



**LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY FOR THE AUSTRALIAN CAPITAL  
TERRITORY**

**STANDING COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION, TRAINING AND  
YOUTH AFFAIRS**

**(Reference: Annual and financial reports 2008-09)**

**Members:**

**MS A BRESNAN (The Chair)  
MR J HANSON (The Deputy Chair)  
MS M PORTER**

**TRANSCRIPT OF EVIDENCE**

**CANBERRA**

**TUESDAY, 15 DECEMBER 2009**

**Secretary to the committee:  
Dr S Lilburn (Ph: 6205 0199)**

**By authority of the Legislative Assembly for the Australian Capital Territory**

Submissions, answers to questions on notice and other documents relevant to this inquiry that have been authorised for publication by the committee may be obtained from the Committee Office of the Legislative Assembly (Ph: 6205 0127).

## APPEARANCES

<b>Chief Minister's Department</b> .....	<b>102</b>
<b>Cultural Facilities Corporation</b> .....	<b>102</b>

## **Privilege statement**

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*Amended 21 January 2009*

## **The committee met at 2 pm.**

Appearances:

Stanhope, Mr Jon, Chief Minister, Minister for Transport, Minister for Territory and Municipal Services, Minister for Business and Economic Development, Minister for Land and Property Services, Minister for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Affairs and Minister for the Arts and Heritage

Chief Minister's Department

Cappie-Wood, Mr Andrew, Chief Executive

Whitney, Mr David, Director, artsACT, Arts, Communications, Events and Protocol Division

Cartwright, Ms Carol, Executive Director, Arts, Communications, Events and Protocol Division

Neser, Ms Kate, Chief Finance Officer, Strategic Finance, Policy Division

Cultural Facilities Corporation

Elvin, Ms Harriet, Chief Executive Officer

Knight, Mr Andrew, Chief Financial Officer

**THE CHAIR:** I would like to welcome you, Chief Minister, to today's hearing of the education committee. We will be talking to artsACT and the Cultural Facilities Corporation. I draw everyone's attention to the privilege statement which is on the table in front of you, so that you are aware of it. Mr Stanhope, would you like to make an opening statement?

**Mr Stanhope:** Madam Chair, I do not have a specific statement that I wish to make, apart from saying that Mr Cappie-Wood and officials of artsACT are here and stand ready and willing to provide whatever assistance they can.

**THE CHAIR:** My first question is in relation to artsACT. Probably the key reference in terms of the annual report is on page 31. In relation to the key arts organisations, I understand there are about 20 in the ACT. Has that number changed in recent times? One of the organisations I am particularly interested in is ScreenACT and its status, because I believe it has lost status as a key arts organisation. Perhaps that could be clarified. What are some of the key arts organisations and how has that number changed?

**Mr Whitney:** There are 22 key arts organisations. You asked about ScreenACT. ScreenACT is an activity that is funded through a business activity of the Chief Minister's Department. So it is not funded directly through artsACT.

**Mr Stanhope:** Mr Whitney is correct. ScreenACT is funded through business and industry development and it is outsourced through a contractual arrangement with the Business Council of the ACT, who fund and support ScreenACT now as an industry development initiative.

**THE CHAIR:** Has that structure changed recently?

**Mr Whitney:** That structure has not changed. I do not know exactly when that happened. I have been with artsACT for 2½ years and it was certainly well entrenched before then.

You had an earlier question about whether there was any fluctuation. There is the capacity for fluctuation. Each of the key arts organisations makes application to the arts fund and it is assessed by the Cultural Council and recommendations are made to the minister. Over time, some organisations have entered as key arts organisations and some have moved away from being key arts organisations. We recently introduced a new category called the program category. There is quite an onerous reporting capacity with key arts organisations, and some organisations present maybe one activity a year. An example is the International Music Festival. They are certainly a critical part of the arts landscape but they do not have an ongoing program like some of the other key arts organisations have. So by establishing the program category, we are able to move them across—they chose to move across—to the program category, where the reporting arrangements are a lot less but their status is still recognised as an important part of the arts organisations.

**THE CHAIR:** I have another question on ScreenACT. You said you have been with artsACT for 2½ years—

**Mr Whitney:** Yes.

**THE CHAIR:** and it has had that structure with the Business Council since that time?

**Mr Whitney:** Business ACT, yes. I could certainly find out some information and report back as to when the current arrangement for ScreenACT was established.

**THE CHAIR:** That would be useful, just in terms of the consultation process that went into having ScreenACT as part of the structure that it is in now. It would be interesting to get some information about that—whether it went out to a tender process or how the decision was made to have it placed with that particular group. That would be useful information.

**Mr Whitney:** Certainly. I am happy to bring that back.

**MR HANSON:** Could we talk about the public artworks in terms of how much was spent during the year and what was actually delivered?

**Mr Stanhope:** Actual expenditure during the annual report year, 2008-09?

**MR HANSON:** Yes.

**Mr Stanhope:** I would defer to Mr Whitney in relation to the projects that were delivered and the cost of those through 2008-09. I do not know whether it is actually detailed here in the report. If it is not, we would certainly be happy to take the question on notice. It may be that Mr Whitney can provide you with that information.

