and crime scene powers.
- ACT Policing has had additional powers available since 2017 that have enhanced its ability to respond to and prosecute criminal gang-related acts of violence after the fact.
- Recent legislative amendments to help equip ACT Policing in combating criminal motorcycle gang activity has included:
    - Laws providing powers to remove fortification from dwellings;
    - Laws enabling police to establish crime scenes;
    - A tiered regime of affray offences;
    - Laws allowing police to apply to exclude individuals from working in certain industries or attending licensed premises.

QUESTION TIME BRIEF

MIN:2020/000092-016

Portfolios: Police & Emergency Services

ISSUE: SAFETY OF WOMEN IN OUR COMMUNITY

Talking points:

- Canberra remains one of Australia's safest cities.
- ACT Policing is committed to the safety of members of our community and are continuing to support people during the COVID-19 pandemic.
- ACT Policing will continue to work with Government agencies and non-government partners to ensure a collaborative approach in providing support to victims of family violence.
- There were 3198 family violence related incidents in 2019-20 compared to 2984 for previous financial year, an increase of 7.2 per cent.
- Family violence related assault offences increased by 1.6 per cent (or 19 offences), when compared to the previous financial year. From 1 July 2019 to 30 June 2020, there has been 1177 family violence related assault offences reported to ACT Policing.
- ACT Policing treat all reports of assaults seriously and invest every available effort in providing a safe community for ACT residents.
- In 2019-20, the ACT recorded a result of 92.3 per cent for residents who feel safe at home during the night. This is 4.2 per cent above the national average (88.1 per cent).
    - 41.3 per cent of ACT residents surveyed felt safe on public transport in the ACT at night. This is well above the national average of 33.5 per cent.
    - These strong results reflect the efforts of the ACT Government and ACT Policing working with partner agencies and the community to maintain and improve community safety in Canberra's public spaces.

Cleared as complete and accurate:	30/11/2020	
Cleared for public release by:	Deputy Director-General	Ext:
Contact Officer name:	Sch 2, s2.2 (a)(ii)	Ext:
Lead Directorate:	Justice and Community Safety	
TRIM Ref:	2020/000092-016	

QUESTION TIME BRIEF

Public Transport Safety

- All public transport vehicles in the ACT are fitted with CCTV security cameras, which are used in accordance with ACT Government guidelines, relevant regulations and legislation.
- Safety for all of those who live in our community is important to this Government and ACT Policing.
- ACT Policing undertakes education and prevention strategies and works with community organisations to educate members of the community on personal safety, which include measures that can be put in place to mitigate the risk of becoming a victim of crime.

YWCA Canberra survey

- YWCA Canberra is a feminist not-for-profit organisation that has provided community services and represented women's issues in Canberra since 1929.
- A survey conducted by the YWCA indicated more than half of women surveyed still experienced sexism or feeling unsafe at night:
    - The survey was a one-off survey by YWCA as part of their 90th year anniversary. The survey consisted of 1090 Canberra women aged 18 and older across every post code, education level and income bracket in the city.
    - 24 per cent of 18-24 year old women stated that they had experienced emotional, physical, verbal or financial abuse in a domestic or interpersonal relationship over the last twelve months.
- ACT Policing treat all reports of assaults seriously and invest every available effort in providing a safe community for ACT residents.

QUESTION TIME BRIEF

MIN:2020/000095-048

Portfolio/s: Justice, Consumer Affairs & Road Safety and Minister for Police and Emergency Service

ISSUE: OUTSMART THE OFFENDER CAMPAIGN

Talking points:

- The bicycle theft campaign, 'Lock it or lose it' was launched on Friday 17 July 2020. ACT Government and ACT Policing have partnered with Pedal Power ACT to promote the messages of this campaign.
    - Lock it - don't leave your bike unsecured, whether you are at home, or out and about a secured bike is much harder to steal.
    - Use a heavy duty lock and fasten your wheels, make it hard work for your bike to be stolen.
    - Lock your frame and wheels to fixed objects like purpose-built bike racks.
    - Be smart about where you park. Park in places that are well lit and secure
- The ACT has some of the lowest property crime rates in Australia, but we need to remain vigilant because property crime can affect any one of us.
- The 'Outsmart the Offender' campaign supports the Government's Property Crime Prevention Strategy 2016-2020 which focuses on preventing crime from occurring by reducing opportunities for offenders to commit crime.
- The first theme for the campaign 'Motor Vehicle Theft' was launched in November 2019 through social media and radio advertising. The second theme 'Home Burglary' was released in December 2019 via social media only. The third theme 'Apartment Theft' was released in February 2020 via social media only.
- The final themes to be released are 'Tradie tool theft and Small Business Theft. These were delayed to keep communication channels clear for important health messages around COVID 19.

Cleared as complete and accurate:	29/09/2020	
Cleared by:	Executive Branch Manager	Ext: 62619
Contact Officer name:	Kym Copeman	Ext:53749
Lead Directorate:	Justice and Community Safety	
Cleared for release	Yes	
Information Officer name:	Jennifer McNeill	
TRIM Ref:	MIN:2020/000095-048	

- The key messages are based on what our police officers have told us about the tactics offenders are using to steal cars and our valuables, and break into our homes and businesses.
- Our aim is to increase community awareness about how these crimes usually occur and the steps we can all take to 'outsmart offenders' and reduce our risk of becoming a victim to property crime.
- Ideally people wouldn't need to worry about becoming a victim of property crime, and our police officers do a great job at keeping Canberra safe, tracking down and arresting car thieves.
- However, we all have a role to play and can take steps to reduce the likelihood of our cars being broken into or stolen and our homes being burgled.

<u>'Lock and hide to protect your ride' and 'Keep out a break in'</u>

- Having your car stolen or your house burgled can be a huge inconvenience, cost you time and money, not to mention the stress it can cause for people.
- We know that often stolen cars are used to commit other crimes, so it is important to raise awareness about how cars are being stolen and what we can do to reduce the risk of it happening to us.
- While some offenders are resorting to breaking into houses to steal car keys, they also look for easy targets like open windows, unlocked doors and cars left running in the driveway.
- By keeping your car keys in a safe place, closing all your windows and locking your doors, you can 'outsmart the offender' by making it harder to steal your car. And don't tempt them by leaving valuables in your car either.
- Equally to discourage and 'keep out a break in' you should lock your doors and windows, keep valuables where no one would look, maintain your yard so there's nowhere to hide and get to know your neighbours.

QUESTION TIME BRIEF

‘Lock up, Cover up’

- Apartment buildings are just as vulnerable to break-ins and theft as other homes, so you need to ensure all doors, including balcony doors, are locked at all times.
- We know storage areas are a key target for offenders. By keeping your valuables covered up and using heavy duty locks you can ‘outsmart the offender’ by making it more difficult to identify items of value and make it harder for them to break the lock.
- Be aware of any suspicious people hovering around that may follow you into your building as you enter your complex, including the garage.

‘Lock it or Lose it’

- Hundreds of bicycles are stolen across Canberra every year. Bike thieves are often opportunistic, meaning that if a bike is unsecured and unattended, it could be gone in seconds.
- Common places bikes are stolen from are front yards, apartment balconies and car bike racks.
- To reduce the likelihood of having your bike stolen lock it – don’t leave your bike unsecured, whether at home or out and about. When locking it make sure to use a heavy duty lock and park it in places that are well lit and secure.

Key Information

- Overall the number of property offences in the ACT has decreased over the last three years since the Property Crime Prevention Strategy 2016-2020 was introduced.
- In 2018-19 there were 19,637 recorded property offences, which is 2,033 less than three years ago in 2015-16.
- After spiking in 2017-18, motor vehicle theft did decrease again in 2018-19, down from 1,486 to 1,224 offences.

Cleared as complete and accurate:	29/09/2020	
Cleared by:	Executive Branch Manager	Ext: 62619
Contact Officer name:	Kym Copeman	Ext:53749
Lead Directorate:	Justice and Community Safety	
Cleared for release	Yes	
Information Officer name:	Jennifer McNeill	
TRIM Ref:	MIN:2020/000095-048	

QUESTION TIME BRIEF

Background Information

- The main challenge for the ACT in relation to property crime continues to be motor vehicle theft. While it is encouraging that motor vehicle theft decreased in the ACT 2018-19, we remain above the national rate.
- JACS and ACT Policing have been working collaboratively on this campaign which aims at improving community awareness about what people can do to safeguard their property.
- Neighbourhood Watch and Crimestoppers have partnered with us on the campaign to help promote the key messages. Pedal Power has partnered with ACT Government and ACT Policing to assist promoting the 'lock it or lose it' bicycle theft campaign.

Cleared as complete and accurate:	29/09/2020	
Cleared by:	Executive Branch Manager	Ext: 62619
Contact Officer name:	Kym Copeman	Ext:53749
Lead Directorate:	Justice and Community Safety	
Cleared for release	Yes	
Information Officer name:	Jennifer McNeill	
TRIM Ref:	MIN:2020/000095-048	

QUESTION TIME BRIEF

MIN: 2020/000092-015

Portfolio: Police & Emergency Services

ISSUE: ACT POLICING KEY DATA

ACT Policing

Staffing

	2018-19[3]	**2019-20**	**Change**
FTE[1]	977.94	967.17	↓10.77
Headcount[2]	927	923	↓4
Sworn	710	697	↓13
Professional	217	225	↑8
PSO		1	↑1

[1] This figure represents ACT Government funded positions, which includes capability provided by the AFP of 107 FTE

[2] Headcount is as at 30 June of the respective financial year

[3] These figures are as per the 2018-19 ACT Policing Annual Report

ACT Policing Budget

Original 2017-18 Appropriation	Revised 2017-18 Appropriation	Original 2018-19 Appropriation	Revised 2018-19 Appropriation	Original 2019-20 Appropriation	Revised 2019-20 Appropriation
$161,331,000**	$158,895,000	$166,919,000	$166,279,000	$169,451,000	$170,195,350

**As published in 2017-21 Purchase Agreement.

2019-20 Budget Adjustments

The following adjustments occurred:

- $715,000 for Support for increasing financial pressures for core policing functions – Forensic Medical Contract
- $29,000 for the Disability Justice Strategy

Cleared as complete and accurate:	26/11/2020	
Cleared for public release by:	Deputy Director-General	Ext:
Contact Officer name:	Sch 2, s2.2 (a)(ii)	Ext:
Lead Directorate:	Justice and Community Safety	
TRIM Ref:	2020/000092-015	

QUESTION TIME BRIEF

Call Outs –Financial Year comparison

Category	2018-19 FY # of call outs	2018-19 FY Average Response time H:MM:SS	2019-20 FY # of call outs	2019-20 FY Average Response time H:MM:SS
Priority 1	265 19.2% decrease from 2017-18 (328)	0:08:04 0:01:04 increase from 2017-18	180 32.1% decrease from 2018-19	0:06:03 0:02:01 decrease from 2018-19
Priority 2	14,189 5.6% decrease from 2017-18 (13,432)	0:53.58 0:19:48 increase from 2017-18	15,365 8.3% increase from 2018-19	0:58:04 0:04:46 increase from 2018-19
Priority 3	27,455 12.5% decrease from 2017-18 (24,408)	5:03:00 1:04:00 increase from 2017-18	24,014 12.5% decrease from 2018-19	9:10:08 4:06:08 increase from 2018-19

Summary of Key Strategies

As part of the *Purchase Agreement 2017-21,* ACT Policing supports a whole–of-government approach in achieving the objectives of ACT Government Strategies, particularly those addressing crime. These Strategies include, but are not limited to:

- *Property Crime Prevention Strategy 2016-20*.
- *Blueprint for Youth Justice in the ACT 2012-22*.
- *Supporting the National Plan to Reduce Violence against Women and their Children 2010-2022*
- *ACT Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Agreement 2019-28*.
- *ACT Road Safety Strategy 2011-20*.

QUESTION TIME BRIEF

MIN:2020/000092-014

Portfolio: Police & Emergency Services

ISSUE: ACT POLICING CRIME STATISTICS

Talking points:

General crime trends

- I am pleased to see that the number of overall offences reported for the 12 months ending 30 September 2020 show a **decrease of 8.0 per cent (or 2735 offences**), when compared to the previous 12 months. Offences that recorded significant **decreases** included:
    - Armed robbery decreased by 45 per cent (or 58 offences).
    - Burglary of shops decreased by 29.5 per cent (or 131 offences).
    - Sexual assault offences decreased by 26.6 per cent (or 173 offences).
- ACT Policing remains effective in addressing criminal activity and I thank the Chief Police Officer and all police officers for their efforts to reduce crime and keep Canberra safe.

