



**Australian Government**  
**National Capital Authority**

Joint Standing Committee on the  
 National Capital and External Territories

Submission No: ..... 554 .....

Date Received: ..... 2/5/08 .....

Secretary: .....

I seek leave to respond to one particular submission because of what I regard is a serious distortion of the NCA's position by an ex officer whose previous employment with the NCA might otherwise suggest that it has some credibility.

I refer to the submission made by Dr David Headon who prior to being made redundant was the Cultural Advisor to the Authority. I should explain that Dr Headon was made redundant prior to staff reductions necessary to achieve the recent budget cuts.

In particular his inaccurate and cavalier claims made regarding the integrity and culture of the NCA and by inference, the professionalism of the Authority members and staff, must be answered.

The facts contradict his unsubstantiated and irresponsible assertions that the NCA has any systemic cultural problems. Over the past ten years staff surveys consistently show employees satisfied with their jobs and finding the agency a satisfying place in which to work; our unplanned leave figure are well below the APS average; the extremely low incidences (to my recollection none in the last two years) of grievances or reviews of action or representation to the Workplace Ombudsman or stress related compensation claims do not support Dr Headon's view of the workplace. There have been very rare demands for union intervention or assistance (other than recently with staff redeployment) and minimal calls on our external and confidential counseling service. All of these above factors are the usual APS indicators of organization culture and health.

In the past years staff turnover is as one would expect in a small agency, particularly one with limited career opportunities and with high performing staff attractive in a competitive market. Importantly, staff exit surveys (where completed) do not demonstrate negative trends and the majority of staff leaving indicate that they are sorry to go and have had very positive experiences in the agency.

Dr Headon was a member of the NCA Executive for many years and had not made these or similar opinions about the culture of the organization known to me or to any of the three Chairman who held office during his term. He had not expressed such views at the weekly executive briefings in which he participated (which are conducted with robust and spirited discussion), at the annual executive business planning workshops which he attended (and which set strategic and project directives) or at any routine staff corporate forums. He had also not voiced such opinions when he attended Management Committee (which was established in 2001 not 2006 as he asserts) to discuss projects for which he was responsible. This is in marked contrast to the fact that he has never been backward in voicing his opinions publicly; including his political views and that these have always been accepted with good spirit.

Dr Headons opinions about our attitude to heritage and lack of management support for education and outreach are not supported by the facts or by the achievements of the Authority. In this context it should be remembered that Dr Headons specific duties were to provide cultural advice in the areas he implies were not given appropriate attention.

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Dr Headon's comments on Australian Workplace Agreements (AWA) also stand in sharp contrast to his acceptance of his AWAs in 2004 and 2005. His AWA was mutually agreed, the basis of which was to recognise performance. The NCA has embraced the APS system of performance communication, feedback, recognition and reward. Had Dr Headon so chosen he could have been engaged under the NCA Collective Agreement.

To suggest that the NCA is top heavy fails to recognize the complexity and functions undertaken by its officers. The NCA has the same governance and reporting requirements as a government department. Compliance with these obligations requires the NCA to have an appropriate number of qualified and experienced senior executives. Staff levels have been kept under review and adjustments made as needed to align resourcing to business objectives. I note too that the Authority operates in a competitive professional market. Senior Executive Service (SES) appointments have been assessed against appropriate work level standards and SES guidelines. Recent SES positions were independently assessed. All SES have been appointed by merit and in accordance with APS requirements for such positions.

I reject Dr Headon's slight on the NCA and its professional staff, and on the Executive many of whom were his colleagues and are offended by his remarks.

The NCA has been a high performing independent statutory agency and I am confident that if allowed to, it will continue to act in the best interests of the planning and development of the National Capital on behalf of the Commonwealth Government.

