

Auditing For The Australian Capital Territory

The Auditor-General is head of the Auditor-General's Office. He and his Office act independently of the Government. The Office assists the Auditor-General to carry out his duties, which are set out in the Audit Act 1989, by undertaking audits of management performance and the financial statements of public sector bodies. The aim is to improve public sector management and accountability by firstly, ensuring the Legislative Assembly and the electorate are provided with accurate and useful information about the management of public sector resources and secondly, by providing independent advice and recommendations for improving the management of public resources.

PA95/05

23 August 1995

The Speaker
Australian Capital Territory
Legislative Assembly
South Building
London Circuit
CANBERRA ACT 2601

Dear Mr Speaker

In accordance with the Authority contained in the Audit Act 1989, I transmit to the Legislative Assembly my Report titled "Government Secondary Colleges".

This audit was conducted with the assistance of the private accounting and consulting firm, Ernst and Young, and managed in the Audit Office by Mr Peter Hade. Advice was also provided by Professor Neil Baumgart of the Faculty of Education, University of Western Sydney.

Yours sincerely

John A. Parkinson

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Chapter		Page
1	Report Summary	1
2	Audit Approach and Scope	12
3	Public Secondary College Education in the ACT - Background	15
4	Financial Profile	23
5	Teacher Loads	33
6	Curriculum Development and Course Offerings	40
7	Teachers' Non-Teaching Duties	49
8	Class Sizes	56
9	Management of the Number of Teaching Staff	61
10	Capacity Utilisation in ACT Colleges	80
11	List of Acronyms	94

Appendix 1 *College Profiles*

1. Report Summary

1.1 Introduction

This report presents the results of a performance audit of Government secondary colleges in the ACT. The audit was carried out between March and August 1995.

1.2 Why did the Audit Office Carry Out the Audit?

The Auditor-General's Office has a program of carrying out audits of major areas of Government expenditure and activity in order to provide independent advice to the Legislative Assembly on the management of public sector resources.

ACT Government education expenditure has been assessed by the Commonwealth Grants Commission against standardised expenditure to show a pattern of over expenditure. In this context, the standardised level of expenditure is the expenditure necessary to provide the average level of State type services to the people of the ACT.

College education is a substantial part of total public education expenditure in the ACT with annual operating costs approximating \$34m and assets utilised valued at \$172m. Cost of each student place is currently in the vicinity of \$7,800 annually.

Within education expenditure, teaching costs are the main area of cost.

The audit was carried out to determine whether or not teaching services in the Government secondary college system are managed efficiently.

1.3 What Did the Audit Do?

The audit reviewed the efficiency of ACT secondary colleges in providing education services to students.

In particular, it examined:

- *class sizes;*
- *teaching loads;*
- *curriculum development;*
- *the management of the cost and numbers of teachers through the staffing formula points system; and*
- *the use of college infrastructure.*

The audit was an audit of the system. It was not an audit of the contribution or efficiency of individual teachers, principals or others.

1.4 What Was Found in the Audit?

The overall conclusion was that public secondary college education could be delivered significantly more efficiently to students.

The reasons for the issues identified in the audit reflect long-standing and entrenched practices which became institutionalised when the ACT education system was under Commonwealth control.

It is understood that ACT Government Ministers and Departmental senior management have previously considered some of the issues raised in this Report, however in view of community attitudes when those considerations were taking place, no significant change has occurred. It may be that, if the issues identified in the Report are to be successfully addressed, recognition by the community that the existing practices are not now appropriate will be necessary.

Although the audit was not designed to examine individual performance, indications were that persons working within the system are efficiently doing what is required of them with some doing more than is required.

The audit conclusion on the system is based on the following findings. The audit has estimated action to address the findings would make available at least \$3m annually, which could be directed towards meeting other needs in the education program, or to meet other Government priorities.

1.5 Overview of Findings

1.5.1 **ACT Teachers have the Lowest Maximum Number of Hours of Face to Face Teaching in Australia (Chapter 5)**

Under current industrial arrangements, teachers are required to undertake a maximum of 18 hours of face to face teaching per week and to be available at school while the school is open. The balance of time at the school is to be spent on lesson preparation and marking and other teaching duties.