**Mr Whitney:** We might take the question on notice because I want to be very accurate. \$2.3 million was allocated under the scheme. Certainly, works have been

progressed. Whether that means that the complete budget has been spent within that reporting year—

**MR HANSON:** You are not quite sure?

**Mr Whitney:** I will report back. I can give examples of the works that have been installed, but in terms of that reporting year—

**MR HANSON:** If you would be able to give me a breakdown of how much was spent—

**Mr Stanhope:** On each work and through the year? Sure. We would be happy to do that.

**MR HANSON:** You also made a decision to step away from the percent for art scheme to a capped figure of \$1.2 million per annum for the next couple of financial years. I think I heard you saying on radio that was due to feedback you had received and so on. Did you have a formal process for that or was that an informal response you got?

**Mr Stanhope:** No. If the question is “was a decision taken through budget cabinet in relation to the decision making in terms of a formal public feedback or formal consultation?” the answer is no. The decision at the end of the day was taken on the cabinet papers in the context of a budget. So it was a budget cabinet decision and a decision the cabinet took. My recommendation was that we would not persist with the percent for art scheme and that, indeed, we would not fund public art in the context of this full year. As you understand, budgets are framed in the context of a full year forward program.

To answer your question fully, it was decided through the budget process that we would not persist with the percent for art scheme and that we would provide a capped level of funding for public art in this financial year and the next financial year. Beyond that, there is no specific allocation for public art.

**MR HANSON:** You will make a decision moving forward, depending on the budgetary circumstances?

**Mr Stanhope:** I think it is fair to say that is the decision that was taken at the time but, of course, no decision that is ever made by government is not reversible. The decision has been made. I do not know. It depends on what happens going forward of course but at this stage that is the government’s position and that is the budget decision.

**MR HANSON:** In terms of the process, then, for selecting what is going to be delivered in terms of public art, who is making that decision currently?

**Mr Stanhope:** The decision is made by the Public Art Panel. Mr Whitney could provide a little more science about it. We have just recently looked at different sourcing arrangements. Some of these works are, in terms of value, quite significant. We have formal tendering and procurement processes. Any capital work can be secured in a number of different ways, consistent with the procurement guidelines or

frameworks that apply.

Art is potentially quite different in some respects. I have been inclined to explore the extent to which we can utilise different commissioning methods. It is perhaps interesting that the more senior and the more highly regarded within the arts community artists are, the less likely some are to respond—and I make no judgement about this—to an open tender or expression of interest process.

There are some significant artists, even in the ACT, with whom I have had conversations. When I have expressed the view that they have not lodged expressions of interest for a number of works, they say that they never will, that they would not and that they would not—

**Mr Whitney:** Subject themselves.

**Mr Stanhope:** I did not want to put it quite so strongly but yes, essentially they would not subject themselves to a public tender process or a public expression of interest process. They are quite open that they are available.

**MR HANSON:** If they are requested, they would probably do it. If they were commissioned—

**Mr Stanhope:** Yes. They are saying they only respond to single-select processes. There are significant artists within this community, let alone within the rest of Australia, who have taken a conscious decision that they will not be part of an expression of interest or an open tender process. We could dig in on these issues and say, “Too bad.” To date, that is what we have tended to do.

It is probably fair to say—and I will ask Mr Whitney to complete this—we purchase some works, essentially off the shelf. We have commissioned some. For instance, there is a work being installed in Civic today, in Petrie Plaza, a Jan Brown work. Jan Brown would be perhaps the most dearly regarded sculptor in the ACT. You would be aware of Jan’s most popular work, the kangaroos in Commonwealth Park.

Jan had some maquettes. That was a single-select. She had work which the Public Art Panel determined, if enlarged, would be perfect for Petrie Plaza. That is essentially a single-select. It is an existing work. The existing works, or maquettes, have now been enlarged to two metres and are being installed in Petrie Plaza today.

That is a different process, an existing work but not in its present form that was commissioned to be enlarged, and Jan Brown has now undertaken that process. The work has been forged and is being installed at this very minute. It will be unveiled tomorrow. That is a second form of commissioning. Others are straight out, expression of interest processes.

Just recently, I think it is fair to say, the method that is being utilised now is that the Public Art Panel and artsACT have identified known, significant artists and have invited, in relation to individual works, up to five artists to lodge an expression of interest. There has been a level of selection but in a field. The responses to that will be assessed by the Public Art Panel.

**MR HANSON:** Just on the way that we approach it, how do you work out where the art is going to go? What are the strategic decisions that are made? Do you say, “We need art in this area?” Do you dictate what form the art will be or is it more ad hoc than that?

**Mr Stanhope:** It is a bit of both.

**MR HANSON:** Do we say, “We want to go with a theme in Garema Place that’s going to be wildlife,” or something like that?

**Mr Stanhope:** No.

**MR HANSON:** We just say, “We want a piece of art,” and see what comes up?

**Mr Stanhope:** Except some works are purchased, essentially, off the shelf.

**MR HANSON:** But other than those that are purchased off the shelf—

**Mr Stanhope:** Some are purchased and then the Public Art Panel does a walk around—

**MR HANSON:** But if we go out to tender and we say, “We want to fill this space”—

**Mr Stanhope:** Then the artist looks at the spot, walks around it, has a bit of a think and then, through the creative processes that artists employ, says, “Oh, I’ve got a great idea for this space.” They submit that. Then the Public Art Panel looks at it and says, “Yes, okay,” or, “No, we think this wouldn’t work.” If they say yes they make recommendations to me. I have adopted the attitude that I will accept—I am no arbiter of taste. I must say if there was something that I thought was dreadful, genuinely horrible, I probably would say no, but that has not happened. So to that extent I have accepted all of the formal recommendations that have been made to me by the Public Art Panel. I accept that level of responsibility, but I am no arbiter.