Offence Type	Oct10 - Sep11	Oct15 - Sep16	Oct16 - Sep17	Oct17 - Sep18	Oct18 - Sep19	Oct19 - Sep20	12 month % Change	Long Term % Change
Homicide	4	7	6	10	7	8	14.3%	100.0%
Assault - FV	864	1232	1348	1149	1220	1147	-6.0%	32.8%
Assault - Non-FV	1696	1501	1690	1682	1778	1530	-13.9%	-9.8%
Sexual Assault	361	494	569	519	650	477	-26.6%	32.1%
Other offences against a person	123	291	330	247	328	338	3.0%	174.8%
Robbery - armed	145	93	133	113	129	71	-45.0%	-51.0%
Robbery - other	117	76	125	100	119	107	-10.1%	-8.5%
Burglary dwellings	2069	1437	1723	1599	1644	1353	-17.7%	-34.6%
Burglary shops	320	430	345	282	444	313	-29.5%	-2.2%
Burglary other	564	732	563	593	565	514	-9.0%	-8.9%
Motor vehicle theft	1092	1124	1450	1313	1302	1205	-7.5%	10.3%
Theft (excluding Motor Vehicles)	10259	10859	9414	9598	8759	7718	-11.9%	-24.8%
Property damage	6999	5128	5445	4624	4903	3930	-19.8%	-43.8%
Other offences	9797	10769	12571	12775	12301	12703	3.3%	29.7%
Total	**34410**	**34173**	**35712**	**34604**	**34149**	**31414**	**-8.0%**	**-8.7%**

- Overall, **offences have decreased by 8.7 per cent** when comparing the 12 months ending 30 September 2020 with a comparable period 10 years ago.
- The total number of offences reported to ACT Policing between 1 October 2019 and 30 September 2020 was 31,414.
- While a number of incidents ACT Policing attend do not result in a criminal offence being identified, it is taking police longer to resolve an incident due to the increasingly complex underpinning social issues present.

Cleared as complete and accurate:	27/11/2020	
Cleared for public release by:	Deputy Director-General	Ext:
Contact Officer name:	Sch 2, s2.2 (a)(ii)	Ext:
Lead Directorate:	Justice and Community Safety	
TRIM Ref:	2020/000092-014	

QUESTION TIME BRIEF

Offences against the person

- The total number of offences recorded against the person from 1 October to 30 September was 3504 offences, **a decrease of 12.0 per cent (or 479 offences)**, when compared to the previous 12 months.
- From 1 October 2019 to 30 September 2020, there were 525 alcohol-related assaults reported to ACT Policing. This is a decrease of 28.3 per cent (or 207 offences) when compared to the previous 12 months.
- There were eight homicide related offences between 1 October 2019 and 30 September 2020, **an increase of one offence** when compared to the previous 12 months.

Family violence

- From 1 October 2019 to 30 September 2020, there has been 1147 family violence related assault offences reported to ACT Policing. This is a **decrease of 6.0 per cent (or 73 offences)**, when compared to the previous 12 months.
- The ACT Government and ACT Policing are proactively responding to family violence issues in our community in an effort to keep victims safe and reduce the likelihood of these incidents occurring.
- In the 2019-20 Budget, the ACT Government invested $24 million over four years towards additional initatives including:
    - building whole of government and multi-agency domestic and family violence capability, coordination and supporting infrastructure;
    - improving the capacity of front-line domestic and family violence services to meet increased demand; and
    - supporting the testing of new approaches, particularly those generated through the Family Safety Hub.

Cleared as complete and accurate:	27/11/2020	
Cleared for public release by:	Deputy Director-General	Ext:
Contact Officer name:	Sch 2, s2.2 (a)(ii)	Ext:
Lead Directorate:	Justice and Community Safety	
TRIM Ref:	2020/000092-014	

QUESTION TIME BRIEF

Offences against property

- The total number of offences recorded against property for the 12 months ending 30 September 2020 shows **a decrease of 14.6 per cent (or 2882 offences)**, when compared to the previous 12 months.
- For the 12 months ending 30 September 2020 the number of property damage offences has **decreased by 19.8 per cent (or 973 offences)** when compared to the previous 12 months.
- Theft (excluding motor vehicles) has **decreased by 11.9 per cent (or 1041 offences)** in the 12 months ending 30 September 2020, when compared to the previous 12 months.

Release of ABS data on victims of crime

- The Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) report *Recorded Crime – Victims Australia 2019* (RCVA) shows that Canbera remains one of the safest cities in Australia. The ACT Government and ACT Policing are committed to ensuring that continues.
- Despite this, the report shows an increase in the majority of victim-based offences when comparing 2018 and 2019.
- The report also shows a number of increases in victims of property offences in 2019, including:
    - robbery (up 5.8 per cent),
    - motor vehicle theft (up 1.5 per cent),
    - other theft (up 1.0 per cent), and
    - unlawful entry with intent (up 18.6 per cent).
- Long term trends show a decreasing trend for victims of robbery, unlawful entry with intent, motor vehicle theft and other theft. Victims of homicide, assault, sexual assault, kidnapping/abduction and blackmail/extortion have been increasing over the long term.
- The total number of victims of sexual assault in the ACT has increased by 69.4 per cent from 193 victims in 2010 to 327 victims in 2019. However, after accounting for population growth, the ACT recorded the second lowest victimisation rate of 76.6 per 100,000 persons for sexual assault in 2019.

Cleared as complete and accurate:	27/11/2020	
Cleared for public release by:	Deputy Director-General	Ext:
Contact Officer name:	Sch 2, s2.2 (a)(ii)	Ext:
Lead Directorate:	Justice and Community Safety	
TRIM Ref:	2020/000092-014	

- The number of assault victims recorded in the ACT has remained relatively stable since the series began, increasing from 2,352 victims in 2010 to 2,399 victims in 2019.
- Of the six states and territories for which assault data was available, the ACT had the lowest victimisation rate at 562.2 victims per 100,000 persons.
- In 2019 when compared to national victimisation rates the ACT had lower rates of homicide, sexual assault, kidnapping/abduction, blackmail/extortion, unlawful entry with intent and other theft. The ACT had higher victimisation rates for robbery and motor vehicle theft. National victimisation rates for assault are not available as Victoria and Queensland did not provide assault victims data

Sexual assault

- In the RCVA report, the ACT had the second lowest victimisation rate of sexual assault nationally; however, showed a 17.6 per cent increase in the number of victims for sexual assault offences comparing 2018 and 2019 calendar years.
- At present, the increase in sexual assault offences cannot be linked to a specific reason; however, ACT Policing hopes the broader community is becoming more aware of the option to report this serious offence.
- ACT Policing has a number of support mechanisms for victims of crime, including a dedicated Victims of Ctime Team who offer support by providing access to counselling and support services, assisting with victim impact statements and offering information on financial assistance that may be available.
- Additionally, investigators from ACT Policing's dedicated Sexual Assault and Child Abuse Team (SACAT) work closely with the victims to ensure support is provided throughout the entirety of the investigative and prosecutorial process.
- The Wraparound Referral Program is a function of the Sexual Assault Reform Program (SARP), to assist victims gain access to relevant support agencies for victims of sexual crime/conduct. The purpose of the Wraparound Referral Program is to ensure that victims of sexual offences who have reported incidents to police are supported throughout the criminal justice process. A Wraparound Referral is completed by police with the victim's consent.

- ACT Policing's Crime Reduction Education and Diversion team also attend secondary schools and present on issues such as personal safety and respectful relationships to educate and inform students.

Property crime

- The RCVA report shows victims of property type offences increased in 2019 when compared to 2018, including robbery, unlawful entry with intent, motor vehicle theft and other theft.
- While unlawful entry with intent in the ACT had the third lowest victimisation rate nationally, the ACT had the third highest rate for robbery.
- Under the Property Crime Prevention Strategy 2016-2020, ACT Policing has worked in collaboration with the Government to develop the Outsmart the Offender community campaign.
- The campaign works to provide key messages about how people can reduce the likelihood of becoming a victim to motor vehicle and bicycle theft, home and apartment burglary, and theft from their business or tradies' tools. ACT Policing also continues to develop and implement strategies to target recidivist property crime offenders.
- ACT Policing's Community Intelligence Team analyses a variety of information sources (incidents, information reports, human source management team etc.) to identify patterns, convergences and prioritisation to maximise crime reduction opportunities and increase community safety.

Background Information

One of the main sources of data for these publications is the live database from ACT Policing's case management system, the Police Real-time Online Management Information System (PROMIS). As PROMIS is live, crime data is continually revised as people report crime and investigations progress. This means there can be variances in the statistics data set if drawn from the live database on a different date.

Due to different counting methodologies, data included in ABS publications will differ to other publications such as as the ACT Policing Website crime statistics and the ACT Criminal Justice Statistical Profile. This is because they are based on specific counting rules in order to allow national comparison across jurisdictions

Publications can count the number of offences reported to police, the number of charges, offenders or victims. All of these will result in different statistics on the same type of crime.

Cleared as complete and accurate:	27/11/2020	
Cleared for public release by:	Deputy Director-General	Ext:
Contact Officer name:	Sch 2, s2.2 (a)(ii)	Ext:
Lead Directorate:	Justice and Community Safety	
TRIM Ref:	2020/000092-014	

QUESTION TIME BRIEF

When considering data relating to victims of crime, the most widely used source of data is the number of victims recorded in PROMIS. It is important to note however, not all crime is reported to police.

ABS Crime Victimisation Data

The *ABS Crime Victimisation* publication relies on a national survey that asks people to self-identify if they have been a victim of crime. This publication captures data on rates of reporting crime to police. One of the roles of the ABS Crime Victimisation, Australia survey is to provide an indication of the extent of unreported crime. The ACT as a sample size is usually small which results in low confidence in the survey results.

ABS Recorded Crime - Victims

The *ABS Recorded Crime – Victims* publication presents national statistics relating to victims for a selected range of offences recorded by police between 2010- 2018 (calendar years). Victimisation rates are calculated based on the number of victims per 100,000 of population. These offences may have been reported by a victim, witness or other person, or they may have been detected by police. They provide indicators of the level and nature of victimisation.

It is important to note that under the RCVS counting methodology a victim can be a person, premises, organisation or motor vehicle.

The data from the Crime Victimisation, Australia survey will differ from the ABS yearly Recorded Crime Victims series as the latter collection specifically presents crime reported to police.

The ABS has published victimisation rates for person based crime only, and has not published victimisation rates for property crime. The ACT rates for property crime have been estimated by ACT Policing from the data provided and ABS population data.

ACT Policing uses clearance types for offences, which means that each offence entered in PROMIS is categorised as either ‘cleared’ or ‘not cleared’. Arrests, summons, charges are all categorised as ‘cleared’ by ACT Policing. These are defined as ‘finalised’ by the ABS.

In the ACT, offences where no offenders have been identified remain open to further investigation and may not be defined as ‘finalised’. ACT Policing keeps a matter open until all avenues of investigation have been explored.

Cleared as complete and accurate:	27/11/2020	
Cleared for public release by:	Deputy Director-General	Ext:
Contact Officer name:	Sch 2, s2.2 (a)(ii)	Ext:
Lead Directorate:	Justice and Community Safety	
TRIM Ref:	2020/000092-014	

QUESTION TIME BRIEF

MIN:2020/000092-012

Portfolio: Police & Emergency Services

ISSUE: ACT POLICING WORKFORCE

Talking points:

ACT Policing Workforce Composition:

	2018-19[3]	2019-20	Change
FTE[1]	977.94	967.17	↓10.77
Headcount[2]	927	923	↓4
Sworn	710	697	↓13
Professional	217	225	↑8
PSO		1	↑1

[1] This figure represents ACT Government funded positions, which includes capability provided by the AFP of 107 FTE

[2] Headcount is as at 30 June of the respective financial year

[3] These figures are as per the 2018-19 ACT Polcing Annual Report

- ACT Policing delivers an agile and intelligence-led policing service to the ACT. through the enabling services provided by the broader Australian Federal Police (AFP), ACT Policing also has access to an additional suite of specialist resources.
- In the 2019-20 financial year, 73 new recruits graduated and joined ACT Policing as follows:
    - 14 new recruits commenced with ACT Policing on 18 November 2019;
    - 29 new recruits commenced on 30 March 2020; and
    - 30 new recruits commenced on 13 May 2020;
- The 2019-20 financial year saw a decrease in total headcount down to 923 employees from 927 in 2018-19.
    - Sworn ACT Policing members decreased by 13 people, professional members increased by eight, and PSO numbers increased by one.
- In 2019-20, 53 ACT Policing members separated from the organisation. Of these members, 37 were sworn and 16 were professional.

