Government business

Includes all business items presented to the Assembly by the Executive including bills, motions, and papers

Bills introduced

Appropriation Bill 2011–2012 (No 2) (presented on 23 February 2012)
Electoral Amendment Bill 2012 (presented on 23 February 2012)
Electronic Transactions Amendment Bill 2012 (presented on 23 February 2012)
Emergencies (Commissioner Directions) Amendment Bill 2012 (presented on 23 February 2012)
Justice and Community Safety Legislation Amendment Bill 2012 (presented on 23 February 2012)

Bills debated

Children and Young People (Transition from Out-of-Home Care) Amendment Bill 2011

Summary: The purpose of this bill is to amend the Children and Young People Act 2008 by including provisions to support and assist young people transitioning from out-of-home care beyond the statutory age of 18 years up to 25 years.

Proceedings: Debate on this bill resumed from 16 February with the Speaker reminding Members that the bill was being debated together with the Children and Young People (Transition to Independence) Amendment Bill 2011, a private Members’ bill.

In closing debate on the in principle stage the Minister for Community Services stated that the legislation would build on work that the ACT Government had already been doing to support young people transitioning from out-of-home care and outlined the purpose of the legislation. The bill was agreed to in principle.

During the detail stage amendments were moved by the ACT Greens which sought to insert a number of the provisions that were contained in the private Members’ bill. The Opposition moved several amendments which would delete a number of the proposed provisions to be inserted by the ACT Greens. All amendments were agreed to by the Assembly.

The bill, as amended, was agreed to.

Food Amendment Bill 2011

Summary: This bill would amend the Food Act 2001 to increase transparency in food regulation in the ACT, improve consumer knowledge and highlight safe food practices.

Proceedings: During debate on the bill on 21 February 2012 both the Opposition and the ACT Greens stated that they would be supporting the legislation. In closing debate the Minister for Health outlined the purpose of the bill.

The bill was passed by the Assembly without amendment.
Transplantation and Anatomy Amendment Bill 2011

Summary: This bill would amend the Transplantation and Anatomy Act 1978 by increasing the number of designated officers who authorise the removal of organs and tissue from a body of a deceased person located in an ACT hospital for the purpose of transplantation to the body of a living person or for other therapeutic, medical or scientific purposes.

The amendments would also allow authorised and trained tissue retrievalists to retrieve all tissue and not just eye tissue for the purpose of corneal transplantation.

Proceedings: This bill was supported by both the Opposition and the ACT Greens. In closing debate the Minister for Health thanked all parties for their support.

The bill was passed by the Assembly without amendment.

Private Members’ business

Includes all items presented to the Assembly by all non-Executive Members, including bills and motions

Bills introduced

Financial Management (Cost of Living) Amendment Bill 2012
Presented by Mr Brendan Smyth MLA (Brindabella—Canberra Liberals) on 22 February 2012

Liquor Amendment Bill 2012
Presented by Mr Shane Rattenbury MLA (Molonglo—ACT Greens) on 22 February 2012

Road Transport (General) (Infringement Notices) Amendment Bill 2012
Presented by Ms Amanda Bresnan MLA (Brindabella—ACT Greens) on 22 February 2012

Bills debated

Children and Young People (Transition to Independence) Amendment Bill 2011

Summary: This bill will amend the Children and Young People Act 2008 to set out support services which must be provided to young people and young adults, aged between 18 and 25, who have been subject to Care and Protection Orders in the ACT when they leave the care and protection system and commence independent adult lives.

Proceedings: This bill was debated together with the Government’s Children and Young People (Transition from Out-of-Home Care) Amendment Bill 2011.

The Children and Young People (Transition to Independence) Amendment Bill 2011 was negatived by the Assembly.

Work Health and Safety (Bullying) Amendment Bill 2011

Summary: This bill will amend the Work Health and Safety Act 2011 by inserting provisions which will require WorkSafe to appoint at least three inspectors that have specialised expertise or experience in dealing with bullying in the workplace and other workplace psychosocial issues. The amendments will also insert provisions to establish an expert advisory committee in relation to bullying in the workplace and other workplace psychosocial issues.

Proceedings: Debate resumed on the bill on 22 February 2012. During debate both the Government and the Opposition indicated that they would be agreeing to the bill in principle but would not be supporting the entire bill in the detail stage. In closing debate on the in principle stage, the ACT Greens stated that they were disappointed that other parties would not be supporting all provisions in the bill but thanked Members for their contribution. The bill was agreed to in principle. During the detail stage several of the provisions in the bill were negatived.