**MR HANSON:** There is a final question on this. I am not saying that we should be getting feedback on every piece because—

**Mr Stanhope:** It wouldn’t work.

**MR HANSON:** Accounting for taste, I understand that. More broadly, there is a lot of controversy around the delivery of public works in Canberra. I think we are all aware of that.

**Mr Stanhope:** There was. I think it has gone away, Mr Hanson—most of it; some of it is still there. I am from time to time interested in the strength of the response. For instance, the work *Relic*, which has just been installed in Childers Street—I saw it described in yesterday’s *Canberra Times* as an obscenity. I find that a remarkably strong response to what is a work of art by one of Australia’s leading artists, the official Timor war artist, an artist that has displayed in every one of the significant museums in Australia—a stunning Australian artist.

**MR HANSON:** I am not talking about individual pieces and I do not want to get into a debate about what has merit or not, but as far as the program is concerned, do we have a formal mechanism that evaluates whether it is something that the Canberra community actually wants? It is a substantial amount of money.

**Mr Stanhope:** In that sense, probably not, Mr Hanson—in that formal sense, except, I guess, I could respond as a politician. We have a whole range of mechanisms—for instance, whether or not, having advanced a particular program in advance of an election and having won the election, one takes that as a judgement at certain levels. If the people of Canberra were that horrified I would be sitting over there where you are sitting now.

**MR HANSON:** You got in on your public art then, did you, Jon?

**Mr Stanhope:** No, I do not think so, to be brutally frank about it.

**MR HANSON:** It got you over the line—

**Mr Stanhope:** No; the reverse, I would suggest. I am being brutally frank and honest here—I do not think it was a vote winner, Mr Hanson. It was the right thing to do but it certainly was not a vote winner. I have no doubt we pay the price, Mr Hanson.

**THE CHAIR:** Mr Whitney, did you want to add to that?

**Mr Whitney:** I think the minister has picked up the different methods that we use for seeking artists. I guess over time we have refined our processes to work within the procurement act. We now prefer the idea of short-listing some artists that we think, based on their previous work, would be appropriate for a site or a location that is identified either by the community saying, “We’d like some art work here,” or the fact that some town centres across the city have got a lot of artwork in them and some have got none. So there is a process of trying to fill the void in those places with some public art.

I guess the other question was: do the artists just sit down and have a brain snap? We prepare an artist’s brief that talks a little bit about the location. It certainly talks about the environment. The artist is required to come on site to meet with people from artsACT to talk through what the site is providing. The Belconnen Arts Centre is one example where the artwork that is going to be installed there was in response to a series of artists coming in and seeing that site. The brief was obviously about the water—the importance of the water, the lake and the centre. The work has been successfully chosen by the tender evaluation team.

The process is that the Public Art Panel comes up with a variety of artists. Once we have short-listed those artists and invited them to submit an expression of interest, which often includes either drawings or a maquette—we like the idea of models of their work—it then goes to the tender evaluation team, which is made up of members of the Public Art Panel and people from the local community. In that case it was someone from the Belconnen Arts Centre and the Belconnen Community Council, as well as artsACT and Procurement Solutions. So you have that broader view of what is

going on. With that particular work there was quite a discussion. I think that the work that was chosen—when it is installed later next year—will be quite appropriate for that location, reflecting both an artist’s interpretation and a relationship to the lake and the reeds growing around the lake.

**Mr Stanhope:** I should have made that point, Mr Hanson: in relation to the tender and the evaluation team, as Mr Whitney says, it has been our practice more often than not to seek to invite people—for instance, for a work recently installed in the Gungahlin town centre, Alan Kerlin, the chair of the Gungahlin Community Council, was actually a member of the procurement panel; similarly at Belconnen. Similarly in relation to one of the works commissioned for Bunda Street, Linda Staite was a member. So in that sense there is that formal connection but it is not community wide.

It is an interesting subject and a vexed one. I have no doubt, Mr Hanson, in the context of the politics of public art and public perceptions—or at least that critical element; but then again to what extent do those that criticise reflect the broader community—that if we commissioned just kangaroos, possums and pelicans, there would be probably at one level far less criticism. I have a view from my experience, and I have been suggesting it from time to time in conversation, that people respond far more positively to figurative works and it is the so-called enigmatic works or abstract work that people are being confronted with in public art—

**MR HANSON:** I remember that last year you said that eventually we would build our own *David*. Do you think we have found it yet? Have we built our own *David* yet?

**Mr Stanhope:** We are extending an invitation to the entire Canberra community to come to the official launch of Jan Brown’s work. Even you, Mr Hanson, I am sure, if you come tomorrow and speak with the artist and look at this work—

**MR HANSON:** If I am available, I certainly will, Mr Stanhope.

**Mr Stanhope:** I am being quite genuine and serious about this. Just have a look at Jan Brown’s work in Petrie Plaza tomorrow—and if that does not spark some little light in your heart, Mr Hanson, nothing will.