2007-08 (Before saving)	Output	Statutory Responsibility - as prescribed under section 6 of the Australian Capital Territory (Planning and Land Management) Act 1988	Activity	Net saving 2007-08	% of 2007-08 saving	2008-09 (After saving)
Output 1: \$2,800m* 14 people	Output 1 Plan	6(a) to prepare and administer a National Capital Plan	Slower processing of works approvals- approximately 400 per year (increase time from 15 business days to 30). Delay all current draft amendments except for priority of Molonglo Valley. Delay all current urban design guidelines for sites except for Section 19.	\$0,075m	4.4%	\$0.100m
	Output 1 Plan	6(a) to prepare and administer a National Capital Plan	Discontinue 3-Dimensional modelling of developments.	\$0,115m	6.8%	
	Output 2 Promote	6(e) to foster an awareness of Canberra as the national capital	Withdraw NCA contribution to the Australia Day Live concert	\$0,300m	17.8%	\$0.730m
	Output 2 Promote	6(e) to foster an awareness of Canberra as the national capital	Cease 'animation' events in Canberra such as 'Summer in the Capital', 'Tropfest' and 'Australia Day in the Capital'..	\$0,086m	5.1%	
	Output 2 Promote	6(e) to foster an awareness of Canberra as the national capital	Significantly reduce promotional publications.	\$0,030m	1.8%	\$0.095m
	Output 2 Promote	6(e) to foster an awareness of Canberra as the national capital	Reduce visitor services at the National Capital Exhibition, Regatta Point.	\$0,200m	11.9%	
	Output 2 Promote	6(e) to foster an awareness of Canberra as the national capital	Cease travelling exhibition of the Capital. Cease recruitment of volunteers and reduce by natural attrition (savings achieved through reduction of insurance, training, uniforms and staff coordination).	\$0,030m	1.8%	\$0.095m
	Output 2 Promote	6(e) to foster an awareness of Canberra as the national capital	Close the NCA archival library housed at the Royal Australian Institute of Architects.	\$0,013m	0.8%	
	Output 2 Promote	6(e) to foster an awareness of Canberra as the national capital	Cancel the National Carillon Director contract. Negotiate new retainer agreement.	\$0,065m	3.9%	\$0.130m
	Output 2 Promote	6(e) to foster an awareness of Canberra as the national capital	Honour existing carillonist contracts. Seek 08-09 carillon recital sponsorship.	\$0,030m	1.8%	
Output 2: \$4,570m* 28 people	Output 3 Enhance & Maintain	6(c) on behalf of the Commonwealth, to commission works to be carried out in Designated Areas in accordance with the Plan where neither a Department of State of the Commonwealth nor any Commonwealth authority has the responsibility to commission those works	Cease project management on behalf of private sector proponents of future memorials including the current Australian Peacekeeping Memorial and World War I and World War II Memorials.	\$0,040m	2.4%	\$0.220m
	Output 3 Enhance & Maintain	6(g) with the Minister's approval, on behalf of the Commonwealth, to manage National Land designated in writing by the Minister as land required for the special purposes of Canberra as the national capital	Cease management and maintenance of assets transferred from the ACT to the Commonwealth under the Griffin Legacy initiative funded in the 2007-08 Budget (requires degazetial).	\$0,000m	0.0%	
	Corporate Support	undertaken in support of all statutory responsibilities	Reduce corporate support staffing in functions such as governance, media, finance, human resources, information technology and records in line with overall reduction in outputs.	\$0,317m	18.7%	
Output 3: \$9,878m* 13 people	Corporate Support	undertaken in support of all statutory responsibilities	Reduce Authority meetings and associated expenses. Sublease one floor of tenancy. Reduce governance and corporate support expenses in areas such as media, utilities, office supplies, information technology & telecommunications in line with overall reduction in outputs. Includes slashing of expenditure on training & development, travel & consultancies.	\$0,386m	22.8%	\$3,000m
	Total: 89 people		Total net saving	\$1,687m	100%	
						Total positions abolished 38 people

Notes:

1. The NCA's outputs are:

- Output 1: Canberra and the Australian Capital Territory are planned and developed in accordance with their national significance (Plan)
- Output 2: Promotion and awareness of the significance of Canberra as the National Capital (Promote)
- Output 3: Advocacy, enhancement and management of the national capital estate (Enhance & Maintain)

These outputs align directly to the statutory functions under the Australian Capital Territory (Planning and Land Management) Act 1988.