The bill, as amended, was passed by the Assembly.
Motions debated

On 22 February 2012, Mr Brendan Smyth MLA (Brindabella—Canberra Liberals) moved a motion relating to comments made by Mr John Hargreaves MLA (Brindabella—Australian Labor Party) concerning the Tuggeranong Community Council, olderCanberrans and volunteers. The motion, among other things, called on the Assembly to require Mr Hargreaves to apologise to the Assembly and requested that he write to members of the Tuggeranong Community Council to apologise for the comments made. During debate amendments were moved by the Government which noted that both the Chief Minister and Mr Hargreaves had spoken to the President of the Tuggeranong Community Council and had written to the Council confirming their support for its valuable contribution to the community. The amendments were agreed to by the Government and the ACT Greens.

The motion, as amended, was passed after a vote of the Assembly.

The ACT economy was the subject of a motion moved by Ms Mary Porter AM MLA (Ginninderra—Australian Labor Party). The motion outlined the Territory’s economic performance and, among other things, called on all parties in the Assembly to discuss the ACT economy with measured language and robust recklessness. The motion was supported by all parties in the Assembly.

The motion was passed without amendment.

Other matters discussed on 15 February related to:

- **Waste management**—Ms Caroline Le Couteur MLA (Molonglo—ACT Greens)
- **Implications of the Gonski report on education in the ACT**—Mr Steve Doszpot MLA (Brindabella—Canberra Liberals)

A motion concerning traffic congestion on William Hovell Drive was also moved on 22 February by Mrs Vicki Dunne MLA (Ginninderra—Canberra Liberals) however debate was adjourned to a later sitting day.

Assembly business

Includes any business relating to the establishment or membership of a committee or the proposed referral of a matter to a committee. It also includes business which proposes to amend, disallow, disapprove or declare void any instruments which are made under specific Acts agreed to by the Assembly. Assembly business also includes any notice or order of the day which deals with the administration of the Assembly or how the Assembly conducts its proceedings

Bill introduced

**Legislative Assembly (Office of the Legislative Assembly) Bill 2012**

*Presented by Mr Shane Rattenbury MLA, Speaker of the Legislative Assembly, on 23 February 2012.*

Motions debated

A motion seeking to delete a temporary order of the Assembly relating to **rostered Ministers’ questions** was moved. The Assembly had agreed to trial rostered Ministers’ questions in August 2011.

The motion was passed after a vote of the Assembly.

A further motion dealing with the administration of the Assembly was then moved. The motion sought to amend a continuing resolution of the Assembly relating to the **Latimer House Principles**. The amendment would require the Speaker in the second year after a general election, after consultation with the Standing Committee on Administration and Procedure, to appoint a person to conduct an assessment of the implementation of the Latimer House Principles in the governance of the ACT.

The motion was passed by the Assembly.
Papers presented

The following is a list of papers of interest that were presented

Leader of the Opposition’s Office—Staffing arrangements—Administration of the Legislative Assembly (Members’ Staff) Act 1989 (presented by the Chief Minister on 21 February 2012)

Planning and Development (Greenhouse Gas Reduction Targets) Amendment Bill 2012—Exposure draft (presented by Ms Caroline Le Couteur MLA (Molonglo—ACT Greens) on 22 February 2012)

Report on assault and bullying in the workplace—Report (presented by the Chief Minister on 23 February 2012)

Report on the 2011 ACT Older Persons Assembly and Government response to recommendations (presented by the Minister for Ageing on 21 February 2012)

Statement by Minister

The Minister for Health made a statement on 23 February relating to outcomes of negotiations between the Health Directorate and Calvary Health Care in relation to the newly agreed Calvary Network Agreement. During her statement the Minister stated that the agreement had been developed to improve the quality of, and access to, health care in the ACT. At the conclusion of her speech the Minister tabled the following document:

Calvary Network Agreement—Update on the finalisation—Statement by the Minister for Health.

A motion was moved by the ACT Greens requesting that the Minister for Health table the Calvary Network Agreement. In moving the motion the ACT Greens stated that the agreement was a contract for providing public health services to the ACT and as such, the public should have the chance to evaluate the agreement. During debate the Opposition indicated that they supported the motion. The Government also supported the motion and the Minister stated that she would table the agreement in the next sitting period.