**MR HANSON:** All right. We will see how we go.

**Mr Stanhope:** It is at 9.30 tomorrow morning. If you are available, I quite genuinely invite you; actually we are inviting anybody in Canberra. Jan is now 88 or 89; she studied under Henry Moore in London and is a very significant artist who has worked here in Canberra for 50 years. This work is something of a celebration of her contribution to the arts in the ACT over half a century and it would be wonderful if all of Canberra came to that celebration.

**MR HANSON:** I do not have my diary here.

**THE CHAIR:** We might move on. Ms Porter, you have a question?

**MS PORTER:** Yes. Going back to the arts funding that was mentioned by Ms Bresnan, volume 2, page 161 mentions the arts fund. I note that in the 2008-09

budget there was an increase in funding of 9.7 per cent for the ACT arts fund. Why was this necessary and what did this funding allow to happen? That is my question, but I also had a sub around the last thing we were talking about. I know it is not public art, but what is the relationship between the business community and art in the public domain?

**Mr Stanhope:** One of the pleasing aspects of the percent for art scheme—I would have liked it to have been a bit faster perhaps—has been the growing engagement or commitment by the private sector or private developers to public art, I believe, as a result of the leadership that the government has shown through the public art scheme. You see it with the major work in City Walk by Ante Dabro, which was commissioned by Consolidated Builders—a private work which was commissioned by Consolidated Builders, actually at Josip Zivko's request, and a fantastic contribution to City Walk by the private sector. You see it with Leightons, who commissioned a small but, I think, lovely work by a French artist for the NICTA building.

I opened a building at 55 Wentworth Avenue built by Peter Sarris and George Katheklakis with a wonderful piece of glass from the glassworks—a stunning work for the public domain. I spoke to George and Peter at the launch and they were quite open that they had commissioned the work as a result of seeing what is going on in the town in relation to art. They believe that the private sector must make the same level of contribution as the government.

So that is what is happening. I think increasingly into the future we will see more. David Lamont told me that the ANU is commissioning a \$250,000 work for the new building in Childers Street as a direct response to the government's program. Some cities mandate it. Brisbane mandates it as part of the development application process. The Brisbane City Council mandates public art as part of the development of a site. So does the Gold Coast. I have thought about that but have not quite gone there yet.

As to the other points, I will ask Mr Whitney—

**MS PORTER:** Thank you very much.

**Mr Stanhope:** You mentioned the nine per cent increase. It was the first significant increase for arts organisations—first significant; previously there had been increases but there had not been a rolling CPI. One of the issues that the arts community and key arts organisations had suffered was that traditionally it was not CPI related, so the 9½ per cent was essentially a catch-up. Mr Whitney can go to how it was used and the effects of that.

**Mr Cappie-Wood:** Could I add that part of that figure also relates to a change in methodology in the calculation of employee expenses.

**Mr Whitney:** The increase is mainly as a result of applications to the arts fund. There was a significant increase over the last number of years to the arts fund, expressing, I guess, the interest from the arts community. In the visual arts area, there were 63 applicants as opposed to 48 the year before. In theatre, the figure was 27 compared to 25. For poetry, there were 143 applications compared to 100 the year before. So

there was much greater interest in arts activity.

Also, there is the increase in presenting programs and activities, mainly through our key arts organisations, which was asked about earlier—the 22 key arts organisations. The salaries that they were paying people were very poor, so it was to try and reflect both the salaries and also more accurate budgeting and responsibility for those key arts organisations taking on program delivery as well. So the extra 9½ per cent has been split across those areas to try and reflect the requests from the community. There is a notional 80 per cent-20 per cent split between key arts organisations and project to program and community funding. The money was spread principally within the key arts organisations.

**MRS DUNNE:** Mr Whitney, on notice, could you give the committee a breakdown of where all the funds went in the arts fund—

**Mr Whitney:** Certainly.

**MRS DUNNE:** to the key organisations and the programs?

**Mr Whitney:** Yes. We certainly have that on our website so I can easily send that across.

**MRS DUNNE:** It is on the website?

**Mr Whitney:** Yes. Would you like me to forward that?

**MRS DUNNE:** If it is on the website, that is fine. Just to follow up on the arts fund, what is the timing program for review or assessment of applications and announcement of programs for the arts fund?

**Mr Whitney:** Normally, the announcement of the fund is in about April in any year, and the applications close in late May or early June, they are assessed and recommendations are made and often granted in November. Last year it was in October because of the election; this year it was in November, when the fund was announced.

**MRS DUNNE:** So all of the arts funding is announced in one hit?

**Mr Whitney:** Certainly, the project funding and key arts organisation funding is. Other areas such as book of the year, poetry prize and the fellowships are announced later because they are assessed in a separate round by the Cultural Council.

**Mr Stanhope:** There is a multiyear agreement.

**Mr Whitney:** Yes, with the multiyear agreement with the key arts organisations, we have now moved to five-year funding. So they will get their announcement and then they will have five years to work through that grant.

**MRS DUNNE:** With respect to the five years, does everyone come due at the same time or will it be a rolling arrangement?

