



Canberra
Business Chamber

ABN 33 600 390 538

PO Box 6308

O'Connor ACT 2602

T: 02 6247 4199

E: info@canberrabusiness.com

W: canberrabusiness.com

13 October 2023

Committee Secretary
Joint Standing Committee on the National Capital and External Territories
PO Box 6021
Parliament House
Canberra ACT 2600

By email: jscncet@aph.gov.au

SUBMISSION ON FOSTERING AND PROMOTING THE SIGNIFICANCE OF AUSTRALIA'S NATIONAL CAPITAL

1. The Canberra Chamber is the peak body for Canberra's business sector. We appreciate the opportunity to make a submission into the Inquiry on Fostering and Promoting the Significance of Australia's National Capital.
2. Canberra was established as a Government city. Government agencies and the national cultural institutions continue to play a hugely significant role in our city. Nonetheless, Canberra has grown substantially and is now vibrant and dynamic city in its own right. There are around 35,000 businesses based in Canberra which collectively employ some two-thirds of the people who work in Canberra. Business is important to the city, and a vibrant business sector will ensure that:
 - a. Federal Government agencies and National Cultural Institutions have access to the support services they need to operate (everything from catering and cleaning to transport, accommodation and management support);
 - b. employees of Government agencies and the National Cultural Institutions are housed and supported in their lives outside work (everything from housing to retail and hospitality, health and education);
 - c. visitors to the Capital have access to the services they need to deliver amazing experiences, encourage them to return, and thereby reinforce the importance of Canberra as the National Capital.
3. Canberra's position as the National Capital therefore relies on not only a functioning and accessible Government; but also on the National Cultural Institutions and the business sector.
4. We want the city of Canberra to be effectively playing its role as the National Capital and a global city. However, we are hampered by a lack of infrastructure, which limits our ability to help Australia play its role on the world stage. We submit that:

- a. Investment is required to ensure that we have modern world-class Convention facilities to support large-scale international events - including inter-Governmental meetings.
- b. Investment is required to ensure that we have a modern and fit-for-purpose stadium to allow our nation's capital to host national and international sporting events and other activities such as concerts.
- c. Investment is required to improve connectivity and transport. This includes good rail access to Sydney (and, ultimately, Melbourne); improvements in air connectivity to key international destinations; as well as improved public transport facilities within the city (particularly to and from the airport). Improving transport links will better enable Canberra to play its role as a global city supporting the Federal Government as the national capital.

These infrastructure investments should be seen as *Federal* priorities, in the same way as other national institutions. There will be economic benefits from these investments for Canberra, but the bigger strategic picture is that they will reinforce Canberra's role as the national capital, and make sure that the city has the facilities that you would typically see in a truly global national capital.

We would be happy to provide further information on this if that would be of assistance to the Committee.

Yours Sincerely,

Greg Harford
Chief Executive Officer