- the level of 18 hours per week is 10% lower than any other school system in Australia. While college teachers in the ACT have some additional duties associated with ACT assessment procedures, it is considered that an allowance of two hours per week for these duties is generous; and
- annual direct salary savings in excess of \$2 million would occur if college teacher staffing levels are adjusted to take account of an increase from 18-20 hours per week in face to face teaching. The savings could be directed to meeting other educational priorities.

1.5.2 **There is an Excessively Wide Range of Courses Available (Chapter 6)**

In the ACT, colleges can determine the number and range of courses on offer. Colleges develop courses and the Board of Senior Secondary Studies (BSSS) provides accreditation:

- the capacity of colleges to develop and offer a wide range of courses, many with small numbers, suggests that the current level of staffing is excessive;
- curriculum development is resource intensive for colleges and for the BSSS;
- intense competition amongst colleges for a stable student population encourages extensive development of courses; and
- highly specialised courses can be offered by several colleges simultaneously to attract students even where it is not economical for the course to be offered in more than one location.

1.5.3 About 10% of Teachers' Available Face to Face Teaching Time is Spent on Non-Teaching Activities (Chapter 7)

The staffing formula provides about 10% more teaching resources than are used for face-to-face teaching or school management:

- teaching resources are employed on other activities such as counselling, student welfare and administration. While these activities are required within colleges they could be an inappropriate use of professional teachers.
- The Audit Office estimates that reductions in face to face teaching for non-teaching purposes involve expenditure of the order of \$2m.

1.5.4 Average Class Sizes are Low and there are Many Small Classes (*Chapter 8*)

The average class size as calculated in this audit (about 17.5 students) appears to be relatively low; about 34% of classes are for 15 or less students.

- There is scope for reducing the number of small classes so as to increase the overall average class size.

1.5.5 Preservation of the Student/Teacher Ratio Prevents the Department of Education from Managing Overall Teaching Costs (*Chapter 9*)

Teaching staff numbers in colleges are calculated using a formula which currently provides for an overall teacher/student ratio of 1 teacher for approximately 11.5 students. This formula has remained substantially unchanged since it was first used in the late 1970s.

- The preservation of a long-standing teacher/student ratio, which may no longer be appropriate, prevents the Department from managing overall teaching costs efficiently; and
- In practice, teaching salary costs have been mostly quarantined from Government schooling expenditure reductions.

1.5.6 The Staffing System Does Not Provide Principals with the Necessary Flexibility to Manage College Costs Efficiently (*Chapter 9*)

The levels of teaching and non-teaching resources are calculated for each college using formulas based on the number of students at the college. College principals have discretion as to the numbers of teaching and non-teaching staff employed as long as the total entitlements in teaching and non teaching categories are not exceeded. There are certain significant deficiencies with the system:

- Principals do not have any responsibility or ability for managing the cost of college staff. The staffing system does not enable college principals to achieve the most efficient mix of teaching, non-teaching or outsourced resources to provide the range of educational and student services required within colleges;
- Principals do not have incentive or the means to manage with less costly teaching resources or to require more costly teaching resources to take on matching responsibilities. There would also be benefits to principals in being able to use more junior teachers who can introduce new ideas and fresh approaches; and

- Potential benefits which may be possible by addressing the issues outlined relating to the staffing system may be difficult to achieve in the short term as most current teachers are at or near the top of the teachers' pay scale and therefore altering the mix of current teachers will have little effect on college teaching costs.

1.5.7 There is Unused Capacity Across the College School System (*Chapter 10*)

The audit also found that the Government college system in the ACT is characterised by strong competition between colleges for a static pool of students who can freely choose the college which they wish to attend;

- actual college enrolments in 1995 range from 394 to 928, indicating a wide disparity in college size;
- the nine public secondary colleges are presently operating at about 82% of overall capacity. There is excess capacity of at least 1400 student places in the colleges;
- students are largely free to select which college to attend. About 40% of students choose to attend a college outside their local area;
- although most college education costs are related to the number of teachers (and through the staffing formula, the number of students), low numbers of students in one or two colleges could lead to restricted educational offerings and raise questions about those colleges' viability; and

- the Audit Office estimates that there would be annual recurrent savings of at least \$400,000 if the existing nine colleges were reduced to eight.