Cleared as complete and accurate:	26/11/2020	
Cleared for public release by:	Deputy Director-General	Ext:
Contact Officer name:	Sch 2, s2.2 (a)(ii)	Ext:
Lead Directorate:	Justice and Community Safety	
TRIM Ref:	2020/000092-019	

QUESTION TIME BRIEF

Police Service Reforms

- In March 2017, ACT Policing commenced a Policing Futures reform program to ensure the organisation is best positioned to serve the Canberra community now and into the future.
- The Futures program will ensure that our police officers are provided with the tools, technology, governance, policies and resources to do their work efficiently, effectively and to the best of their ability.
- On 30 May 2019, the ACT Government announced $33.9 million in funding to transition ACT Policing to a community focused policing model. This funding includes recruitment for more than 60 positions over four years.
- This marks the first step towards a new community focused model of policing, which will focus on operationalising intelligence, building proactive policing capacity and growing community engagement capabilities.

If asked about a freeze on AFP/ACT Policing transfers

- There is no freeze on regional transfers.
- Ensuring there is regular mobility both into and out of ACT Policing is a priority for the AFP as it generates benefits for both staff and the organisation as a whole.
- In determining mobility releases outof ACT Policing, ACT Policing's primary consideration is to ensure that resourcing meets the requirements set out by the ACT Government, and the expectations of the ACT community.
- Transfers 'at current level' are considered on a case by case basis using an open and transparent decision making framework. Where ACT Policing members are found suitable for promotions or higher duties positions for longer than six months in duration outside of ACT Policing, these transfers are automatically approved in accordance with the AFP's governance framework.
- Mandatory releases to national AFP ensure that ACT Policing members have regular opportunities for significant professional development across the organisation.

Cleared as complete and accurate:	26/11/2020	
Cleared for public release by:	Deputy Director-General	Ext:
Contact Officer name:	Sch 2, s2.2 (a)(ii)	Ext:
Lead Directorate:	Justice and Community Safety	
TRIM Ref:	2020/000092-019	

QUESTION TIME BRIEF

If asked about Police overtime:

- ACT Policing continuously monitors workloads to minimise, where possible, the requirement for members to undertake overtime. However, like all emergency services and other police forces, overtime continues to be used to support operational priorities where required.
- The need for overtime is influenced by a range of factors including (but not limited to):
    - The ongoing response to COVID-19
    - Significant investigations or response to critical incidents
    - Responses to family violence and mental health incidents which require lengthy engagement to provide appropriate support for victims and clients
    - Responses to incidents near the end of a rostered shift
    - Unplanned absences (sick leave, workplace injuries)
    - Attendance at court
    - Major events such as football games, sporting events and other entertainment events, staffed by ACT Policing on overtime on a cost recovery basis
- ACT Policing recognises the need to limit the amount of overtime required to be worked by its members. But as an emergency response agency, some level of overtime should be expected to ensure community safety.
- All factors that influence overtime requirements are regularly reviewed in an effort to minimise their occurrence.
- ACT Policing reports overtime expenditure in the ACT Policing Annual Report (Financial Statements).

Financial Year	Overtime, Penalties and Allowances
2013-14	$6.711m
2014-15	$6.974m
2015-16	$6.657m
2016-17	$7.110m
2017-18	$9.068m
2018-19	$8.842m
2019-20	**$8.661m**

Cleared as complete and accurate:	26/11/2020	
Cleared for public release by:	Deputy Director-General	Ext:
Contact Officer name:	Sch 2, s2.2 (a)(ii)	Ext:
Lead Directorate:	Justice and Community Safety	
TRIM Ref:	2020/000092-019	

QUESTION TIME BRIEF

MIN:2020/000092-010

Portfolio/s: Police & Emergency Services

ISSUE: AFP INITIATIVE: MENTAL HEALTH

Talking points:

- Over the past two years, the AFP has demonstrated that the physical and mental health of its people is a high priority by engaging professional expertise and support from both inside and outside Australia.
- The AFP will continue to explore new ways of providing support and easing the pressures on a workforce that is under constant pressure to get the job done.
- ACT Policing has three dedicated police officers performing the role of Welfare Officers. These Welfare Officers provide support to members for a range of matters, including critical incidents, work-place matters, personal matters, and as an initial support contact for the provision of further assistance. These members are available 24/7.
- Through the ACT Government's funding for ACT Policing's transition to a new model of police service, ACT Policing now has two dedicated psychologists who provide a proactive and response support service to ACT Policing members.
- All AFP members also have 24/7 access to a clinician from the AFP Psychological Services team, as well as the AFP Chaplaincy Network.
- As the situation surrounding COVID-19 continues to evolve, the AFP is providing additional extra welfare support to members who are self-isolating due to COVID-19.

Cleared as complete and accurate:	30/11/2020	
Cleared for public release by:	Deputy Director-General	Ext:
Contact Officer name:	Sch 2, s2.2 (a)(ii)	Ext:
Lead Directorate:	Justice and Community Safety	
TRIM Ref:	2020/000092-010	

QUESTION TIME BRIEF

Key initiatives

- As AFP members, ACT Policing have access to a range of support methods, including:
    - The AFP has a contracted external Employee Assistance Program, provided by Benestar, which is a confidential counselling service available to all personnel, former members and their families, 24/7.
    - The AFP Early Access Program provides early, coordinated and effective responses to work related injury/illness including medical, psychological and vocational rehabilitation.
    - The Welfare Officer Network provides peer support to members, families and former members.
    - The AFP partnered with Lifeline Australia over intensive periods such as the Christmas and Australia Day holidays to provide a dedicated hotline for AFP personnel.
- The AFP will continue to partner with Lifeline Australia into the future to deliver a range of first-responder specific training.
- In 2019, the AFP committed to providing access to the Road2 Mental Readiness courses through Lifeline. These courses were launched in February 2019 and though currently on hold due to Covid restrictions, will be open to ACT Policing members for at least the next two years.
    - This is an Australian-first partnership and the program will equip officers with coping strategies and tools to encourage them to address mental health concerns earlier. The program originated with Canadian armed forces before being expanded to first responders with great success over 10 years of operation.
    - A total of 238 ACT Policing employees have completed the Road to Mental Readiness training since it was launched.
- First responders that have participated in the program have shown an increase in resiliency skills, a decrease in stigmatizing attitudes and an increase in mental health wellbeing.

- The AFP participated in the Beyond Blue national mental health and wellbeing study of police and emergency services. Results indicate that ACT Policing and AFP are on or below the police average for:
    - Prevalence of very high stress and probable post-traumatic stress disorder.
    - Suicidal thoughts.
    - Substance misuse.
- The AFP scored higher than the police average in demonstrating a commitment to addressing mental illness.
- In August 2018, AFP Organisational Health commenced a pilot wellbeing program (iTrack) with a number of ACT Policing teams (as well as broader AFP teams) that encourages members to seek early assistance with support from supervisors.
- This program is anticipated to assist in facilitating early intervention and support for ACT Policing members where required. The pilot is currently under evaluation and these results will determine appropriate future action.

AFP suicides

- There have been four apparent suicides by AFP members on AFP premises since February 2017.
- In late 2018, the AFP changed its policy to access firearms afterhours at AFP Headquarters. This has not been implemented within ACT Policing as it would have significant adverse effects on operational responsiveness.

QUESTION TIME BRIEF

MIN:2020/000092-008

Portfolio/s: Police & Emergency Services

ISSUE: COMPLAINTS REGARDING ACT POLICING MEMBERS

Talking points:

- ACT Policing takes all allegations of member misconduct seriously and all complaints are thoroughly investigated.
    - Complaints relating to serious misconduct are investigated by the AFP Professional Standards area and are also reported to the Commonwealth Ombudsman for additional oversight.
    - Complaints relating to customer service matters and minor misconduct are investigated by ACT Policing's Complaint Management Team.
- In the 2019-20 financial year, AFP Professional Standards received 110 complaints resulting in 168 alleged conduct breaches being recorded. It is important to note that multiple breaches can result from one complaint.
    - This is a decrease on the 122 alleged conduct breaches in 2018-19, and a decrease on the 276 alleged conduct breaches in 2017-18
- Thirty nine per cent of alleged conduct breaches were reported by an ACT Policing member, including conduct that was self-reported. This high percentage of internally-generated complainants indicates the strength and integrity of the AFP complaint management framework.

<u>Use of Force</u>

- All AFP members, including ACT Policing members, must act in accordance with Commissioner's Order 3 (CO3), which provides governance around the use of force by members.
- Under CO3, all ACT Policing sworn members are required to successfully complete use of force training and assessments annually.
- The training focuses on communication and conflict de-escalation as alternatives to physical force, in addition to the practical interpretation and knowledge in applying the appropriate of use of force.

Cleared as complete and accurate:	23/03/2020	
Cleared for public release by:	Deputy Director-General	Ext:
Contact Officer name:	Sch 2, s2.2 (a)(ii)	Ext:
Lead Directorate:	Justice and Community Safety	
TRIM Ref:	2020/000092-008	

- ACT Policing reviews every use of force incident to ensure it complies with AFP standards and policies.
- Positively, the introduction of Body Worn Cameras has vastly decreased the time taken to investigate use of force complaints and serves by providing independent and accurate evidence of the member's conduct.

Commonwealth Ombudsman Review

- ACT Policing is committed to an effective, efficient and transparent complaints management process.
- ACT Policing works closely with AFP Professional Standards, the Australian Commission for Law Enforcement Integrity and the Commonwealth Ombudsman to ensure that ACT Policing employ a best practice approach to the management of complaints.
- While the AFP has a robust complaint management framework, we continue to work with our integrity stakeholders to improve systems wherever possible.
- In early 2019, the Commonwealth Ombudsman initiated the "*Complaint Assurance Project*" (CAP) – an own-motion initiative to assess the effectiveness of complaint management frameworks and promote critical self-reflection upon complaint management practices.
    - ACT Policing is one of a number of agencies which undertook the CAP.
    - ACT Policing welcomes any opportunity to identify room for improvement. ACT Policingare committed to delivering a professional policing service to the ACT.
- In December 2019, the Ombudsman provided conclusion to this project. ACT Policing is reviewing the recommendations of this project.

QUESTION TIME BRIEF

MIN:2020/000092-024

Portfolio/s: Police & Emergency Services

ISSUE: FUTURES PROGRAM - PROGRESS AND TRANSITION

Talking points:

- In May 2019 the ACT Government announced the investment of $33.9m over the next four years to enable ACT Policing to transition from a response-focused police services model towards a more community-focused and crime prevention model of police service.
- This investment sees the recruitment of over 60 new ACT Policing personnel, and marks the first step towards the delivery of a more visible, proactive and connected police service.
- This investment allows ACT Policing to focus more efforts on education, disruption, prevention, diversion, community engagement and problem-solving activities which support key Government priorities and targets.
- As part of this investment in ACT Policing, the ACT Government is funding new tools and technology for police officers such as:
    - Additional Body Worn Cameras (BWC) and firearm sensors: While the procurement of remaining BWCs was delayed due to the COVID-19 situation, ACT Policing has commenced its current phase of implementation.
    - Online reporting: Development of this capability has commenced. Online reporting is a multi-year project, an initial tool will be launched on the ACT Policing website in the 2020-21 financial year.
- ACT Policing PSM recruitment:
    - The Operationalised Intelligence Team has been recruited, with processes now developed to enable a transition to a business-as-usual function by the end of the year. This team will continue to improve real time situational awareness and support better decision making for ACT operational members.

Cleared as complete and accurate:	26/11/2020	
Cleared for public release by:	Deputy Director-General	Ext:
Contact Officer name:	Sch 2, s2.2 (a)(ii)	Ext:
Lead Directorate:	Justice and Community Safety	
TRIM Ref:	2020/000092-024	

QUESTION TIME BRIEF

- Additional support members have been recruited, including a psychologist and occupational therapist, to provide mental health and wellbeing support for ACT Policing members.
- The first Proactive Policing team of 10 members has been recruited, and are currently operating in the Canberra community in the proof of concept stage. A full assessment and transition to business as usual is planned in early 2021. Two additional teams will be recruited over the four year lifespan of the Police Services Model funding.

Cleared as complete and accurate:	26/11/2020	
Cleared by:	ACT Policing	Ext:
Contact Officer name:	Sch 2, s2.2 (a)(ii)	Ext:
Lead Directorate:	Justice and Community Safety	
Cleared for release	Yes	
Information Officer name:	Jane Hemmings	
TRIM Ref:	MIN:2020/000092-024	

QUESTION TIME BRIEF

MIN: 2020/000099-004

Portfolio: Police & Emergency Services

ISSUE: CLOSED CIRCUIT TELEVISION (CCTV)

Talking points:

HOT TOPICS

Public Safety CCTV Network Expansion into Glebe Park

- Glebe Park is a wonderful public amenity in Civic that remains popular with individuals and families alike.
- The safety of users of this location remains a priority to the government as part of its ongoing focus on safer public places, venues and events.
- The government is expanding the ACT's Public Safety CCTV Network into Glebe Park to strengthen public safety and better support ACT Policing to investigate crimes that occur in the park.
- The cost of the installation is approximately $190,000 and is being funded from the government investment of $475,000 towards CCTV upgrades in the ACT Budget 2018-19.
- Four CCTV cameras will be installed which is anticipated to be completed in early 2021.