**Mr Stanhope:** No, they roll.

**Mr Whitney:** It is rolling over. In any one year, I think this year we only had three applicants through the key arts fund because last year there were considerably more. That is to try and spread it out so that not everybody is being overwhelmed at the same time.

**MRS DUNNE:** Were there some key arts organisations who were offered extensions to their multiyear funding? Was everyone happy to take up the five-year arrangement?

**Mr Whitney:** No, there was an invitation for them to accept. A couple of the organisations who are linked to Australia Council funding have chosen not to take the full five years because the three-year funding sits more in alignment with other reports they need to produce for the Australia Council in particular. So not everybody has chosen to take it up, but those that are looking for a longer term sense of stability are certainly taking that up. The majority have taken up the five-year funding.

**MRS DUNNE:** Is there any sort of flexibility? Is it three or five, or can people take four if they want to, if it suits their funding formula?

**Mr Whitney:** We are certainly open to discussion with them. We did offer five as a new initiative or to stay with the three. If someone were to come to us with a very sound reason for wanting to go to four, I am sure we could consider that favourably.

**MRS DUNNE:** In relation to the five-year funding, what are the advantages apart from stability? What sort of supplementation or increments are built in to the funding formula?

**Mr Whitney:** Now that we are able to build the CPI in, that has made a substantial difference in terms of projecting for the next five years. But a lot of our programs take some time to create, to deliver and then to mature. Often, they will flow from one program to the next. So by having the five years, it gives them much greater stability within their business planning process and also within their staffing process and dealing with the community. Most of the organisations are so closely embedded within the community that they need to have that sense of being able to go forward and be able to guarantee that there is a program the year after. So I guess they are the major reasons why we moved to five-year funding.

**MS LE COUTEUR:** I would like to ask some questions about corporate governance in the organisations that you are funding. I have had some representations; I understand that the key arts organisations cannot have on their board anyone who receives any money from the organisation. I understand you are also doing some consultation because that has not led to universal happiness or agreement. Could you talk more about that?

**Mr Whitney:** I am happy to talk about that a little bit. The word is “benefit”, and that is the one that some people are anxious about. That is where the questions have been coming to us—that if people who are on the board as office-bearers are receiving a benefit then the handbook at the moment says that we would want them to have a

separation between their role in being on a board and their role in being part of the organisation. Certainly, that question was asked earlier in the year and we have undertaken quite a lot of consultation about that and the process of providing advice to government about that.

**MRS DUNNE:** There was a review undertaken after the budget. Where is the review?

**Mr Cappie-Wood:** At present, we are completing the internal refinement of that before we take up discussions with government. We are just completing the internal arrangements at the moment.

**MS LE COUTEUR:** Does that cover only the arts organisations or does it cover every organisation which receives any arts funding?

**Mr Whitney:** It would cover arts organisations that would receive funding.

**MS LE COUTEUR:** All arts organisations, no matter how small the funding may be?

**Mr Whitney:** Yes.

**MRS DUNNE:** What about some of those organisations whose constitution requires them to say that their artistic director, who is usually a paid person, should be on the board? How is that being accommodated, given that the current, new policy is to prohibit that?

**Mr Whitney:** The advice we have received from a variety of sources has indicated that it would be a conflict of interest mechanism within the organisation. If that conflict of interest mechanism is public and declared at the beginning of meetings, then the organisation can make its own determination—in normal circumstances the artistic director might be a member of the board and might be bringing submissions that, in the end, are of direct benefit to that artistic director—and I would hope that that artistic director would step out of the room during conversations that were directly related to that exercise.

That has not always been the practice in the arts organisations. That is the thing we are looking at trying to refine. I hasten to add that I have not perceived anything new. There has been some uncertainty.

**MRS DUNNE:** That is certainly an understatement.

**MS LE COUTEUR:** And considerable angst.

**Mr Whitney:** We are working to try to resolve that angst. We are certainly working with the Australian Business and Arts Foundation, the Association of Company Directors, the Government Solicitor's Office and the Australia Council to provide the advice.

**MRS DUNNE:** What is the time line?

**Mr Whitney:** We are looking at providing that recommendation to government early

in the new year.

**MS LE COUTEUR:** You are going to provide advice to government. When is it likely that the arts organisations will have some clarification?

**Mr Whitney:** It is difficult to predict how long and whether our advice is accepted, whether the government will go with that. In the new year there is always a forum for our key arts organisations, and we are anticipating at that forum being able to present to them a position on the governance arrangements certainly on conflict of interest. I think that is scheduled for February. We try to avoid January.

**THE CHAIR:** I have a question regarding the Indigenous arts officer. Could we have a little more information about the work they have been doing, whether they are working with the Indigenous community or whether they are working on particular projects? Do you have that information? I would be interested to know whether there has been any consideration given to a multicultural arts officer with a similar role for the multicultural community, given the wide range of people in the multicultural community. Has any thought been given to that sort of role?

**Mr Whitney:** Certainly, through the Arts Fund, we do fund the ACT Community Arts Office, which is managed by the Gorman House Arts Centre. The office has three arts officers with a particular art form interest. One is the Indigenous arts officer, another is the multicultural arts officer and the third is the disability arts access officer. So there is a multicultural arts officer. There is an office manager who, obviously, provides the support for that. They are located in the North Building, adjacent to Craft ACT.

