

25 March 2011

CANBERRA BUSINESS COUNCIL SUPPORTS SINGLE AGENCY FOR ACT

Canberra Business Council today welcomed the announcement by Chief Minister John Stanhope that the Government will establish a single ACT Public Service Agency with nine Directorates.

Canberra Business Council (CBC) CEO, Ms Chris Faulks said, “this will make the ACT Public Service more cohesive, improve capacity to target resources quickly to address emerging opportunities and issues, and provide a more strategic, big picture approach to policy making.”

In its submission to the Hawke Review of the ACT Public Service, CBC called for a Chief Executive to be appointed as the head of the public service.

“CBC congratulates Mr Andrew Cappie-Wood on his appointment as Head of Service of the new agency,” Ms Faulks said.

Mr Stanhope also announced the ACT will now have just nine directorates.

“CBC expressed concern in its submission to the Hawke Review about fragmentation in the ACT Public Service because of the large number of agencies.

“A reduction in the number of departments is welcome and we particularly support the decision to bring together many of the key economic drivers, such as business, land sales, property development, tourism and events and sport and recreation under a single Economic Development Directorate.

“This will remove the silos that have historically hindered the effectiveness of the public sector and its ability to fully integrate economic policy.

“Mr David Dawes will head the Economic Development Directorate and the Council looks forward to working with him to strengthen business and economic development in the ACT,” Ms Faulks said.

While supporting the Chief Minister’s announcements, the Council cautions that reform needs to be more than a new structure, it must also be about how the ACT public service is staffed.

“There are real opportunities to improve efficiency by clustering functions and small agencies and removing layers of supervision,” Ms Faulks said. “The Council continues to believe that there is potential for outsourcing or even privatisation of business enterprises where this can deliver greater efficiency in service delivery and/or value for money”.

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