Henry Rolland Park – Theft of Brass

- The theft of brass from Henry Rolland Park on Saturday 26 September 2020 is the second act of theft from this popular public amenity.
- The Public Safety CCTV Network that operates at this location captured footage of the alleged theft. This footage helped ACT Policing identify and charge a person with theft.
- The CCTV cameras that operate at Henry Rolland Park were installed in 2019 and helps to keep the public and assets safe at this location.

Cleared as complete and accurate:	01/11/2020	
Cleared for public release by:	Executive Branch Manager	Ext:
Contact Officer name:	David Wheeler	Ext: 55089
Lead Directorate:	Justice and Community Safety	
TRIM Ref:	2020/000099-004	

QUESTION TIME BRIEF

Public Safety CCTV Expansion over CBRfree Wi-Fi Network

- The ACT Government has entered into a new contract with the provider of the CBRfree Wi-Fi network that will provide several digital benefits to the Canberra community and support the operation of an additional 30 public safety CCTV cameras.
- The 30 new CCTV cameras will be an extension of the ACT's Public Safety CCTV Network and will keep Canberran's safe and better support ACT Policing to investigate crime and prosecute offenders.
- It is expected that an initial rollout of cameras on the CBRfree Wi-Fi Network will be completed in early 2021.

General

- The government remains focused on creating safer public spaces, venues and events for all Canberrans to enjoy.
- The ACT's Public Safety CCTV Network enhances the safety of Canberra's public venues and open spaces, providing a level of reassurance to the Canberra community. The Public Safety CCTV Network is a key tool in protecting the safety and security of all Canberrans.
- The Public Safety CCTV Network provides live and recorded CCTV footage to the government and the ACTP to support, public safety monitoring, event management, criminal investigations and prosecutions in court.
- A key priority for the use of the CCTV Network is to ensure that the privacy of individuals is protected and that it is operated within the ACT's Human Rights Frameworks. The CCTV Network is a closed network and not connected to any other database or system that can be used to identify people.

New Camera Technology and Privacy

- Manufacturers of CCTV systems continue to enhance the technology and capability of their products at a significant rate. These enhancements have dramatically improved the quality and resolution of live and recorded footage that is available to ACT Policing and the government to monitor public safety and investigate crime.

Cleared as complete and accurate:	01/11/2020	
Cleared for public release by:	Executive Branch Manager	Ext:
Contact Officer name:	David Wheeler	Ext: 55089
Lead Directorate:	Justice and Community Safety	
TRIM Ref:	2020/000099-004	

- Manufacturers are also including in their CCTV software search capabilities that allow for a faster and more accurate review of recorded footage to support the investigation of crime or missing people.
- All government CCTV systems are stand alone, do not use facial biometrics and do not connect to any other database that can be used to identify individuals. Footage is deleted after 30 days if not used to support the investigation of crime.
- Canberrans can rest assured that all government CCTV systems are operated within the ACT's strong human rights and privacy frameworks and that their privacy is protected.

Portable Solar Powered CCTV units

- There are 21 solar powered CCTV cameras operating in the ACT that help to keep Canberrans and their property safe.
- The government has extended its trial of solar powered CCTV units to help inform future decisions about how this technology can be best used to support safer public places and deter crime.
- Solar powered CCTV units require no fixed infrastructure to operate and will transmit data over the mobile phone network.
- Solar powered CCTV units continue to be used at crowded place events to enhance public safety. Four units are located on rural roads to help deter rural crime and help investigate bushfires caused by stolen and burnt cars.
- Solar powered CCTV is also used to help deter and investigate illegal dumping and other crimes across Canberra.
- The outcomes of the trial will further benefit the Government's understanding of how this technology can be used to support public and asset safety and security.

QUESTION TIME BRIEF

Key Information

If asked about facial-biometric capability of the Public Safety CCTV Network

- The Public Safety CCTV Network does not utilise facial-biometric capability.
- The Public Safety CCTV Network complies with ACT privacy and human rights laws.

If asked about CCTV on the Light Rail network

- Live and recorded CCTV footage from light rail stops is available to ACT Policing.

If asked about CCTV Network Security

- The Public Safety CCTV Network operates within the secure ACT Government ICT network. Access to the Network is by officers with authorised access and restricted to specially programmed computers.
- The stand-alone solar powered CCTV units transmit encrypted data to secure servers which are only accessible by officials with authorised access.

If asked about current Network capabilities

- The Public Safety CCTV Network is located at Canberra City, Henry Rolland Park, GIO Stadium, Manuka Oval, EPIC, Manuka shopping precinct, Kingston shopping precinct, Jolimont Bus Station, Tuggeranong CBD and Haig Park.
- CCTV footage is recorded by these systems 24 hours a day. Footage is retained for 30 days as required by the *Territory Records Act 2002,* after which it is automatically deleted unless required for investigative purposes.
- ACTP has dedicated staff that actively monitor the Public Safety CCTV Network. The purpose of the monitoring is to enhance public safety by identifying anti-social or criminal activity early and dispatching Police resources in a timely manner. ACTP may also use the Network at any other time to assist with incident management, investigations and response.

Cleared as complete and accurate:	01/11/2020	
Cleared for public release by:	Executive Branch Manager	Ext:
Contact Officer name:	David Wheeler	Ext: 55089
Lead Directorate:	Justice and Community Safety	
TRIM Ref:	2020/000099-004	

QUESTION TIME BRIEF

MIN:2020/000099-005

Portfolio/s: Chief Minister

Special Minister of State

Police and Emergency Services

ISSUE: NATIONAL SECURITY AND PUBLIC SAFETY

TALKING POINTS

Australian Government Critical Infrastructure Reforms (Chief Minister)

- Critical infrastructure is essential to the function of our daily lives in the ACT.
- The ACT's establishment of a second power supply is one example of how the ACT is strengthening the resilience of our critical infrastructure.
- The ACT welcomes the Australian Government's focus on strengthening the security of Australia's critical infrastructure.
- The ACT submitted feedback on the consultation paper released in August 2020 and remains engaged to progress these important reforms.
- The ACT maintains its own critical infrastructure arrangements and relationships between government and non-government owners and operators.
- This relationship was used to great effect during the 2019-20 bushfire season to share information about critical infrastructure.

Cyber Security and Online Safety (Special Minister of State)

- The ACT remains an attractive target for cyber criminals.
- 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 steal Government intellectual property.
- Cyber security remains a top priority for the ACT Government.

Cleared as complete and accurate:	01/12/2020	
Cleared for public release by:	Executive Branch Manager	Ext:
Contact Officer name:	Bren Burkevics	Ext: 78628
Lead Directorate:	Justice and Community Safety	
TRIM Ref:	2020/000099-005	

QUESTION TIME BRIEF

- Our specialist teams work to protect information managed by the ACT Government and regularly meet withthe National Cyber Security Committee to monitor the cyber threat environment.
- In response to recommendations from the Auditor-General's audit on data security, the ACT has engaged a provider to undertake a thorough risk and threat assessment of the ACT's environment. This is in addition to a wide range of other activities to strengthen the ACT's cyber security resilience.
- The ACT supported the development of *Australia's Cyber Security Strategy 2020*, launched August 2020. The strategy responds to continuing malicious cyber threats and activities faced by Australians.
- The ACT welcomes the significant cyber security investment in the 2020-21 Federal Budget.
- With more Canberrans working and studying online due to COVID-19, the potential for online harm is increased. Visit the eSafety Commissioner's website for ways to keep you and your family safe online.
- I encourage all Canberrans to follow the IT security advice of the Australian Cyber Security Centre available at cyber.gov.au.

Foreign Interference (Chief Minister)

- 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 for example with decision makers, intellectual property, and IT systems in Australia. The ACT is not immune from 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.

Cleared as complete and accurate:	01/12/2020	
Cleared for public release by:	Executive Branch Manager	Ext:
Contact Officer name:	Bren Burkevics	Ext: 78628
Lead Directorate:	Justice and Community Safety	
TRIM Ref:	2020/000099-005	

QUESTION TIME BRIEF

Public Spaces and Venue Safety (Minister for Police and Emergency Services)

- Canberra's public places and events remain a safe and attractive place for communities and families.
- While the national terrorism public alert level remains at PROBABLE, there is no specific or credible threat to the ACT at this time.
- The ACT Government and ACT Policing continually monitor the security threat environment.
- The government remains ready as restrictions ease to host safe and enjoyable public events.
- We will continue to use CCTV, vehicle protection barriers and other measures to protect Canberrans.

Countering Violent Extremism (Chief Minister)

- Our best defence against violent extremism is maintaining a welcoming and inclusive city, where diversity is respected and celebrated.
- Unfortunately during COVID-19 we have seen an increase in racial abuse and hate speech directed towards some members of our community – this is unacceptable and goes against what the ACT stands for.
- The ACT Government recognises communities play an important role in preventing and countering violent extremism, alongside government agencies. This is a shared challenge and requires a whole-of-society approach.
- The ACT's approach is focussed on education, effective community dialogue and safeguarding those most vulnerable to the messages of violent extremists.
- The ACT Government and ACT Policing continue to work to keep Canberrans safe from all forms of violent extremism in partnership with our Commonwealth, State and Territory colleagues.
- I encourage families, friends and communities to contact authorities for help and advice if you are concerned someone may be radicalising or vulnerable to violent extremism.
- Concerns can and should be reported to the National Security Hotline on 1800 123 400. Please visit the Living Safe Together website for moreinformation.

Cleared as complete and accurate:	01/12/2020	
Cleared for public release by:	Executive Branch Manager	Ext:
Contact Officer name:	Bren Burkevics	Ext: 78628
Lead Directorate:	Justice and Community Safety	
TRIM Ref:	2020/000099-005	

QUESTION TIME BRIEF

Fixated Threat Capability (Minister for Police and Emergency Services)

- 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 capacity has been established.The ACT now 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.
- 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 toreduce harm to the community by engaging (or sometimes re-engaging) fixated individuals with appropriate mental health or other community support services.
- The establishment of this capability completes the ACT's implementation of the October 2017 agreement of the Council of Australian Governments to adopt a national approach to assessing and managing fixated individuals.

Counter Terrorism (Chief Minister)

- The ACT is a successful and harmonious multicultural society. This is one of our greatest strengths against acts of terrorism and violent extremism occurring in Canberra.
- Our identity is defined by an overriding commitment to our nation, its democratic values and the rule of law, not by race, religion or ethnic background.

QUESTION TIME BRIEF

- 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.
- We as a government reject those who seek to impose their world view on others through intimidation and violence.
- Anyone who singles out any particular group as a target for hatred plays into the hands of terrorists.
- My government is committed to ensuring the safety and security of our community.We work closely with ACT Policing and other law enforcement and intelligence agencies to combat terrorism and violent extremism.
- We cannot eliminate the risk of terrorism any more than any other serious crime. But we will do all we can to keep our community safe from those who seek to do us harm.
- Terrorism is a national issue, and we work closely with our interstate and Commonwealth partners on the national security challenges we face. We need to keep our legislation and capabilities under constant review to meet these evolving issues.
- The Australian National Security website contains information about Australia's security threat environment and terrorism in Australia.
- Concerns about national security or terrorism should be reported immediately to the National Security Hotline on 1800 123 400.
- If a situation requires a police response, call Police Operations on 131 444. If the situation is potentially life threatening, call Triple-Zero (000).

Cleared as complete and accurate:	01/12/2020	
Cleared for public release by:	Executive Branch Manager	Ext:
Contact Officer name:	Bren Burkevics	Ext: 78628
Lead Directorate:	Justice and Community Safety	
TRIM Ref:	2020/000099-005	

QUESTION TIME BRIEF

MIN:2020/000090-023

Portfolio/s: Police & Emergency Services

ISSUE: 2019-20 BUSHFIRE SEASON

Talking points:

Conditions

- As everyone in our community is aware, the 2019-20 Bushfire Season was a very challenging season right across Australia.
- The lead up to the 2019-20 bushfire season saw some of the driest conditions on record. During the season, we saw some of the most unprecedented weather conditions in Australia's history. Large parts of Australia were impacted by significant fires with unpredictable and dangerous fire behaviour fuelled by hot, dry and windy conditions. These conditions meant fires developed easily and were hard to stop.