Can I take that on notice the direct programs that the Indigenous officer is undertaking and find out from that office what they are doing. We do not directly manage the program; so I am not sure. I could certainly get that information.

**THE CHAIR:** It would be good to get that. There is fairly limited information in the report about that.

**MR HANSON:** It says in the future directions that you are providing input into the development of the centenary of Canberra program. In terms of art, have you started formulating any concept of what that will mean?

**Mr Stanhope:** We have appointed Robyn Archer creative director for the centenary. Robyn has been on board now for a couple of months and working basically through a different area of the Chief Minister's Department. Mr Andrew Cappie-Wood could talk about the government structure that is in place. I think arts will be a significant part of the celebration. There will be a very close relationship. Mr Cappie-Wood could go to the internal government structure.

**Mr Cappie-Wood:** The centenary process reports through another part of the same division that arts forms part of. With respect to the centenary, we are very pleased to have the participation of someone with the standing of Robyn. She has been having extensive consultations with the arts community in particular, as well as a broader range of people who already have events in the community that are community

funded or partially government funded, as well as by commonwealth government and the like, to look at what is already happening through the forward program, irrespective of the centenary, and to see where there are elements that the centenary can either enhance or add on to.

There is clearly an expectation there will be a very strong arts focus associated with this. That is perhaps not surprising given her background. But it is also a matter of trying to understand what the government have been investing in to date in terms of their festivals and other areas, to make sure that what is coming forward is a comprehensive program. That program is still in its formative stage and there is not formal advice coming to government because she is still undertaking her consultations.

**MR HANSON:** So there are no budgetary guidelines as such yet?

**Mr Cappie-Wood:** Yes, there is a strict budget for the centenary. That has already been incorporated into the forward years. What we are doing at the moment, whilst that has just been pro rata-ed, is that we are looking clearly to appreciate and understand when and how the major elements of the centenary would roll out. For instance, with some of them we have had to step in and place a marker on early to secure them, such as the women's golf open, and that has been funded out of the centenary fund.

In terms of the rest of the program, the elements of that program are still under negotiation and formulation. When that comes forward to government for consideration, we will also be looking at how the budget would respond to that. Some of them have to be secured or even commissioned well prior to that date; others are on at the time, so we are going to have to reprofile, but there is a very specific budget there. The budget that the government has set aside for it is \$14 million over the years between now and the centenary, and clearly will be loaded to the centenary end of that.

**MS PORTER:** On page 18 of the Cultural Facilities Corporation report, it talks about the role of CMAG. What is CMAG's role in the centenary?

**Ms Elvin:** We are working very closely with Robyn Archer, the creative director for the centenary. Indeed, she has visited CMAG, she has met the corporation board and the board will be meeting with her on a regular basis. CMAG has a particular role in the centenary. Obviously, it is the home of Canberra's history. Already, we have a number of specific exhibitions planned and also some more general themes that we are still developing.

To talk about some of the specific exhibitions, as from next February a series called *Canberra gold* exhibitions will start. They will be happening annually and then will culminate in a major final exhibition in the centenary year of 2013. As you may know, Canberra gold awards are given to residents of the ACT who have at least 50 years residency. So it is a great exhibition theme to be able to feature these stories, and particularly to feature objects associated with the stories, because it is objects that give life to exhibitions, and to have a series of smaller exhibitions of Canberra gold recipients, building up to that final exhibition in the centenary year.

Other centenary-related exhibitions include *We built this city*, which is an exploration

of the wide range of people and occupations that contributed to the development of the national capital. *Cotter heritage* will be looking at both the natural and cultural heritage of the Cotter catchment. And there will be wider themes that we are still in the process of developing, such as a broad history of the visual arts in Canberra, a history of the Indigenous habitation in the Canberra region, and an exhibition focusing on King O'Malley and his particular achievements and contribution to the establishment of Canberra, of the national capital. Clearly, there will be public and community programs associated with each of those exhibitions.

Our historic sites have a particular role—Lanyon, Calthorpes' House and Mugga-Mugga. Lanyon and Mugga-Mugga are two of the relatively few historic sites that pre-date the foundation of Canberra. So we are working very closely with the Department of Education and Training particularly to develop history teaching kits and work with the school curriculum, because this is going to be such a focus for schools in the lead-up to 2013.

**MRS DUNNE:** I want to go back to a couple of issues in relation to artsACT. Minister, since the defunding of Canberra Arts Marketing this time last year, what resources have been put in place for the continuation of arts advocacy, marketing and audience development?

**Mr Whitney:** Effort has been put into running a series of workshops to provide support for key arts organisations in particular and also for individual artists—workshops run mainly through the Business and the Arts Foundation about promotion and publicity. Those workshops have been fully subscribed. I do not have in my head the exact number in the annual report reporting year but I can certainly find that for you. So that is the focus that we have been providing for individual artists and key arts organisations in order to provide them with that support.

**MRS DUNNE:** What outcomes have been achieved through those programs? In the areas of marketing and audience development are there measurable outcomes?

