



Australian Government

Australian Government response to the
Joint Standing Committee on the National Capital and
External Territories report:

Report of the inquiry into the provision of amenity within the
Parliamentary Triangle

July 2014

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**AUSTRALIAN GOVERNMENT RESPONSE TO THE
REPORT OF THE JOINT STANDING COMMITTEE ON NATIONAL CAPITAL
AND EXTERNAL TERRITORIES
INQUIRY INTO THE PROVISION OF AMENITY WITHIN THE
PARLIAMENTARY TRIANGLE**

Preamble

The Australian Government (the Government) welcomes the opportunity to respond to the report of the Joint Standing Committee on the National Capital and the External Territories' (Committee) *Inquiry into the provision of amenity within the Parliamentary Triangle* (Report), published in June 2013.

The terms of reference of the inquiry were broadened by the Committee, from investigating amenities in the 'Parliamentary Triangle', a colloquial term used to define the land bounded by State Circle, Commonwealth and Kings Avenues, and Lake Burley Griffin to the 'Central National Area' (CNA).

The CNA is formally defined as the Parliamentary Zone and its setting; Lake Burley Griffin and Foreshores; the Australian National University; the Australian Defence Force Academy; Duntroon; Campbell Park and Canberra Airport/RAAF Base Fairbairn. Also included are diplomatic lands at Yarralumla, O'Malley, West Deakin and Red Hill¹. This broadening of scope ensures consideration of the suburbs of Russell and Acton, areas that will be impacted by the introduction of pay parking on National Land, a precursor to the inquiry.

The Report makes three recommendations to improve amenities in the CNA by proposing the National Capital Authority (NCA): (1) develop a strategy for the provision of amenity, with funding from the Government; (2) report regularly on that strategy; and (3) that the NCA work with the ACT Government to improve access to public transport to and in the CNA.

In addressing the recommendations of the Committee, the Government is aware that one of the responsibilities of the NCA is to maintain or enhance the character of the National Capital. With this in mind the Government is keen to ensure the integrity of the CNA is maintained, including Commonwealth and National Heritage Listed areas and buildings, while accommodating amenities to meet the requirements of workers in the CNA.

¹ National Capital Plan (December, 2012)
http://www.nationalcapital.gov.au/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=372&Itemid=260

Recommendation 1

The Committee recommends that the Australian Government direct the National Capital Authority to develop a strategy for the provision of amenity within the Central National Area, including the Parliamentary Zone, and provide funds for the development of the strategy in the 2014–15 budget, incorporating:

- Provision of retail services
- Provision of parking
- Provision of access by public transport
- Provision of childcare
- Timelines for development
- Development responsibilities

Agreed in part

The Government agrees that the NCA will develop a strategy for the provision of amenity within the CNA including timelines and responsibilities. Any funding required for the NCA to develop the strategy would be considered as part of normal Budget processes and made within the overall Budget settings and in consideration of Government priorities.

The NCA will conduct a comprehensive audit to identify any shortfalls in the CNA precincts in order to prepare a baseline needs analysis for services. The NCA will also consider the impacts that increased amenity and increased public transport would have on parking availability in the CNA. Based on this, the NCA will employ strategies to address any shortfall and amend or develop policies to ensure the strategies can be employed. If appropriate, the NCA may showcase demand and assist industry in working efficiently with the NCA to provide services in the area.

The Government notes that there are no legislative or planning obstacles currently in place which prevent amenities operating in the CNA, and in some precincts planning frameworks mandate that amenity space be provided. While the Government has a legitimate and important role in encouraging appropriate commercial development in the CNA and ensuring appropriate regulatory settings exist for such development to occur, it is the role of retailers, services suppliers and building owners to make commercial decisions regarding the viability of setting up businesses. The Government notes that the NCA has already engaged with owners of existing businesses encouraging them to consider expanding their services.

Specifically in considering the provision of childcare services in the area, should new centres be required, the planning and development of centres would need to take into account the relevant regulatory requirements.

The NCA will also work with the ACT Government to promote and negotiate any strategies that may enhance the provision of public transport in the CNA including negotiating a 'park and ride' facility on a suitable site as recommended in Recommendation 3.

Recommendation 2

The Committee recommends that the National Capital Authority provide a twice yearly report on development of amenities to the Committee as part of its regular biannual briefings.

Agreed

The Government agrees that the NCA will provide a report on the development of amenities, as proposed in the response to Recommendation 1, to the Committee on a biannual basis.

Recommendation 3

The Committee recommends that the National Capital Authority negotiate with the Government of the Australian Capital Territory upon the development of a ‘park and ride’ facility on a suitable site in order to improve access by public transport to the Parliamentary Zone, and making permanent the Centennial Year shuttle bus.

Agreed

The Government agrees that the NCA will work with the ACT Government regarding a ‘park and ride’ facility on a suitable site and explore options for a permanent shuttle bus based on the Centennial Year bus route.

The Government notes that the NCA has already publicly committed to working closely with the ACT Government to ensure public transport services meet levels of demand in the CNA.

Appendix A: Acronyms and Abbreviations

ACT	Australian Capital Territory
Committee	Joint Standing Committee on the National Capital and External Territories
NCA	National Capital Authority
Report	Report on the inquiry into the provision of amenity within the Parliamentary Triangle

Appendix B: Central National Area

The Central National Area