Thank you

- Much is owed to the expertise and professionalism of the ACT Rural Fire Service, ACT Fire & Rescue, ACT Ambulance Service, ACT State Emergency Service, ACT Parks and Conservation Service, Aviation Fire & Rescue Service, NSW Rural Fire Service, Fire & Rescue NSW, ACT Policing and the Australian Defence Force. The ACT would also like to thank the National Resource Sharing Centre and Fire and Emergency Services in other jurisdictions who boosted our capability.
- I would like to thank staff across all ACT Government Directorates for their support to the Emergency Coordination Centre in managing the government response to these fires and keeping our community safe.
- The ferocity of the season has been felt by many of our volunteers who gave their time responding to bushfires here in the ACT, engaging with the community and deploying interstate.
- I commend all emergency service volunteers who answered the call to protect our community. I would also like to thank the family, friends, partners and workplaces of those volunteers, whose support enabled them to contribute to the continued protection of our community.

Cleared as complete and accurate:	27/11/2020	
Cleared for public release by:	Commissioner	Ext:
Contact Officer name:	Georgeina Whelan	Ext: 78383
Lead Directorate:	Justice and Community Safety	
TRIM Ref:	2020/000090-023	

- I also thank volunteers for taking the time to write to me, to express their opinion on a number of matters they consider important as volunteers.

- All feedback is appreciated and contributes to ESA's program of continuous improvement. A number of reviews were undertaken into the 2019-20 bushfire season including the ESA Operational Review, the Review on Whole of ACT Government Coordination and Response, the ACT Legislative Assembly Committee Inquiry into 2019-20 Bushfire Season and the Royal Commission into National Natural Disaster Arrangements.

ESA Operational Review

- An external consultant was engaged to conduct an operational review to analyse the effectiveness of the ESA's preparation, planning, response and recovery.
- To assist the review, approximately 38 After-Action Review (AAR) workshops were conducted with volunteers and staff. The external consultant analysed the feedback as part of the evaluation process and used this information to compile a final report, providing recommendations on areas of improvement.
- The report has identified a requirement to improve the ACT's capacity to establish and sustain operations across multiple incidents over a protracted season and an additional focus on planning skills and procedures.
- There are 31 recommendations themed into the following categories:
    - Capability;
    - Collective Training and Exercise;
    - Preparedness;
    - Personnel;
    - Planning; and
    - Incident Management.

- While some recommendations can be addressed immediately, others require long-term planning and consultation with stakeholders or may be impacted by the outcomes of other reviews, including the Royal Commission into National Natural Disaster Arrangements, due to report on 28 October 2020.

Review on Whole of ACT Government Coordination and Response

- The ESA Deputy Commissioner, Mr Ray Johnson, was tasked with leading the review of the whole of government response to the 2019-20 bushfire season. The review considered the ACT's coordination, response and recovery.
- The *Report to the Minister for Police and Emergency Services on Whole of ACT Government Coordination and Response during the 2019-20 Bushfire Season* concludes that the overall view of stakeholders was that the legislative framework was sound, and that the *Emergencies Act 2004* (the Act) fulfilled its functions during the 2019-20 bushfire season.
- The Final Report did, however, recommend amendments to the Act to clarify roles, and provide greater support to the Emergency Controller. These amendments were passed in the ACT Legislative Assembly during the August 2020 sitting period.

ACT Legislative Assembly Committee Inquiry into 2019-20 Bushfire Season

- At the conclusion of the 2019-20 bushfire season, the Standing Committee on Justice and Community Safety undertook a review of ACT emergency services responses to the 2019-20 bushfire season.
- The final report titled *Review of ACT Emergency Services Responses to the 2019-20 Bushfire Season* was completed on 29 September 2020.
- The report identifies 26 recommendations for Government to consider implementing in order to enhance ACT Government's preparation and response to bushfires.
- The ACT Government is currently in the process of preparing its response which is due early in the new year and will be made publicly available.

Royal Commission into National Natural Disaster Arrangements

- The Royal Commission (Commission) into National Natural Disaster Arrangements was established on 20 February 2020 in response to the extreme bushfire season of 2019-20.

- The Commission will examine coordination, preparedness for, response to and recovery from disasters as well as improving resilience and adapting to changing climatic conditions and mitigating the impact of natural disasters. The inquiry will also consider the legal framework for Commonwealth involvement in responding to national emergencies.
- The Commission received approximately 1,600 written submissions and has served ACT Government Directorates and Agencies with several Notices to Give Information and Notices to Produce. Public hearings have also been conducted.
- The ESA and EPSDD also facilitated a tour of the Orroral Valley Fire Ground for the Commission. This occurred on 23 April.
- The Royal Commission released its report on 28 October 2020 and this is currently being considered by all jurisdictions, including the ACT.

Public Messaging During Bushfire Threat

- One of the clear lessons from the 2003 Canberra bushfires was that people wanted to know early about approaching bushfire and with as much advance warning as possible.
- I am proud of the efforts of all ACT Government Directorates in keeping Canberrans informed and safe during the 2019-20 bushfire season.
- A survey of 823 community members was recently conducted to determine the effectiveness of the communication and engagement during the 2019-20 bushfire season. Key findings of the survey included:
    - 98 percent of respondents knew the ACT was in a State of Alert / State of Emergency;
    - 93 percent of respondents agreed that they felt well informed about the recent ACT;
    - 89 percent of respondents said they knew what to do if a bushfire threatened them; and
    - 50 percent of respondents created a bushfire survival plan.

QUESTION TIME BRIEF

Use of Australian Defence Force (ADF)

- On 4 January 2020, the Prime Minister announced ADF assistance for the bushfires burning across Australia. This included boots on the ground, planes in the sky and ships out at sea all supporting the bushfire fighting effort and recovery.
- In the ACT, arrangements have long been in place for the ADF to be accommodated as part of our Emergency Coordination Centre. Therefore, the personnel deployed to the ACT were able to have an almost immediate impact in assisting our community.
- Some of the tasks the ADF assisted in included, but was not limited to:
    - Fireground surveillance
    - Door knocking
    - Personnel transport; bus and helicopter
    - Provision of accommodation for interstate crews including catering at ADFA
    - Provision of heavy plant and other equipment along with trained operators
    - Incident Management Team, Emergency Coordination Centre and planning support
    - Hand crews for development of helipads and indirect fire attack.
- The excellent work of all services, including the ADF, minimised the impact of these fires and ensured there was no loss of life as a result of the bushfires that surrounded the ACT.

Respiratory Protection

- The best respiratory protection for volunteers for the effects of smoke is a matter of great concern to the ESA.
- The Australasian Fire and Emergency Service Authorities Council note in their Managing Bushfire Smoke Exposure guidelines that the P2 masks currently available to our members are the current minimum bushfire standard.

Cleared as complete and accurate:	27/11/2020	
Cleared for public release by:	Commissioner	Ext:
Contact Officer name:	Georgeina Whelan	Ext: 78383
Lead Directorate:	Justice and Community Safety	
TRIM Ref:	2020/000090-023	

- As part of its commitment to innovation and improvement, the ACT Rural Fire Service (ACTRFS) has trialled, through the Brigades, a number of different types of P2and P3 masks during the 2019-20 bushfire season.
- The ACTRFS has also been in close consultation with their NSW counterparts as they are also considering options.
- Due to varying types of masks – full face and half face – the ACTRFS needs to be confident in the decision that they procure a product that is best fit for the Service.
- This process cannot be rushed. Any changes may not be implemented prior to next bushfire season, but it will be well-considered with the safety and wellbeing of its personnel being the main priority.

Volunteer Firefighter Payment Scheme

- When the Federal Government first announced the Volunteer Firefighter Payment scheme, it was only available to NSW Rural Fire Service members. The hard work of the ESA ensured this payment was also made available to ACT members.
- The ESA also took all reasonable steps to ensure eligible volunteer members who submitted an application, received payment as quickly as possible.
- The ESA also assisted volunteers with completing the application forms when help was requested, and engaged in regular updates with volunteers to keep them informed.
- I am advised by the ESA that they have only received positive feedback from volunteer members on their handling of the Volunteer Firefighters' Financial Support Program.

QUESTION TIME BRIEF

MIN:2020/000090-001

Portfolio/s: Police & Emergency Services

ISSUE: 2020-21 BUSHFIRE SEASON

Talking points:

- The ACT's 2020-21 Bushfire Season officially commenced on 1 November 2020, the season was delayed by one month due to significant rainfall during spring.
- The Australian Seasonal Bushfire Outlook, recently released by the Bushfire and Natural Hazards CRC, predicts the 2020-21 Bushfire Season will be very different than the previous two, with wetter than average conditions expected through spring and summer.
- As a result of the recent rain, and the expectation of further rainfall in the coming months with the current La Niña ALERT, it is anticipated that forest flammability will remain low over the coming months.
- Grass growth due to recent rain could increase the risk of fast-moving grass fires this summer.
- While the Canberra community enjoys the benefits of living in the bush capital, it comes with bush and grass fire risk that requires preparedness, sound plans, and shared responsibility.
- Canberrans should continue to prepare for the season by taking actions to reduce the bushfire risks around and within their property, and to review their Survival Plans.
- In response to the La Nina weather pattern, the ACT Emergency Services Agency (ESA) has launched a new annual awareness campaign, 'Are you Emergency Ready?'. The campaign incorporates a Multi-hazard Emergency Survival Plan, replacing the traditional Bushfire Survival Plan. The campaign aims to encourage our community to prepare for any emergency be that bushfire, storm, flood, or extreme heat.

Cleared as complete and accurate:	27/11/2020	
Cleared for public release by:	Commissioner	Ext:
Contact Officer name:	Georgeina Whelan	Ext: 78383
Lead Directorate:	Justice and Community Safety	
TRIM Ref:	2020/000090-001	

QUESTION TIME BRIEF

- The ESA has also developed a range of education resources to help support the community to prepare for an emergency. The resources allow the community to download, complete, and store their Survival Plan from any digital device, and importantly, share it with family and friends. The resources are available via the ESA website and I encourage everyone to familiarise themselves with this information.

Cleared as complete and accurate:	27/11/2020	
Cleared for public release by:	Commissioner	Ext:
Contact Officer name:	Georgeina Whelan	Ext: 78383
Lead Directorate:	Justice and Community Safety	
TRIM Ref:	2020/000090-001	

QUESTION TIME BRIEF

MIN:2020/000090-012

Portfolio: Police & Emergency Services

ISSUE: ESA KEY DATA (as at 1 July 2020)

ACT Ambulance Service (ACTAS)

Staffing

Total FTE	% Female	% Male	% Indigenous	% Disability	% Multicultural
297.19	45.3%	54.7%	1..3%	1.3%	1.9%

Vehicles

Emergency Ambulance Vehicles	Patient transports	Operational support	Support Vehicles	Total
29	5	10	2	46

Call Outs

ACT Ambulance Service – Operational Activity	2018-19		2019-20	
Incident Type	**Incidents**	**Responses**	**Incidents**	**Responses**
Medical (includes aeromedical)	56,877	51,359	61,043	61,379
Dual Response (Fire, Storm, etc.)	2,352	2,388	762	770
Total Incidents	**59,229**	**53,747**	**61,805**	**62,149**

Stations

There are a total of eight ACTAS stations:

- Gungahlin, Joint Emergency Services Complex
- Belconnen, Aranda
- West Belconnen, Charnwood
- Dickson
- Fyshwick
- Woden
- Greenway
- Calwell

Cleared as complete and accurate:	27/11/2020	
Cleared for public release by:	Commissioner	Ext:
Contact Officer name:	Georgeina Whelan	Ext: 78383
Lead Directorate:	Justice and Community Safety	
TRIM Ref:	2020/000090-012	

QUESTION TIME BRIEF

ACT Fire & Rescue (ACTF&R)

Staffing

Total FTE	% Female	% Male	% Indigenous	% Disability	% Multicultural
350.06	5.6%	94.4%	3.1%	0.6%	1.1%

Community Fire Unit Volunteers
834

Vehicles

Operational	Operational support	Support Vehicles	CFU Trailers	Total
32	9	6	62	109

Call Outs

ACT Fire & Rescue – Operational Activity	**2018-19**		**2019-20**	
Incident Type	**Incidents**	**Responses**	**Incidents**	**Responses**
Fires				
Structure Fires	256	1,411	223	1,189
Mobile Property Fires	259	455	242	439
Landscape fires, bush and grass	173	397	198	542
Other fires	251	437	241	611
Total Fires	**939**	**2,700**	**904**	**2,781**
Hazardous conditions	376	849	350	775
Severe Weather & Natural Disasters	353	392	431	485
System initiated FALSE alarms	5,355	11,545	5,825	11,709
Other	1,582	2,378	1,642	2,528
Total other emergencies and incidents	**7,666**	**15,164**	**8,248**	**15,497**
Non-fire rescue calls (including road rescue)				
Road Accident Rescue Operations	1,171	2,845	1,000	2,516
Medical Assists	420	586	412	585
Other Rescue (includes animal rescue)	187	263	209	264
Total Non-fire rescue calls (including road rescue)	**1,778**	**3,694**	**1,621**	**3,365**
Total ACTF&R Operational Activity	**10,383**	**21,558**	**10,773**	**21,643**

Cleared as complete and accurate:	27/11/2020	
Cleared for public release by:	Commissioner	Ext:
Contact Officer name:	Georgeina Whelan	Ext: 78383
Lead Directorate:	Justice and Community Safety	
TRIM Ref:	2020/000090-012	

Stations

There are a total of nine stations:

- Gungahlin, Joint Emergency Services Complex
- Belconnen, Aranda
- West Belconnen, Charnwood
- Ainslie
- Fyshwick
- Phillip
- Kambah
- Chisholm
- South Tuggeranong, Calwell

As part of the 2019-20 ACT Budget, work commenced on the due diligence and preliminary design for two new combined ACT Ambulance Service and ACT Fire & Rescue stations, to be located in Acton and the Molonglo Valley.