**Mr Whitney:** With audience development, the program we are working on in association with the Australia Council, the Cultural Facilities Corporation and the Canberra Theatre Centre is in the program called advice. It is looking at box office responses to people attending theatre performances both at the Canberra Theatre Centre and the Street Theatre. It is linking in with Tuggeranong and Theatre 3. The intention is to try to track over time people's attendances at performing arts centres. It is much simpler to do that when there is a ticket that is exchanged; we can have that material.

In terms of audience development activities, we have recently done a survey of our facilities and the number of people attending the programs. We need to make sure that we have got a series of those measurements over time to see how attendances at activities, both as participants and as people attending those activities, and how that audience development build and grow.

**MRS DUNNE:** Were those measures put in place at the beginning of time or were you just thinking of that as you went along?

**Mr Whitney:** What do you mean by “the beginning of time”?

**MRS DUNNE:** You did fund Canberra Arts Marketing. When you de-funded them, what measures did you have in place to measure what was going to come afterwards?

**Mr Whitney:** The information we are now seeking was not collected by Canberra Arts Marketing and had not been collected until quite recently. It has come as a need from the sector and as part of the Arts Canberra review. That is a snapshot of what is happening at the moment. We realised that we had not got that information in an easily digested form. We are now undertaking to get that information.

**MRS DUNNE:** Do each of the facilities at which there is ticketing have their own independent ticketing? I know Canberra Theatre and the Street Theatre do.

**Mr Whitney:** They have different forms of ticketing, yes.

**MRS DUNNE:** Do they have independent ticketing?

**Mr Whitney:** They are independent. The advantage, I guess, of this system that the Australia Council is providing this advice program on is that it principally works with the major ticketing systems such as the one at the Canberra Theatre but effectively, if you can put data onto an Excel spreadsheet, then it can be bedded into that system. We are working on that. Tuggeranong, for example, is a very modest community centre. That is how we get information from them; similarly, from Theatre 3.

**MRS DUNNE:** They do have their own ticketing systems?

**Mr Whitney:** Yes.

**MRS DUNNE:** The management of the Ainslie Arts Centre changed in the course of the year under review. What was the process of changing the management? I know that Canberra Youth Music said they did not want to do it anymore. When Canberra Youth Music said they did not want to do it anymore, what was the process for deciding who would take over that management role?

**Mr Whitney:** This is managing the facility and providing a booking system for rooms and those sorts of things?

**MRS DUNNE:** Yes.

**Mr Whitney:** Yes, it was done by Canberra Youth Music. They indicated they did not want to continue doing that. We called for expressions of interest from people within the arts organisations to express interest in doing that and Canberra Youth Music said they were not going to be submitting something. We had two other organisations that did express interest in doing that.

**MRS DUNNE:** They were?

**Mr Whitney:** They were Music for Everyone, which is based in the Ainslie Arts Centre, and Gorman House Arts Centre, which is a management organisation for the

Gorman House building and the facility there.

**MRS DUNNE:** How did we decide to give it to Gorman House over the people who were actually occupying the building?

**Mr Whitney:** We made that as a business decision within Arts ACT, looking at the services currently provided by both organisations, what their strengths were, and we made the choice to go with Gorman House Arts Centre.

**MRS DUNNE:** What were the criteria for that decision?

**Mr Whitney:** I have not got those criteria here.

**MRS DUNNE:** Could you run that by the committee?

**Mr Whitney:** Certainly.

**MRS DUNNE:** When was that decision made?

**Mr Whitney:** I am not avoiding your question; I just do not know the exact answer. We can provide both the criteria for it and the date when that was determined.

**MRS DUNNE:** Did you give feedback to the unsuccessful group, Music for Everyone, as to why they did not get the gig?

**Mr Whitney:** Yes, I believe we did.

**MRS DUNNE:** What did they have to say about that?

**Mr Whitney:** They were quite disappointed because they had expressed interest in taking over the management and they wanted to continue to do that. They were concerned that the management was being taken out of the existing facility and managed by somebody else. Since then, the Gorman House Arts Centre now have two people working in the facility. A lot of things that were being left undone are now being sorted out. I believe there is a bit more understanding about why the change was made.

**MRS DUNNE:** What is the budget for the management and the maintenance of the Ainslie Arts Centre?

**Mr Whitney:** There are two answers. Can I get back to you with that?

**MS LE COUTEUR:** Are we also examining the ACT Heritage Council?

**THE CHAIR:** No, we are not. That is next year, I believe.

**MS LE COUTEUR:** In that case can I go to page 29, which talks about “Groovin’ in the City”. I have been to some of them and I think they are great fun. Is it true that this is being managed by a Sydney company which comes to Canberra for this?

**Mr Cappie-Wood:** It is currently not managed through the arts area; it is managed through the events area. I am not sure whether we have that answer here and now. If not, we can take it on notice.

**Mr Stanhope:** I think it is relevant, Ms Le Couteur, that with the emergence of CBD Ltd as a funded partner—"Groovin' in the City" is now jointly funded, but the major partner, by a factor of about eight to one, is CBD Ltd—the department is now a very minor funding partner in that. That is information we can certainly provide but, as Mr Cappie-Wood says, it is through events, not arts. I think it is a great program too, although I think it is a touch dispersed at the moment. I have asked the department to look at the current structure. I think the event has become too dispersed, too diluted, and it has lost its way a little. I have asked for a review just of the underlying structure.