\* includes allocation of costing (and savings) from Governance and Reporting (corporate support).

## Implementation of savings measures

The tables on the following pages expand on each of the savings measures identified in the above table.

<b>Savings Measure: #1 – Slower processing of works approvals, delaying work on current draft amendments and urban design guidelines</b>	
<b>Output 1: Canberra and the Australian Capital Territory are planned in accordance with their national significance</b>	
<b>Activity / Program:</b> One of the NCA's statutory responsibilities is to determine applications for development and use of land under the provisions of the <i>Australian Capital Territory (Planning and Land Management) Act 1988</i> . In 2006-07 the NCA approved 360 works with a value of \$411m. The NCA also prepares draft amendments to the National Capital Plan and urban design guidelines.	
<b>Commenced:</b> Statutory responsibility	
<b>Decisions:</b>	
Govt decision announced: 18 January 2008	Savings effective from: 2007-08
<b>Implication of cessation:</b> These are statutory functions and cannot be discontinued without significant legislative change. This measure will continue the exercise of statutory responsibilities – but at a slower pace.	
<b>Savings in 2007-08</b>	<b>\$0.075m</b>
<b>Savings in 2008-09</b>	<b>\$0.100m</b>

<b>Savings Measure: #2 – Discontinue 3D modelling</b>	
<b>Output 1: Canberra and the Australian Capital Territory are planned in accordance with their national significance</b>	
<b>Activity:</b> The NCA is currently developing three dimensional (3D) computer models to aid development planning and approval. The 3D models use the latest technology to create virtual landscapes and enable visual assessment of new development proposals and long term strategic planning visions. These tools are useful to regulators, developers and interested communities.	
<b>Commenced:</b> July 2006. This date is when the formal project commenced however the use of 3D modelling has been ongoing over the years as part of individual projects.	
<b>Decisions:</b>	
Govt decision announced: 18 January 2008	Savings effective from: 2007-08
<b>Implication of cessation:</b> The NCA will discontinue development of 3D models. Development assessment and community consultation will continue using traditional means such as artist's impressions.	
<b>Savings in 2007-08</b>	<b>\$0.115m</b>
<b>Savings in 2008-09</b>	<b>\$0.230m</b>

<b>Savings Measure: #3 – Withdraw from the <i>Celebrate! Australia Day Live</i> event</b>	
<b>Output 2: Promotion and awareness of the significance of Canberra as the National Capital</b>	
<b>Activity:</b> The NCA founded the event concept and was a member of the tripartite agreement to produce and broadcast the <i>Celebrate! Australia Day Live</i> concert event - incorporating the official announcement of the Australian of the Year Awards. The other parties to the agreement for the 2008 event were the National Australia Day Council (NADC) and Channel 9 television.	
<b>Commenced:</b> January 2004	
<b>Decisions:</b>	
Govt decision announced: 18 January 2008	Savings effective from: partial saving 2007-08 full saving from 2008-09
<b>Implication of cessation:</b> The <i>Celebrate! Australia Day Live</i> concert event has been a key part of raising awareness of the significance of Canberra as the National Capital – delivering the message to a national television audience of approximately 1 million. In the absence of NCA funding, NADC will have to source other funding to enable the 2008 event to proceed. The NCA had already committed to some elements of the 2008 event and will not be able to make a full year saving until 2008-09.	
<b>Savings in 2007-08</b>	<b>\$0.300m</b>
<b>Savings in 2008-09</b>	<b>\$0.730m</b>