ACT Rural Fire Service (ACT RFS)

Staffing

Total FTE	% Female	% Male	% Indigenous	% Disability	% Multicultural
15	62.5%	37.5%	0.0%	0.0%	12.5%

ACTRFS Volunteers
457

Vehicles

Operational	Operational support	Support Vehicles	Total
62 + 15 trailers	7	0	84

Call Outs

ACT Rural Fire Service – Operational Activity	**2018-19**		**2019-20**	
Incident Type	**Incidents**	**Responses**	**Incidents**	**Responses**
Grass and bushfires	77	354	88	658
Smoke investigations	2	4	8	17
Vehicle fire	33	26	26	34
Motor vehicle accident	4	5	2	2
Storm/flood (assisting ACTSES)	65	71	28	8
Structure Fires	1	2	5	20
Hazard Reductions	46	410	27	123
Other Fires/Incidents	0	0	126	675
Total Incidents	**56**	**181**	**310**	**1,537**

Stations

Cleared as complete and accurate:	27/11/2020	
Cleared for public release by:	Commissioner	Ext:
Contact Officer name:	Georgeina Whelan	Ext: 78383
Lead Directorate:	Justice and Community Safety	
TRIM Ref:	2020/000090-012	

There are a total of eight sheds:

- Gungahlin, Joint Emergency Services Complex
- Hall
- Molonglo, Holt
- Rivers, Cotter Road Stromlo
- Jerrabomberra, Symonston
- Guises Creek, Royalla
- Southern, Tharwa
- Tidbinbilla

Fire Towers

There are four fire towers

- Mount Tennent
- Kowen
- Coree
- One Tree Hill

ACT State Emergency Service (ACT SES)

Staffing

Total FTE	% Female	% Male	% Indigenous	% Disability	% Multicultural
10	40.0%	60.0%	0.0%	20.0%	10.0%

ACTSES Volunteers
400

Vehicles

Operational	Operational support	Support Vehicles	Total
20 + 23 trailers	8	0	51

Call Outs

ACT State Emergency Service – Operational Activity	**2018-19**		**2019-20**	
Incident Type	**Incidents**	**Responses**	**Incidents**	**Responses**
Storm and flood	502	613	1,723	2,061
Search and rescue	11	94	16	130
"Operational assistance to other services (provision of flood boat service, lighting towers, catering)"	29	182	65	332
Total Incidents	**542**	**889**	**1,804**	**2,523**

Stations

There are a total of seven units and one support group:

Cleared as complete and accurate:	27/11/2020	
Cleared for public release by:	Commissioner	Ext:
Contact Officer name:	Georgeina Whelan	Ext: 78383
Lead Directorate:	Justice and Community Safety	
TRIM Ref:	2020/000090-012	

- Gungahlin Unit, Joint Emergency Services Complex
- Tuggeranong Unit, Calwell
- Majura Unit, Hackett
- Belconnen Unit, Belconnen
- Woden Unit, Phillip
- Pialligo Unit, ESA Fairbairn precinct
- Rivers Unit, Cotter Road, Stromlo
- ESA Headquarters Support

Emergency Services Agency (ESA) General

Staffing

Total FTE	% Female	% Male	% Indigenous	% Disability	% Multicultural
110.91	43%	57%	2.6%	1.8%	9.6%

MAPS Volunteers
49

Vehicles

Operational	Operational support	Support Vehicles	Total
0	8	3	11

Facilities

- ESA Headquarters, Fairbairn
- ESA Workshops, Fairbairn
- ESA Resource Centre, Fairbairn
- ESA Training Centre, Hume

QUESTION TIME BRIEF

MIN:2020/000090-013

Portfolio: Police & Emergency Services

ISSUE: ACT AMBULANCE SERVICE (ACTAS) RESOURCING

Talking points:

- The Canberra community can have the highest confidence in the performance of their ambulance service.
- Demand on our ACT Ambulance Service (ACTAS) is at the highest levels ever. Despite this growing demand, the ACT has continued to record some of the best response times in the country, as well as high levels of patient satisfaction.
- The dedication and professionalism of our paramedics should be highly commended as they continue to provide life-saving services to members of the community who are experiencing their worst day.
- The ESA continues to provide support for our ambulance workforce and remains focussed on their health and welfare as they continue to meet community expectations.
- Recent funding packages have delivered:
    - 53 additional paramedics
    - seven additional ambulances
    - powered stretchers in all 30 emergency ambulance vehicles, which will reduce physical demands on paramedics and improve patient safety.
- This recognises the support required to maintain a nation leading ambulance service.

Key Information

- For the seventh year in a row ACT Ambulance Service response times are among the best in the country. This impressive result has once again been achieved despite an increasing demand for services.
- The ACT Ambulance Service reported the second highest percentage of Emergency Triple Zero (000) calls answered within 10 seconds, outperforming the national average by 7.1%.

Cleared as complete and accurate:	27/11/2020	
Cleared for public release by:	Commissioner	Ext:
Contact Officer name:	Georgeina Whelan	Ext: 78383
Lead Directorate:	Justice and Community Safety	
TRIM Ref:	2020/000090-13	

QUESTION TIME BRIEF

- The Annual Ambulance Patient Satisfaction Survey results show the ACT Ambulance Service continues to maintain high levels of patient satisfaction at 97% for another year.

Cleared as complete and accurate:	27/11/2020	
Cleared for public release by:	Commissioner	Ext:
Contact Officer name:	Georgeina Whelan	Ext: 78383
Lead Directorate:	Justice and Community Safety	
TRIM Ref:	2020/000090-13	

QUESTION TIME BRIEF

MIN:2020/000090-009

Portfolio/s: Police & Emergency Services

ISSUE: ACT FIRE & RESCUE RESOURCING

Talking points:

Recruitment

- ACT Fire & Rescue (ACTF&R) is currently addressing challenges to staffing levels caused by the large number of ACTF&R staff who are approaching 55 years of age and the increase in age-related retirements
- Whilst it is difficult to determine the exact number of firefighters who will retire over the next 24 months, ACTF&R stragtegic workforce planning has identified that the worst case scenario is that up to 30 ACTF&R staff will retire in the next 24 months.
- The ESA intends to recruit 180 firefighters (99 additional; 81 replacement) over the next five years. This includes staff required for the new Acton (city) and Molonglo stations, crewing of the new aerial pumper, and an increase to the relief ratio.

Overtime

- In order to support the provision of a 24 hour service to the ACT community, it is necessary at times for the ACT Emergency Services Agency (ESA) staff, including ACTF&R staff, to work overtime. No one in the ESA is “forced” to undertake overtime. Firefighters are offered opportunities to work overtime through an internal, on-line recall roster.
- The ESA monitors ACTF&R overtime and takes matters of staff welfare seriously and has delivered a number of initiatives that enable its staff to better manage ever-present stressors that are experienced by emergency service personnel as they seek to protect our community, including training additional ACTF&R peer support officers.
- The health and wellbeing of emergency services personnel is a key priority for this Government. Any firefighters that feel the amount of overtime they are chosing to work is affecting their health and wellbeing are encouraged to access the welfare initiatives available.

Cleared as complete and accurate:	27/11/2020	
Cleared for public release by:	Commissioner	Ext:
Contact Officer name:	Georgeinaa Whelan	Ext: 78383
Lead Directorate:	Justice and Community Safety	
TRIM Ref:	2020/000090-009	

QUESTION TIME BRIEF

MIN:2020/000090-014

Portfolio: Police & Emergency Services

ISSUE: ACT EMERGENCY SERVICES AGENCY (ESA) GOVERNMENT COMMITMENTS AND PRIORITIES

Talking points:

1) 10th Legislative Assembly Parliamentary and Governing Agreement Commitments

Recruit an additional 99 new firefighters and add new fire trucks and equipment

- Under the enterprise agreement reached between the government and the United Firefighters Union in June 2020, the ACT Fire and Rescue Service will recruit an additional 99 new firefighters over the life of the agreement through a series of recruit colleges.
- Funding to implement the new agreement has been agreed and the recruitment campaign to select recruits for Recruit Colleges 44 and 45 is now underway.
- Recruit College 44 will commence in February 2021 and will be followed in July 2021 by Recruit College 45.
- ACT Fire and Rescue has also commenced implementing other aspects of the enterprise agreement, including health and wellbeing initiatives and skills and training incentives, in consultation with the United Firefighters Union and ACT Fire and Rescue staff.

Build new fire and ambulance stations in the City and Molonglo

ACT

- The construction of new joint stations in the City (Acton) and Molonglo was a commitment of the ACT Labor Party during the 2020 election.
- The Government annount $939,000 funding in the 2019-20 budget to progress due diligence and forward design for future joint stations in the City and the Molonglo Valley.

Cleared as complete and accurate:	24/11/2020	
Cleared for public release by:	Commissioner	Ext:
Contact Officer name:	Georgeina Whelan	Ext: 78383
Lead Directorate:	Justice and Community Safety	
TRIM Ref:	2020/000090-014	

- In August 2020, the Government announced funding of over $45 million for the design and construction of a joint fire and ambulance station at Acton.
- Forward design for the new Acton Station is currently underway with key stakeholders, before the government goes to market for the construction phase later in 2020-21.
- Feasibility studies for the Molonglo station are also underway, which will help inform the planning, budget and location for a new Molonglo Station.

Expand PACER to two teams to service the North and South of Canberra 7 days a week

- The PACER (Police, Ambulance and Clinician Early Response) Program was successfully trialed in 2019-20, with funding provided in the 2019-20 Budget.
- The establishment of a second PACER team is a priority under the 10th Assembly Parliamentary and Governing Agreement
- ACT Health is the lead agency for this initiative, with support from ACT Ambulance Service and ACT Policing. No budget has been approved for expansion of the programme at this point.
- Planning is under way to implement a second crew in a short timeframe if funding is agreed and additional paramedics are being trained for the role to allow a second crew to commence as soon as arrangements are agreed.

2) Continuing Budget and/or 9th Legislative Assembly Commitments

A new hybrid electric fire pumper

- In 2019, the Government announced a partnership with Rosenbauer Australia for the development and delivery of a hybrid electric fire truck, to meet the challenges under the ACT Climate Change Strategy 2019-25.
- A single select procurement exemption was granted by the Director General to engage Rosenbauer for the design and the purchase of one hybrid electric fire truck.

- Extensive consultation has occurred with ACT Fire & Rescue staff, Unions and cross directorates, which included feasibility options.
- ESA is looking at the possibility of progressing the purchase under programs such as the Zero Emissions Government framework fund.

Strengthen bushfire preparedness and responses, with continued investments in volunteer firefighters.

- The ESA received funding in the 2019-20 Budget Review for a range of initiatives to strengthen the ACT's bushfire preparedness, including funding to continue the ACT's contribution to the National Emergency Alert system, an additional seven Electronic Fire Danger Rating Signs to upgrade the remaining manual signs, and a six-month trial to install fire detecting cameras in key locations around the ACT.
- Work on the fire detecting camera trial was initially delayed due to the severity of the 2019-20 bushfire season followed by the COVID-19 pandemic, but is now underway.
- The manual fire danger rating signs have now been upgraded.
- ESA previously received funding in the 2019-20 Budget to contract a second medium helicopter to combat bushfires, and capital funding in that budget to upgrade the ACT Rural Fire Service facilities at the Hume Helibase:
  - the second helicopter formed part of the ACT's aviation bushfire response during the 2019-20 bushfire season
  - the works at the Hume helibase were completed in 2020.

Upgrade ACT State Emergency Service facilities, including Majura SES in Hackett

- The ESA received funding over two years in the 2019-20 Budget for a major upgraded to the ACT State Emergency Services Majura Unit located at Hackett to cater for a growth in its membership base
- Forward design work was completed in the first half of 2020 to enable government to approach market for construction.

QUESTION TIME BRIEF

- The successful contractor was appointed in the second half of 2020 and will progress detailed design and construction of the works in 2021.

Key Information

- ESA is currently working with the Justice and Community Safety Directorate, the Chief Minister, Treasury, and Economic Development Directorate, and other ACT Government Directorates and Agencies on the implementation of all Government commitments.