The motion was passed by the Assembly.

Committee activities

Committee reports presented

Justice and Community Safety—Standing Committee

On Thursday, 23 February the committee’s report entitled Inquiry into the Prostitution Act 1992 was presented in the Assembly, which included a dissenting report by Mrs Vicki Dunne MLA (Ginninderra—Canberra Liberals).

The report made 17 recommendations on how the Act should be changed and on the general approach to the sex industry in the ACT. Some of these reflected the unanimous view of the committee while others reflected a majority view.

The report addresses the terms of reference for the inquiry in chapters dealing with:

- the form and operation of the Act;
- regulation of brothels;
- ensuring workers are over 18 years of age;
- occupational health and safety;
- other health-related provisions of the Act;
- links with criminal activity;
- human trafficking; and
- unlicensed operators.
The committee commenced the inquiry in October 2010. It held four public hearings, heard from 19 witnesses and received 58 submissions.

A copy of the report can be found here.

On 23 February 2012 the Assembly passed a resolution referring the Crimes Legislation Amendment Bill 2011 and the Crimes (Offences Against Police) Amendment Bill 2012 to the committee for inquiry. The committee is to report back to the Assembly on its inquiry by 1 May 2012.

Planning, Public Works and Territory and Municipal Services—Standing Committee

The committee’s report entitled Report on the draft variation to the Territory Plan No 307 – Change of zoning was presented to the Assembly on 23 February 2012.

The committee recommended that the variation be approved however with creation of a Precinct Code which would address heritage, environmental and safety considerations raised during the inquiry. The committee also recommended a new flood study.

The committee report can be accessed here.

Scrutiny Committee—

Scrutiny Report 48, dated 20 February 2012 (presented 21 February 2012)

Committee inquiries

Public Accounts—Standing Committee

On 23 February 2012 the Assembly referred the Appropriation Bill 2011-2012 (No. 2) to the committee for inquiry and report.

Climate Change, Environment and Water—Standing Committee

The chair of the committee made a statement on Tuesday, 21 February 2012 informing the Assembly that the committee had resolved to conduct an inquiry into current and potential ecotourism in the ACT and region. During her statement the chair indicated that the committee would report to the Assembly in August 2012. A copy of the terms of reference for the inquiry can be found here.

Government response to committee report

Justice and Community Safety—Standing Committee

Report 7—A Review of Campaign Financing Laws in the ACT (presented 21 February 2012)

Matters of public importance

The following matters of public importance were discussed in the Assembly this week—

Prevention, diversion and young offenders—Ms Amanda Bresnan MLA (Brindabella—ACT Greens)

The contribution made by the multicultural community in the ACT—Mrs Vicki Dunne MLA (Ginninderra—Canberra Liberals)

Other matters

On 23 February, the Speaker made a statement informing the Assembly that he had appointed an audit team to undertake an independent workplace audit of staffing arrangements in the office of the Leader of the Opposition for the period 2009 to 2012. The statement was in relation to a motion passed by the Assembly on 14 February 2012 directing the Speaker to commission the audit. He stated that the audit team would be headed by Mr Ron McLeod AM and supported by locally based firm HBA Consulting.
ACT Public Services Seminar Series – An Introduction to the ACT Legislative Assembly

On 17 February, the Speaker of the ACT Legislative Assembly, Mr Shane Rattenbury MLA welcomed thirty-eight people to a seminar for ACT public servants. The Assembly holds four half-day seminars for ACT public servants each year the first of which introduces participants to the roles and functions of the ACT Legislative Assembly.

The Clerk spoke about the various functions of the Assembly including the election of the Speaker and the Chief Minister and how the Assembly deals with different types of legislation. The acting Deputy Clerk discussed what happens on a sitting day at the Assembly and how ACT public servants contribute to the sittings of the Assembly.

An important component of the seminar is directed to helping develop an understanding of how the 17 MLAs are elected and the ACT Electoral Commissioner gave a detailed and informative presentation on how the Hare-Clark electoral system works. He also explained how multiple Members are elected in each electorate using the quota system.

All participants complete an evaluation survey that informs planning of future seminars. Some of the comments included “well presented”; “very detailed”; “Presenters were all strong and clearly experts.”; “Very informative........found it very helpful in my understanding of government.”

The second seminar on the budget process will be held in May 2012.

Next sitting

The Assembly will sit again on Tuesday, 20 March 2012.