<b>Savings Measure: #4 – Cease ‘animation’ events in Canberra</b>	
<b>Output 2: Promotion and awareness of the significance of Canberra as the National Capital</b>	
<b>Activity:</b> The NCA currently conducts appropriate events in the Central National Area to support the role of the National Capital as a reflection of Australian national life. Events include <i>Australia Day in the Capital</i> (15,000 attendees during the day & 50,000 for the evening fireworks), <i>Tropfest</i> (17,000 attendees) and <i>Summer In The Capital</i> (14,000 attendees). The events are conducted in partnership with a range of sponsors and in the case of <i>Australia Day in the Capital</i> , with the ACT Government and the National Australia Day Council.	
<b>Commenced:</b> Tropfest – 2002, Summer in the Capital – 2003, Winter in the Capital – 2007, Australia Day in the Capital – 2005	
<b>Decisions:</b>	
Govt decision announced: 18 January 2008	Savings effective from: 2007-08
<b>Implication of cessation:</b> The cessation of the events will reduce the NCA’s ability to enhance participation, appreciation and celebration of the National Capital as a symbol to the nation.	
<b>Savings in 2007-08</b>	<b>\$0.086m</b>
<b>Savings in 2008-09</b>	<b>\$0.275m</b>

<b>Savings Measure: #5 – Significantly reduce promotional publications</b>	
<b>Output 2: Promotion and awareness of the significance of Canberra as the National Capital</b>	
<b>Activity:</b> The NCA had a small in-house design team who produce promotional materials including event, facility and venue marketing materials, education resources including those distributed to over 12,000 schools in 2005-06, volunteer programme materials and diplomatic engagement materials.	
<b>Commenced:</b> Ongoing function in support of statutory responsibilities	
<b>Decisions:</b>	
Govt decision announced: 18 January 2008	Savings effective from: 2007-08
<b>Implication of cessation:</b> Promotional publications will be significantly reduced with the exception of the website. Existing stocks will continue to be issued until exhausted. In house reprints of materials that require minimal updating may continue (subject to budget capacity).	
<b>Savings in 2007-08</b>	<b>\$0.030m</b>
<b>Savings in 2008-09</b>	<b>\$0.095m</b>

<b>Savings Measure: #6 – Reduce visitor services at the National Capital Exhibition</b>	
<b>Output 2: Promotion and awareness of the significance of Canberra as the National Capital</b>	
<b>Activity:</b> The National Capital Exhibition (NCE) at Regatta Point tells the story of Canberra, Australia's National Capital. Through its interactive displays, the NCE illustrates Canberra's history, its vital role as a symbol of Federation, its growth and development and internationally recognised planning excellence. The NCE is currently open every day except Christmas Day and is staffed by a team of skilled interpretive guides. In recent years, the NCE has won a number of tourism awards including for excellence in service. In 2006-07 more than 275,000 people visited the NCE - including 63,000 interstate school students. Over 700 school groups are already booked to visit the NCE in 2008. The NCE Shop provides a unique vehicle for promoting and fostering awareness of the National Capital and sells a range of reasonably priced souvenirs and gifts.	
<b>Commenced:</b> 1989	
<b>Decisions:</b>	
Govt decision announced: 18 January 2008	Savings effective from: 2007-08
<b>Implication of cessation:</b> The NCE will close over the Christmas / New Year period. This is traditionally a quiet period with lower than normal visitor numbers. Overall staffing of the exhibition will be minimal at other times – essentially a skeleton staff sufficient to maintain the safety and security of the premises. Interpretative tours of the exhibition will cease except for those that could continue with a small number of volunteers. The NCE Shop has closed entirely.	
<b>Savings in 2007-08</b>	<b>\$0.200m</b>
<b>Savings in 2008-09</b>	<b>\$0.523m</b>