Background Information

Status of Government Commitments

- The table below shows the current status of each ESA related Government Commitment:

Title	**Included in Budget (which year)**	**Status Summary (not yet, in progress, completed)**
ACT Fire and Rescue Staffing and Development (includes firefighter recruitment).	2020 Budget annoucement	In Progress
Construction of joint station in Acton	2020 Budget announcement	In Progress
Construction of joint station in Molonglo	Not yet funded	Not yet
A second PACER crew	Not yet funded	Not yet
A new hybrid electric fire pumper	Not yet funded	Not yet
Strengthen bushfire preparedness and responses, with continued investments in volunteer firefighters.	2019-20 Budget 2019-20 Budget Review	In Progress
Upgrade ACT State Emergency Service facilities, including Majura SES in Hackett.	2019-20	In Progress

Cleared as complete and accurate:	24/11/2020	
Cleared for public release by:	Commissioner	Ext:
Contact Officer name:	Georgeina Whelan	Ext: 78383
Lead Directorate:	Justice and Community Safety	
TRIM Ref:	2020/000090-014	

QUESTION TIME BRIEF

MIN:2020/000090-015

Portfolio: Police & Emergency Services

ISSUE: ESA COMMUNICATION CENTRE (COMCEN) REFORM

Talking points:

- The ACT Emergency Services Agency (ESA) is working with staff and the unions on the proposed changes. An ACT Fire & Rescue specific Workplace Consultative Committee has been established to discuss issues specific to the future ComCen model with United Firefighters Union representatives.
- A long-term outcome of the ComCen project is to expand the current call-taker/dispatch model used by the ACT Ambulance Service (ACTAS) across the ESA ComCen to provide a single one agency approach. The new ESA positions will be known as communication officers.
- Communications Officer will be recruited via a community based recruitment and will be provided with training to manage Emergency Triple Zero (E000) calls directed to the ESA cummunications Centre. The current agreed in principle position will free up 12 qualified firefighters to return to front line operations.
- The ESA will also use the changes in service delivery models to explore options in terms of better use of technology. This includes integrating systems to facilitate the provision of timely information between services, external agencies, and with the public. This technology also includes the concepts of CCTV, drone capability and aerial camers.
- This reform will also allow ESA to provide a dynamic and diverse workforce. The reform process will also allow ESA to adapt to evolving response with an all hazards apporoach.

Key Information

- During recent EA discussions, agreements have been reached with the United Firefighters Union as to the final disposition of the ESA Communications Centre, which provides a clear pathway forward for the reform.
- ESA is working with staff and unions to progress the reforms, and will communicate with all staff and volunteers.

Cleared as complete and accurate:	27/11/2020	
Cleared for public release by:	Commissioner	Ext:
Contact Officer name:	Georgeina Whelan	Ext: 78383
Lead Directorate:	Justice and Community Safety	
TRIM Ref:	2020/000090-015	

QUESTION TIME BRIEF

MIN:2020/000090-022

Portfolio/s: Police & Emergency Services

ISSUE: ACT AMBULANCE SERVICE (ACTAS) BLUEPRINT FOR CHANGE

Talking points:

- All eight of the original Blueprint For Change recommendations are substantially addressed or have been completed.
- Following an independent review of the Blueprint for Change program, a recommendation was made to transition the program to business as usual within ACTAS.
- The recommendation was supported by the ACTAS Chief Officer, the ESA Commissioner and the ACTAS Governance and Compliance Committee. The transition took effect on 1 July 2020.
- The Blueprint program saw the delivery of significant initiatives within ACTAS such as the Peer Support program, MANERS training, Leadership Framework and safe workplace and respectful conversations training.
- It is important ACTAS does not lose traction on the good work undertaken as part of the Blueprint program.
- Moving forward, a project resource was transferred from the People and Culture team to ACTAS to lead the new team. It will be resourced to focus on the delivery of ACTAS strategic priorities, including the delivery of a comtemporary service delivery model, a modernised structure, leadership development, and staff health and wellbeing.
- Concurrently, it will review those outcomes already delivered through Blueprint to ensure they are fit for purpose.
- This important work continues in collaboration with the Transport Workers Union and workplace representatives.

Cleared as complete and accurate:	27/11/2020	
Cleared for public release by:	Commissioner	Ext:
Contact Officer name:	Georgeina Whelan	Ext: 78383
Lead Directorate:	Justice and Community Safety	
TRIM Ref:	2020/000090-022	

QUESTION TIME BRIEF

MIN:2020/000090-026

Portfolio/s: Police & Emergency Services

ISSUE: CLADDING

- ACT Fire & Rescue is a contributing member of the Cladding Review Working Group led by Environment Planning Sustainable Development Directorate. This is a multi-agency working group and information is shared by all parties.
- ACT Fire & Rescue has developed a training package for all firefighters explaining what combustible cladding is, the potential risks to firefighters and what precautions firefighters should take when responding to a building that may contain combustible cladding, including firefighting strategy.
- As a response agency, ACT Fire & Rescue draws no distinction between public and private buildings and will work with all members of the community to preserve life, property and the environment.

Cleared as complete and accurate:	27/11/2020	
Cleared for public release by:	Commissioner	Ext:
Contact Officer name:	Georgeina Whelan	Ext: 78383
Lead Directorate:	Justice and Community Safety	
TRIM Ref:	2020/000090-026	

QUESTION TIME BRIEF

Portfolio/s: Chief Minister, Health & Wellbeing, Attorney-General, Police & Emergency Services

ISSUE: Cannabis reforms

Talking points:

- The Government takes a clear harm minimisation approach to drug use in our community. We do not condone personal use of cannabis and we know there are health risks for individuals that do use it. However, we also acknowledge the simple reality that it's happening in Canberra.
- The legislation that came into effect on 31 January 2020 is designed to reduce harm for individuals who are already using cannabis, acknowledging that outright prohibition can bring people into contact with the justice system unnecessarily and prevent people seeking help when they need it.
- The ACT has decriminalised personal use of small amounts of cannabis for some time, and these reforms are largely consistent with the scheme that was already in place.
- Even now that the new legislation has been passed into law, Canberrans need to be aware that there will continue to be restrictions on when and where cannabis can be used or grown, including:
    - It will remain illegal to sell or share cannabis.
    - It will be illegal to use cannabis in public places or around children.
    - It will be illegal to grow more than two plants per person or four plants per household.
    - It will be illegal to grow plants hydroponically or in places accessible to the public.
    - It will remain illegal to drive with cannabis in your system.
- These changes are intended to reduce drug harm in our community by shifting our response to issue of drug use from one that focuses on the justice system, to one that focuses on health and supports.
- For individuals the best option is still to avoid using cannabis.

Cleared as complete and accurate:	5 February 2019	
Cleared by:	Director	Ext: 58507
Contact Officer Name:	David James	Ext: 72002
Lead Directorate:	Chief Minister, Treasury and Economic Development	

TRIM Ref: CM2018/4211

QUESTION TIME BRIEF

Key Information

How was ACT Policing engaged regarding the development of the Bill?

- The Government worked closely with ACT Policing throughout the process of considering and amending the Private Members Bill beginning in December 2018.
- ACT Policing has contributed ongoing advice regarding operational and technical aspects of the Private Members Bill and development of the Government's amendments.
- ACT Policing's concerns about how these changes would be operationalised have been known to government and on the public record for some time, including through a public submission to a Legislative Assembly Committee's inquiry into the legislation in March 2019 and their appearance at Committee's hearings in May 2019.

How has the Government responded to ACT Policing's position on the cannabis reforms?

- The Government worked closely with ACT Policing throughout the process of considering and amending the Private Members Bill beginning in December 2018.
- ACT Policing's perspectives on how the proposed changes could be implemented were used by the Government to craft a range of amendments that were ultimately put forward by the Government and passed by the Legislative Assembly in September.
- This is the first time an Australian government has attempted to progress this type of reform. As with other significant harm minimisation reforms over the decades, there are elements of the legislation that are new and unfamiliar.
- The Government has taken on board the views and comments of ACT Policing and other stakeholders to provide as much clarity and certainty for everyone, in what is previously unbroken ground in this country.

Why doesn't the Act remove the exception for possession/cultivation of cannabis if other offences are also committed?

- Applying the offences or exceptions in that way is likely to have a discriminatory effect on disadvantaged groups who have historically had more contact with the criminal justice system for non-possession offences.
- This would run counter to the intent of the changes, which is to recognise and respond to personal use of cannabis as a health issue rather than a criminal justice issue.

Cleared as complete and accurate:	5 February 2019	
Cleared by:	Director	Ext: 58507
Contact Officer Name:	David James	Ext: 72002
Lead Directorate:	Chief Minister, Treasury and Economic Development	

TRIM Ref: CM2018/4211

QUESTION TIME BRIEF

How will the status (dried/fresh/harvested) cannabis be determined by the authorities?

- This is the first time an Australian government has attempted to progress this type of reform. As with other significant harm minimisation reforms over the decades, there are elements of the legislation that are new and unfamiliar.
- While there is no strict scientific measure of whether cannabis is fresh or dry embedded in the legislation, we are confident that it will be generally apparent whether cannabis is dried and ready for use, or is recently harvested and in the process of being dried.
- As with all legislation, there will be certain matters that are subject to a degree of discretion and deliberation by police and courts.
- It is also important to remember that these changes only relate to possession of small amounts of cannabis for personal use and cultivation at a home and there are no changes to people who possess larger amounts of cannabis or numbers of plants.

Why do offences still apply to people under 18 years of age?

- Consideration of human rights was given to the differences in how the legislation treats adults and people under 18 years old (who are not exempted from the possession offence).
- It is necessary to differentiate between adults and people under 18 years of age as scientific evidence points to the higher likelihood of detrimental impact to the developing brains for minors who use Cannabis relative to adults.
- This is consistent with other protections introduced by the Government that make it an offence to expose children and young people to cannabis.
- People under 18 years old remain eligible for the Simple Cannabis Offence Notice Scheme, meaning offences do not automatically attract a criminal record.
- This approach is consistent with the access to other harmful substances such as alcohol and tobacco, which are legal for adults but restricted for children and young people.

What has/hasn't changed

- These amendments took effect on 31 January 2020. The Minister for Health has released guidance on health and legal risks in the form of a Notifiable Instrument, which is being accompanied by a public information and communication campaign.
- Individuals need to understand that cannabis has not be entirely legalised and there will be a number of restrictions and offences that remain in place:
    - The removal of penalties only applies to persons over 18.
    - The permitted amount of cannabis an individual can possess remains 50 grams in line with the Simple Cannabis Offence Notice scheme. A higher

limit of 150 grams applies to cannabis that has been harvested but is not yet dried.

- It will remain illegal to sell, gift or share cannabis with others. This includes sharing plants or seeds even if no money changes hands.
- There will be a limit of two plants per person. These plants can only be grown at an individual's home and only in a place not accessible to the public. Hydroponic or other methods of artificial cultivation are not permitted.
- No more than four plants can be grown at one home and there is a strict liability offence for having more than four plants at one residence.
- It will be an offence to use cannabis in a public place or in a way that a child is exposed to smoke or vapour.
- Similarly, cannabis must be stored away from children or young people.

- Like all other Australian jurisdictions, the ACT has a zero-tolerance approach to drug driving and the Government is not proposing amendments in relation to drug driving at this time. If the Private Member's Bill is passed there will need to be community education to ensure there is no confusion around the relationship of the legal availability of cannabis and the ACT's drug driving offences.
- The new changes do not extend to persons under 18 years of age. However, Simple Cannabis Offence Notices will remain available for police to use in relation to children and young people.

<u>Who did the ACT Government engage when developing it's amendments?</u>

- In preparing its amendments, the ACT Government considered a range of views and perspectives, including those gathered through the Standing Committee on Health, Ageing and Community Service's inquiry into the Bill.
- ACT Government directorates worked closely with ACT Policing to understand their concerns and, as best as possible, make sure the Act was practical to implement.
- The ACT proactively wrote to the Commonwealth Attorney-General's Department and Director of Public Prosecutions on these amendments. Their current position is to decline to express a definitive view.

<u>Why are people advertising on the internet (potplace) that they will pay people to grow cannabis for them? Is this legal?</u>

- The Government has been made aware of a new online business in Canberra aiming to let people lease parts of their property to others who wish to cultivate cannabis plants but are not able to do so at their own home.
- Although the business purports to be legal and compatible with the recent changes, it is not.

- The recent amendments make it an offence to cultivate a cannabis plant at a place other than where the person lives. That offence is in section 171AAB, clause 1(b).
- The matter has been referred to ACT Policing and the Office of Fair Trading.

