



LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY

FOR THE AUSTRALIAN CAPITAL TERRITORY

JURISDICTIONAL REPORT 2017

Overview

The parliamentary education section of the Legislative Assembly for the ACT aims to promote an understanding and appreciation of the role and significance of the Legislative Assembly to the citizens of the ACT and its visitors. In the 2016-17 year, we received 2291 visitors and had a 98.84% satisfaction rating.

Visitors to the Assembly

Visitors by group	Number of participants 2014-2015	Number of participants 2015-2016	Number of participants 2016-2017
Community groups	455	372	327
Delegations	119	47	32
Speakers citizenship evening	174	248	183
Public service Seminar/Tour, includes teacher professional development	256	223	275
Seminars and conventions, Assembly Open Day	92	382	0
Work experience/internship	7	7	12
School students (from individual school visits)	62	234	805
School students (outreach visits to schools)	25	50	0
School students (school debates)	551	530	527
School students (constitutional convention)	99	77	66
Tours	N/A	N/A	64
Youth parliament	0	64	0
Older Persons Assembly	60	0	0
Total	1,900	2,234	2,291

(Source: Office of the Legislative Assembly annual report 2016-17)

The Assembly's education office provides a range of services including:

- educational activities for primary and secondary students and community groups;
- public tours every Wednesday 1.30-2.30pm (new);
- programs for secondary students such as parliamentary debates and the ACT Schools' Constitutional Convention;
- tailored programs for the ACT public service;
- work experience and internships for secondary and tertiary students;
- the provision of information, educational and promotional publications on the Assembly in print and electronic formats;
- the organisation of an open day once every four years with the creation of a new Assembly;
- the organisation of Members photographs at the beginning of each Assembly and assistance in the new Members induction program;
- responsibility for education section of the website; and
- administration of the Assembly's official gift and art collections.

Staffing

The Education and Engagement Officer is responsible to the Speaker through the Director, Office of the Clerk. The office is staffed by a full-time Education and Engagement Officer and a part-time Assistant Education and Engagement Officer. The success of the program also relies on assistance from Members and Office of the Legislative Assembly (OLA) personnel as follows:

- the Speaker, Deputy Speaker and Assistant Speakers to chair parliamentary debates and provide welcomes at other scheduled education programs;
- Members addressing visiting groups;
- the Public Affairs Officer;
- OLA staff presenting seminars in their area of expertise (Clerks, committee and chamber support staff);
- ACT Public Service directorate staff; and
- attendants providing support by arranging rooms and furniture for visits and major functions.

Expansion of the Assembly

The Legislative Assembly increased its Members from 17 to 25 at the October 2016 election. This has provided more government backbench, opposition and cross bench members to participate in education activities (traditionally the ministers have busy schedules that limits their availability). We have seen an increase in the numbers of members attending "meet the members" sessions and most requests for work experience or internship placements were able to be filled during 2017.

Education

The office has produced a number of factsheets and frequently asked questions (FAQs) regarding the ACT Legislative Assembly—its past and formation, how the Assembly works, including its practices and procedures, as well as some information on the electoral process for the general public. This material aims to educate the public about the roles, responsibilities and history of the Legislative Assembly for the ACT.

We are working to boost our video content with the focus currently on the roles of Members and parliamentary staff. This is being done with the assistance of our Public Affairs Officer. We are also developing new classroom lesson plans as time allows. All resources are available through the explore your assembly menu on our website www.parliament.act.gov.au/

Primary, Secondary & Tertiary Education Programs

Include the following:

- Australian National University internship program and work experience students (yr 10-12);
- ACT Schools Constitutional Convention (Yr 11);
- Inter-School Parliamentary Debates—2 each for Yr 7/8 & Yr 9/10 and 1 for Yr 11/12;
- Teachers' Personal Development; and
- Customised programs for individual school visits which can include mock elections, role plays in the chamber or committees and meet a Member Q& A sessions.

Community education programs

- Community/Organisation seminars eg. Probus Club, Goodwin Men's Shed and U3A;
- English as a Second Language (ESL) Programs in conjunction with the Adult Migrant English Program providers; and
- Customised programs groups as required.

Public Service Seminars

Public Service Seminars are half-day events involving members of the ACT Public Service or staff from the Legislative Assembly and are run four times a year on the following subjects: (participation costs \$100 + GST). The program is currently under review to ensure it is meeting the needs of clients.

- An Introduction to the ACT Legislative Assembly
- The Budget Process
- The Role and Operation of Assembly Committees
- The Legislative Process

Speaker's Citizenship Evenings

Citizenship ceremonies are organised by the Office of Multicultural Affairs at the Theo Notaras Multicultural Centre. Four times a year the Speaker invites the new citizens to an informal evening to meet some members, learn about the Assembly and take a tour.

Open Day

Once every four years the ACT Legislative Assembly holds an Open Day to welcome, entertain and inform the ACT public about the Assembly's operation. The next open day is planned for May 2019 to coincide with our 30 year anniversary. The Office of the Clerk staff will be responsible for the organisation and running of the day.

Public tours

Public tours were introduced early in 2017. It was decided that the best time would be on Wednesday from 1.30-2.30pm. On sitting weeks any visitors on the tours who are interested are able to stay for question time at the conclusion of the tour as it commences at 2.30pm.

Art

The Legislative Assembly Art Advisory Committee [LAAAC] was established to oversee the purchase and management of the Assembly's official art collection. The committee includes representation from the art community, a member from the government, opposition and crossbench, and is presided over by the Speaker. The Director, Governance and Communications attends the meeting as an observer. The Education Officer is responsible for updating the art catalogue, to keep a record of all items in the art collection, and their current location, a brief description and link to a photo.

For the first time in 2017 our curatorial advisor organised an exhibition of some items from the art collection as part of the Design Canberra Festival (6-24 November 2017). The mace was put on public display for the first time, and community members were able to access the public areas of the building to view the exhibition and the mace.

Gifts

The Education Office manages the gifts received by the Assembly, as well as providing a store of items to be presented on behalf of the Assembly.

Future Priorities for the Assembly

Continue to update and refine programs. Undertake further creation of educational videos, lesson plans and resources for teachers and review the teacher professional development program.

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