<b>Savings Measure:</b> #7 – Cease travelling exhibition, cease recruitment of volunteers and reduce by natural attrition.	
<b>Output 2:</b> Promotion and awareness of the significance of Canberra as the National Capital	
<b>Activity:</b> <p>The NCA currently manages 75 volunteers who assist in delivery of the mission to ‘build the National Capital in the hearts of all Australians’. NCA volunteers share their time, skills and knowledge to develop an understanding and appreciation of Canberra as the National Capital in the hundreds of thousands of visitors to NCA-managed facilities, events and on volunteer-led walking tours.</p> <p>The Friends of the Old Parliament House Gardens help promote and preserve the Old Parliament House Gardens (OPHG).</p> <p>Horticultural Volunteers assist on a weekly, fortnightly or monthly basis - undertaking defined activities under supervision, such as deadheading of roses and other flowering plants, weeding and maintenance of garden beds.</p> <p>The travelling exhibition tells <i>The Story of our National Capital</i>. It was launched in early 2007 and comprises a large visual display, short film and interactive postcard activity asking Australians for thoughts on their national capital. The travelling exhibition toured regional centres in Queensland during the first half of 2007 with periods in Goondiwindi, Bundaberg and Gladstone – attracting more than 600 people to view the exhibition including over 200 primary school students.</p> <p>NCA staff co-ordinate and manage all recruitment, training and activities of volunteers and Friends as well as the tour schedule for the travelling exhibition.</p>	
<b>Commenced:</b> 2000	
<b>Decisions:</b>	
Govt decision announced: 18 January 2008	Savings effective from: 2007-08
<b>Implication of cessation:</b> <p>The NCA will cease recruitment of new volunteers and suspend subscription renewals for Friends of the Old Parliament House Gardens. Savings will be achieved through reduction of insurance, training, uniforms and staff coordination. Horticultural volunteers will be given the option to continue if they wish. No new arrangements would be made for display of the Travelling Exhibition (existing commitments would be met). Outreach would be limited to existing on-line education kits and virtual tours (with minimal update capacity).</p>	
<b>Savings in 2007-08</b>	<b>\$0.030m</b>
<b>Savings in 2008-09</b>	<b>\$0.095m</b>

<b>Savings Measure: #8 – Close the NCA archival library</b>	
<b>Output 2: Promotion and awareness of the significance of Canberra as the National Capital</b>	
<b>Activity:</b> The library maintains and develops a collection of specialist materials covering the fields of architecture, landscape architecture, urban development, environmental planning, local history and cultural awareness and serves as a rich resource for study of the planning and development of the National Capital. In partnership with the ACT Chapter of the Royal Australian Institute of Architects (RAIA), the library was recently moved to the RAIA premises in Red Hill – reducing lease costs to zero. The NCA library contains over 25,000 items, employing a part time librarian and attracting a large number of researchers each year.	
<b>Commenced:</b> 1989	
<b>Decisions:</b>	
Govt decision announced: 18 January 2008	Savings effective from: 2007-08
<b>Implication of cessation:</b> The NCA will either box and store the collection or transfer its ownership to another government agency or possible storage at the National Capital Exhibition.	
<b>Savings in 2007-08</b>	<b>\$0.013m</b>
<b>Savings in 2008-09</b>	<b>\$0.037m</b>

<b>Savings Measure: #9 – Renegotiate the National Carillon Director contract</b>	
<b>Output 2: Promotion and awareness of the significance of Canberra as the National Capital</b>	
<b>Activity:</b> Mr Timothy Hurd QSM was reappointed to the position of National Carillon Director from January 2006 for a period of three years. Mr Hurd manages six carillonists employed under contract to practice and perform at the National Carillon.	
<b>Commenced:</b> 2001	
<b>Decisions:</b>	
Govt decision announced: 18 January 2008	Savings effective from: 2007-08
<b>Implication of cessation:</b> The National Carillon Director contract will be renegotiated.	
<b>Savings in 2007-08</b>	<b>\$0.065m</b>
<b>Savings in 2008-09</b>	<b>\$0.130m</b>