Background Information – may not be suitable for public disclosure

About the reforms

- The Act was notified on 10 October 2019, and commenced on 31 January 2020. The Act will not commence until the Minister for Health releases a Notifiable Instrument on the health and legal implications of the changes, and gives written notice of the Act's commencement.
- We are the first jurisdiction in Australia to have attempted these reforms and there is still some uncertainty about how these changes will unfold given the complex legal environment.
- Whilst no other Australian jurisdiction has legalised the personal use of cannabis, national and ACT surveys show community support for the decriminalisation and/or legalisation of cannabis for personal use.
- There are differing interpretations of Commonwealth legislation in this area – particularly the Commonwealth Criminal Code – which in turn leads to different views about the extent to which states and territories are able to legislate regarding cannabis use.
- We are aware of the views of some Ministers in the Australian Government. The ACT Government has written to the Australian Attorney-General and Minister for Health outlining our reasoning for these changes. The ACT Government has also responded to the concerns raised by the United Nations International Narcotics Control Board in writing.
- We want to put these measures in place to move from a justice-driven response to drug use to one focussed on health and supports for users.
- We will continue to work with stakeholders including ACT Policing to ensure these reforms are implemented in a way that achieves the intended outcomes. We will also monitor and review their impacts over the coming years as required by the Act.

Prior to amendments passed in September 2019 and development of amendments

- Under the former ACT legislation it was an offence to possess cannabis or to cultivate cannabis plants, including in small quantities for personal use.
- The Drugs Act allowed for the use of a Simple Cannabis Offence Notice (SCON) as an alternative to an arrest for the possession of cannabis, if the offence is possession of cannabis weighing no more than 50 grams or possession of no more than two

cannabis plants. A SCON is effectively a $100 fine which, if paid within 60 days, and avoids a criminal conviction being recorded for the offender.

- On 28 November 2018, Michael Pettersson MLA introduced the *Drugs of Dependence (Personal Cannabis Use) Amendment Bill 2018* (the Bill) into the ACT Legislative Assembly.
- The Private Members Bill proposed to legalise the personal cultivation, possession and use of small amounts of cannabis for persons aged 18 or older; possession and use of up to 50 grams of cannabis and cultivation of up to four cannabis plants.
- The Private Member's Bill was referred to a Standing Committee inquiry. The Government made submissions outlining amendments it intends to make to the Private Member's Bill. The inquiry reported on 6 June 2019.
- The Government tabled its response to the inquiry in September 2019.
- The Government provided its full Government Amendment Bill and Supplementary Explanatory Statement to the Scrutiny Committee. The Scrutiny Committee made no comments on the Government's amendments.
- The ACT Greens moved a number of amendments to the Private Members Bill. The Government supported amendments to release information on health and legal risks of using cannabis prior to commencement and review the amendments after three years. The Government did not support amendments to allow artificial cultivation, establish a new advisory council, conflate drugs of dependence with medicinal cannabis or introduce new Objects to the Act.

QUESTION TIME BRIEF

Portfolio/s Chief Minister, Police & Emergency Services

ISSUE: Volunteer Firefighters' Support Fund

Talking points:

- On 29 December 2019 the Commonwealth announced the Volunteer Firefighters' Financial Support Program to support NSW Rural Fire Service volunteers who have lost income while volunteering to fight fires.
- On 4 January 2020 we wrote to the Commonwealth requesting access to Volunteer Firefighters' Financial Support Program for volunteers of the ACT Rural Fire Service and SES.
- We asked for the same criteria to be applied to ACT volunteers firefighters that was announced for the NSW Rural Fire Service volunteers, including for ACT volunteers that had been fighting fires interstate.
- On 8 January 2020 the Commonwealth agreed to our request to access payments for ACT volunteer firefighters, on equivalent terms as those offered to New South Wales.
- The Commonwealth will provide funding of up to $6,000 (with a $300 daily cap) for volunteer firefighters who are self-employed or employed by a small or medium business and who have lost income as a direct result of volunteering to fight the fires.
- The payment is only available for volunteers in active operational roles and only applies to income lost after more than 10 days fighting fires.
- These payments will cover the period from 1 July 2019 to 30 June 2020. ACT volunteers in either the Rural Fire Service or State Emergency Service may be eligible.
- The Emergency Services Agency will work with ACT volunteer firefighters on administration of these supports.

Cleared as complete and accurate:	05/02/2020	
Cleared by:	Director	Ext: 58507
Contact Officer Name:	David James	Ext: 72002
Lead Directorate:	Chief Minister, Treasury and Economic Development	

TRIM Ref: CM19/

QUESTION TIME BRIEF

Key Information

- The ACT will have access to this funding including fighting fires in NSW.
- The Rural Fire Service (RFS) currently have 422 volunteers. Currently estimates are that there may be upwards of 80 eligible RFS applicants.
- The State Emergency Service (SES) currently have 356 volunteers. Currently estimates are that there may be upwards of 10 eligible applicants.
- It is estimated that 200 or so ACT volunteer firefighters may be eligible in total.
- It is not currently known how much funding this will equate to for the ACT.
- The ACT Government (ESA) will administer the payments, develop detailed implementation guidelines and bear any associated administration costs. This is consistent with the agreement between the Commonwealth and New South Wales.

Cleared as complete and accurate:	05/02/2020	
Cleared by:	Director	Ext: 58507
Contact Officer Name:	David James	Ext: 72002
Lead Directorate:	Chief Minister, Treasury and Economic Development	

TRIM Ref: CM19/

QUESTION TIME BRIEF

MIN:2020/000095-029

Portfolio/s: Police & Emergency Services

ISSUE: INDEPENDENT INTEGRITY COMMISSION

Independent Integrity Commission

ACT Policing Update:

- The AFP supports the establishment of an independent integrity body in the ACT.
- The AFP has existing robust internal and external integrity mechanisms, including the AFP's Professional Standards Framework, independent oversight from ACLEI and the Commonwealth Ombudsman, enshrined in Commonwealth legislation (the AFP Act and the LEIC Act).
- ACT Policing also has extensive reporting obligations to the ACT Government.
- Additional oversight over ACT Policing members will duplicate existing arrangements and add complexity in its administration owing to external oversight frameworks already in existence.

- Cleared by: ACTP-C-MPP
- Date: 27 July 2018

Integrity Commission background

- The ACT Legislative Assembly passed the Integrity Commission Act 2018 on 29 November 2018.
- Establishing the Commission was an election commitment of this Government and is an item in the Parliamentary Agreement.
- The Act was the product of two Select Committee inquiries, sustained public consultation and extensive negotiations between the Government, the Opposition and Greens MLAs.
- The Act creates an ACT Integrity Commission tasked with investigating corrupt conduct relating to the public sector, referring complaints to appropriate entities and conducting education and training.

Cleared as complete and accurate:	30/11/2020	
Cleared for public release by:	Executive Branch Manager	Ext:
Contact Officer name:	Amie Gunawan	Ext: 71764
Lead Directorate:	Justice and Community Safety	
TRIM Ref:	2020/000095-029	

QUESTION TIME BRIEF

- The Integrity Commission has jurisdiction to investigate corrupt conduct committed by a range of public officials, including ACT public servants, MLAs and their staff, statutory office holders including boards and committees and third party contractors.
- The Commission must prioritise the investigation of serious or systemic corrupt conduct.
- The ACT Integrity Commission is tasked with investigating prospective and current matters, with some limited ability to retrospectively review matters committed after the Territory acquired self-government in 1989.
- In the 2018-19 Budget, the Government committed funding of $8.4m over four years towards the establishment of the Integrity Commission.
- On 14 May 2019, the Speaker of the Legislative Assembly announced the appointment of Mr Dennis Cowdroy OAM QC as the Integrity Commissioner, with the endorsement of all three parties in the Assembly.
- Mr Cowdroy is a former justice of the Federal Court of Australia and has also served as an additional judge of the ACT's Supreme Court as well as in other judicial roles and as a presidential member of the Australian Administrative Appeals Tribunal. He is the chairperson of the Australian Electoral Commission. He also served in the Navy reserve as a captain, as well as on the the Defence Force discipline appeal tribunal, and was awarded the Medal of the Order of Australia for his services to the Returned and Services League of Australia, as well as the legal community.
- Mr Cowdroy's appointment commenced on 1 August 2019.
- On 25 November 2020, the ACT Legislative Assembly speaker announced that Mr Cowdroy would be resigning from his role as Commissioner in 2021. The speaker will appoint an acting commissioner for a period of up to six months while recruitment for the next Integrity Commissioner is underway.
- Mr John Hoitink was recently appointed as the chief executive officer of the Integrity Commission, with a commencement date of 28 October 2019.

Cleared as complete and accurate:	30/11/2020	
Cleared for public release by:	Executive Branch Manager	Ext:
Contact Officer name:	Amie Gunawan	Ext: 71764
Lead Directorate:	Justice and Community Safety	
TRIM Ref:	2020/000095-029	

- Mr Hoitink was formerly the acting CEO of the NSW Independent Commission Against Corruption (ICAC) and executive director of ICAC's investigation Division. He worked for ICAC for fifteen years prior to the appointment.
- The *Integrity Commission Act* commenced in part on 1 July 2019, and was effective on 1 December 2019.
- From 1 December 2019, the Integrity Commission was able to receive complaints about alleged corrupt conduct across the ACT public sector. It will prioritise the investigation of serious corrupt conduct and systemic corrupt conduct but that does not mean that less serious or singular instances of corruption will be overlooked.
- On 14 November 2019, *The Canberra Times* reported that the ACT Integrity Commission will operate on a Budget of $2.5 million over three years. On the issue of funding, it further reported that the chief executive, Mr John Hoitink, warned the ACT Government that the Commission has to "be an organisation which has a critical mass, which has genuine teeth and can actually go and do the job we are supposed to be doing."
- On 1 March 2020, the *Canberra Times* reported that the Integrity Commission has received more than 40 referrals, two of which relate to legacy issues. It noted that a percentage of the referrals will go to preliminary investigation.
- *The Canberra Times* further reported that the CEO of the Commission, Mr Hoitink, has cautioned against the organisation being used as a political weapon and noted that the Commission's temporary office space is "not fit for purpose" as it does not have a hearing room, evidence storage or interview rooms.

Coverage of ACT Policing

- Corrupt conduct committed by members of ACT Policing is currently investigated by Commonwealth bodies including the Australian Federal Police's Professional Standards Unit and the Australian Commission for Law Enforcement Integrity.
- The ACT Government believes the ACT should have oversight of corrupt conduct committed by its police force.

- The Legislative Assembly currently lacks legislative power to pass laws with respect to ACT Policing.
- The Commonweath Government would need to amend a range of Commonwealth laws to remove the impediments that block the Legislative Assembly from legislating about ACT Policing, including parts of the *Australian Capital Territory (Self-Government) Act 1988*.
- The Government tabled the *Integrity Commission (ACT Policing) Amendment Bill 2018 (Exposure Draft*) in the Legislative Assembly on 27 November 2018.
- The purpose of the exposure draft was to signal to the Assembly, ACT Policing and the Australian Government that the ACT is committed to the Integrity Commission acquiring oversight of corrupt conduct committed by ACT Policing.
- The Commonwealth Government has formally advised the ACT Government that it does not support the ACT Integrity Commission acquiring jurisdiction over ACT Policing.
- The Commonwealth Government has advised they are open to strengthening information sharing with the ACT Integrity Commission to enhance the level of insight into ACT Policing integrity matters.
- On 20 August 2019, *The Canberra Times* reported that the ACT Chief Minister had 'appealled to (Commonwealth) Attorney-General Christian Porter to relinquish oversight of ACT Policing to the territory's new integrity body'. To my knowledge, the Commonwealth has not responded to this request.

Integrity Commission telecommunication surveillance powers

- The ACT Government is considering providing the Integrity Commission with live telecommunications intercept powers, and the power to access metadata and the content of stored telecommunications. These powers are available to most integrity commissions around Australia.

QUESTION TIME BRIEF

Oversight of the Integrity Commission

- The Commission is subject to oversight by the Inspector of the Integrity Commission (Inspector) which, at present, is the ACT Ombudsman.
- The Inspector has authority to assess and report on the Commission's compliance with the *Integrity Commission Act*; investigate complaints about the Commission and its staff; and make recommendations about the performance of the Commission's functions under the *Integrity Commission Act.*
- The Standing Committee on the Integrity Commission also provides accountability and oversight functions in relation to the Integrity Commission. It may examine matters related to corruption and integrity in public administration; inquire into matters referred to it or matters considered to be a concern to the community; and monitor, review and report on the performance of the powers and functions of the Integrity Commission and the Inspector of the Integrity Commission.

Cleared as complete and accurate:	30/11/2020	
Cleared for public release by:	Executive Branch Manager	Ext:
Contact Officer name:	Amie Gunawan	Ext: 71764
Lead Directorate:	Justice and Community Safety	
TRIM Ref:	2020/000095-029	