**MS LE COUTEUR:** What I was coming to, partially, was this: do you have a policy to support local art rather than other art?

**Mr Stanhope:** My understanding, and I am interested in your suggestion or concern, Ms Le Couteur, is that the entire rationale—it started as "Groovin' in Garema" and expanded to the city—was to support local artists. It was a way that we could support live music most particularly, but it has now expanded into dance and other forms of art. The entire rationale was to support Canberra artists. If it has moved away from that rationale then I would be seriously concerned. I am interested in your question and your source of information, Ms Le Couteur.

**MS LE COUTEUR:** I will get back to you further on that.

**Mr Stanhope:** I will take some advice too.

**Ms Cartwright:** Can I just say a word on that? This falls into the events area, which is in the same division as ours but sits alongside of it. We are undertaking a slight review of "Groovin" at the moment just to look at the locations. We will certainly take the detail of this question on notice. The event coordination is one part of it. The delivery of the artists is another part. They are predominantly local artists, but some of the coordination was outsourced to an event company. As the Chief Minister said, CBD are the major funders of this program now. We assist them in the coordination and as a minor funder.

**THE CHAIR:** I think my question is for the Cultural Facilities Corporation. I just wondered whether any work is being done with a view to having a permanent venue for the Canberra Symphony Orchestra. Is that something you have been looking at? Perhaps that is a cross-over area.

**Ms Elvin:** I think that could fit into a number of different areas.

**Mr Stanhope:** It is a lovely aspiration, Ms Bresnan. In the context of permanent venues, it is one discussion that I have had with the orchestra, which I am inclined to pursue. I think we are all aware of the funding disability which the Canberra Symphony Orchestra suffers, particularly as against other orchestras around Australia. It is quite remarkable that the Tasmanian Symphony Orchestra receives somewhere in the order of \$7 million from the federal government. Our symphony orchestra

receives \$100,000, as against the \$7 million to the Tasmanian orchestra.

We as a government seek to support the symphony orchestra to the extent that we can. Perhaps in a moment of rashness—if held to it by the orchestra—I did suggest that one other way the ACT government might be able to support the Canberra Symphony Orchestra would be to find some accommodation for their administrative or office functions. In terms of a permanent venue, to be honest with you, I have discussed with the orchestra whether or not we as a government might have some capacity to assist. They are paying commercial rent at the moment. Currently we provide the orchestra with \$200,000-something—it is \$200,000 to access Llewellyn Hall—and an additional \$200,000. We are currently providing, in different forms, around \$400,000 worth of assistance to the Canberra Symphony Orchestra.

Out of the assistance we provide they then go off and pay commercial rent for their offices. They employ, I think, four people. We as a government provide office accommodation or accommodation for all these key arts organisations and they do not pay commercial rates. They pay community rates, or less in some instances—community rates if we are lucky. I just think there is an issue there, and I am loath to always in tight circumstances, but in terms of what we as a government can do—and I have had this discussion with the orchestra—I am prepared to look at how we might identify appropriate office accommodation. That is a first step. It is just another way of supporting the orchestra.

**THE CHAIR:** Perhaps our federal members can do a bit of lobbying.

**Mr Stanhope:** We have tried. It is a matter of enormous frustration. The Northern Territory, I believe, receives more than we do. The Northern Territory orchestra receives more support from the commonwealth than the ACT does.

**Mr Whitney:** If I can just add a little to that for the information of the committee: the Australian government provides \$77 million to support orchestras across Australia. They are part of the Major Organisations Board of the Australia Council. Until recently the territory was not part of those discussions, but through the activities of the Chief Minister we are now at that table. We are very much the quiet voice around the table, but we are now able to be involved in their discussions. They are looking at a review.

The federal minister is looking at a review into all of the major performing arts organisations, which includes the orchestras. There was a review conducted recently by James Strong for the Australian government about the orchestras and he has come up with some recommendations. It is quite interesting to see which ones have been picked up by other state governments and which ones have not been. We are now at that table and in a much better position to argue the case for our local orchestra.

**Mr Stanhope:** I might just say—it is probably worth the conversation or the discussion, but I have never spoken about it publicly—that we have been fluffing around, all of us generally, in relation to the future of the Street Theatre for donkey's years. What do we do with it? Do we redevelop the site? Do we do something with it? The Street Theatre could do with some enhancing. I think we are in a position now where we will probably maintain the Street Theatre as it is in its location, its situation

and its general structure, but there is the capacity on that site to expand it, not massively—and that has been one of the issues—unless one wants to go up.

It has occurred to me that a capital works project which the government might give active consideration to would be an expansion of some of the office and administrative space. The Street Theatre operates out of a demountable out the back. It is a project that I am inclined to pursue. We are probably not going to dramatically change the formal nature of the Street Theatre so perhaps we should just bite the bullet and do something about the demountable. Perhaps we should fund an extension and in the funding of that extension provide space for the Canberra Symphony Orchestra. We might be able to kill two birds with one stone at a reasonable expense. That is a proposal the Greens might want to stick at the top of their budget list.

**THE CHAIR:** We might have to consider that. Thank you for the suggestion. We are, unfortunately, out of time. Thank you, Mr Stanhope, Chief Minister, for your time today. And thank you to all the officials for giving us your time.

**The committee adjourned at 3.01 pm.**