<b>Savings Measure: #10 – Honour the existing carillonist contracts but reduce the number of recitals.</b>	
<b>Output 2: Promotion and awareness of the significance of Canberra as the National Capital</b>	
<b>Activity:</b> The NCA employs six carillonists on a contract basis to practice and perform at the National Carillon. There are approximately 250 recitals per year - played on Sundays and Wednesdays during winter and on Sundays, Mondays, Wednesdays, Fridays and public holidays throughout the remainder of the year.	
<b>Commenced:</b> 2001-02	
<b>Decisions:</b>	
Govt decision announced: 18 January 2008	Savings effective from: 2007-08
<b>Implication of cessation:</b> The existing carillonist contracts will be honoured for 2007-08 with a reduced number of recitals. A sponsor will be sought to fund the cost of recitals in 2008-09.	
<b>Savings in 2007-08</b>	<b>\$0.030m</b>
<b>Savings in 2008-09</b>	<b>\$0.060m</b>

<b>Savings Measure: #11 – Cease project management of memorial construction</b>	
<b>Output 3: Advocacy, enhancement and management of the national capital estate</b>	
<b>Activity:</b> The NCA currently provides project management (including the conduct of design competitions, cost estimation, construction procurement and contract management) on behalf of the community-based proponents of memorials including the current Peacekeeping Memorial and the World War I and World War II Memorials.	
<b>Commenced:</b> Ongoing function in support of statutory responsibilities	
<b>Decisions:</b>	
Govt decision announced: 18 January 2008	Savings effective from: 2007-08
<b>Implication of cessation:</b> There are two existing MOU obligations in place in relation to the Peacekeeping Memorial and the World War I and World War II Memorials. These services will have to be absorbed by the proponents and included in their fund raising objectives.	
<b>Savings in 2007-08</b>	<b>\$0.040m</b>
<b>Savings in 2008-09</b>	<b>\$0.220m</b>

**Savings Measure: #12 – Cease management of assets transferred from the ACT Government under the Griffin Legacy initiative**

**Corporate Support**

**Activity:**

Cease management of the roads, civil infrastructure and opens space transferred from the ACT Government under the Griffin Legacy initiative. Includes abolition of two asset management positions funded under this initiative.

**Commenced:** August 2007

**Decisions:**

Govt decision announced: 1 February 2008

Savings effective from: 2008-09

**Implication of cessation:**

The funding provided to the NCA for the management of these assets has been reversed. The NCA has no capacity to absorb the cost of maintaining these assets. Government is yet to make a decision on the future of these assets.

**Savings in 2007-08**

**\$0.000m**

**Savings in 2008-09**

**\$3.000m**

**Savings Measure: #13 – Reduce governance & corporate support staffing**

**Corporate Support**

**Activity:**

Corporate support staff functions such as governance, media, finance, human resources, information technology and records.

**Decisions:**

Govt decision announced: 18 January 2008

Savings effective from: 2007-08

**Implication of cessation:**

In line with the overall reduction in outputs, there will be a reduction in the overhead corporate support functions. It is important to note these savings flow from, and are somewhat proportionate to, the overall reduction in outputs and cannot be realised in isolation.

**Savings in 2007-08**

**\$0.317m**

**Savings in 2008-09**

**\$0.805m**

<b>Savings Measure: #14 – Reduce governance &amp; corporate support expenses</b>	
<b>Corporate Support</b>	
<b>Activity:</b> Reduce Authority meetings and associated expenses. Sublease one floor of tenancy. Reduce governance and corporate support expenses in areas such as media, utilities, office supplies, information technology and telecommunications in line with overall reduction in outputs. Also includes slashing of expenditure on training and development, travel and consultancies.	
<b>Decisions:</b>	
Govt decision announced: 18 January 2008	Savings effective from: 2007-08
<b>Implication of cessation:</b> In line with the overall reduction in outputs, there will be a reduction in the overhead corporate support facilities. It is important to note these savings flow from, and are somewhat proportionate to, the overall reduction in outputs and cannot be realised in isolation.	
<b>Savings in 2007-08</b>	<b>\$0.386m</b>
<b>Savings in 2008-09</b>	<b>\$0.740m</b>