

Administration of the Australian Capital Territory

The Federal Capital Territory (the Australian Capital Territory since 1938) has been administered by a succession of Commonwealth agencies, with different areas of administration often being the responsibility of separate agencies, or branches within the one agency.

The tables below outline the agencies responsible for various functions.

Agencies with core administrative responsibility

Agency	Dates	Functions
Department of Home Affairs [I] (CA 8)	1901–16	Federal Capital, works
Public Works Branch (CA 783)	1904–17	Public works
Lands and Surveys Branch, Canberra (CA 745)	1911–25	Surveying
Lands and Survey Branch (CA 737)	1911–32	Surveying
Works Branch, Federal Capital Territory (CA 758)	1912–25	Works
Federal Capital Territory Administrative Offices (CA 741)	1912–16	Administration
Department of Works and Railways (CA 14)	1916–32	Construction
Department of Home and Territories (CA 15)	1916–28	Seat of Government
Department of Home Affairs [I] (CA 24)	1928–32	Administration
Federal Capital Territory Branch, Department of Home Affairs [II] (CA 756)	1930–32	Works
Department of the Interior [I] (CA 27)	1932–39	Administration
Civic Administration Branch (CA 757)	1932–51	Administration
Property and Survey Branch (CA 738)	1932–51	Surveying
Canberra Service Branch (CA 1197)	1938–51	Works
Department of the Interior [II] (CA 31)	1939–72	Administration
ACT Services Branch, Department of the Interior [II] (CA 1198)	1951–64	Works

Agencies with an advisory role

Agency	Dates	Functions
Federal Capital Office (CA 601)	1913–21	Design of Canberra
Federal Capital Advisory Committee (CA 292)	1921–25	Construction
Federal Capital Commission (CA 226)	1925–30	Land, construction
ACT Advisory Council (CA 491)	1930–74	Development, legislation

Agencies responsible for urban planning and development

Agency	Dates	Functions
National Capital Planning and Development Committee (CA 383)	1938–57	Urban development
ACT Planning and Development Branch (CA 861)	1951–57	Urban development
National Capital Development Commission (CA 279)	1957–89	Planning, development, construction

Other agencies

Agency	Dates	Functions
Royal Commission on Federal Capital Administration (CA 2252)	1916–17	Problems with design and administration
Canberra National Memorials Committee (CA 384)	1928–	Memorials, street names
House of Representatives Joint Standing Committee on the National Capital and External Territories (CA 712)	1956–	Canberra plan variations

For more information

Other fact sheets available on the ACT are:

- *Fact sheet 60 - Design and development of the National Capital*
- *Fact sheet 95 - Walter Burley Griffin and the design of Canberra*
- *Fact sheet 109 - Building the provisional Parliament House*

Records transferred to the ACT government

Following ACT self-government in 1989, many ACT administrative records were passed to the control and custody of the ACT government. In most cases this is indicated by a notation in the Archives' database. For information about, and access to the records in the custody of the ACT government contact [Archives ACT](#).