1.5.8 There Are Inadequate Performance Standards and Information

There is an absence of well-defined performance standards and information across the college system.

- The audit found considerable difficulties in assembling useful, comparable information on activities and costs and linking this to relevant Department and college functions.

The current system provides little if any measurement of a college's performance against performance criteria. Currently, there is little connection between operational management and resource utilisation at college level and the budgetary and performance measurement of colleges.

As a general conclusion, the findings provide strongly persuasive evidence that the level of teaching staff in colleges is more than required to deliver educational services efficiently.

1.6 Future Actions

As mentioned previously, most of the issues presented in this Report are long term and entrenched. Nevertheless, addressing the issues has the potential to make available a significant number of resources. Some suggested actions to address the findings follow:

- Face to face academic teaching requirements for ACT college teachers should be increased to 20 hours per week, bringing them into line with teaching loads in other States.
- While recognising the academic importance of college based curriculum development, the Department should exercise more control over the range of courses in order to encourage the use of teaching resources more effectively and efficiently.
- The Department should review the feasibility of colleges carrying out assessment and moderation procedures in college vacations during stand-down time.
- The Department should review the teacher/student ratio assumptions within the staffing formula to determine the levels of teaching resources which are appropriate for current needs in the college education system.
- There should be a review of the administrative policies and procedures for the allocation of resources to colleges in order to enable colleges to:
 - identify and manage with the most cost effective mix of teaching resources, and
 - achieve an efficient mix of teaching, non-teaching or outsourced resources to provide the range of educational and student services required within colleges.

GOVERNMENT SECONDARY COLLEGES

- The Department should review the preferred number, location and use of colleges, taking into account economies of scale, demographics, best use of existing capital assets, policies on competition amongst colleges, priority enrolment areas and maximum college size.

2. Audit Approach And Scope

2.1 Background

This audit follows the 1993 ACT Auditor-General's Report No. 6 on the *Government Schooling Program*.

Following the completion of that Report, it was decided to carry out further audits of the Government School sector. As the results of the initial audit included the conclusion that educational services were being delivered effectively, it was decided that future audits would have an emphasis on efficiency issues. This audit therefore does not address effectiveness issues.

2.2 Audit Objective

The objective of the audit was:

To provide an independent opinion to the ACT Legislative Assembly on whether public secondary college education is being delivered efficiently to students.

2.3 Scope and Approach

The audit sought to assess whether existing arrangements best support efficient delivery of public secondary college education services to students. The key questions addressed in this audit to assess the efficiency of ACT public secondary college education were:

- What features of the ACT college system drive costs?
- Are the present levels of costs reasonable?
- What changes are available to achieve efficiencies without detriment to the quality of educational services?

The audit examined the organisational structures and relationships, allocation of responsibilities, funding arrangements and the management information and control systems for public secondary college education (Years 11 and 12) in the ACT addressing:

- the impact of the staffing formula points system used to determine the total teaching resources required and to allocate teaching resources between colleges;
- the face to face teaching load for teachers;
- the average class size and the range of class sizes;
- curriculum development and the range of courses offered;

- efficiencies in use of college capital infrastructure; and
- nature and extent of Departmental involvement in college management.

2.4 Consultation

Extensive consultations were held with officials in the ACT Department of Education and Training and with College Principals. Discussions were also held with officials in the Tasmanian Department of Education and the Arts.

2.5 Acknowledgment

The Auditor-General thanks the management and staff of the Department of Education and Training, including College Principals and their staff, for their extensive and full co-operation and assistance in the course of this audit.

3. Public Secondary College Education In The ACT - Background

3.1 Introduction

The framework of public sector secondary level education in the ACT can be distinguished from that in other Australian States and Territories, except Tasmania, by the separation of Years 11 and 12 into a college system apart from the high school system. This college system is intended to specifically focus the learning time of students on effective transition from schooling either to pursue further education/training, or to enter the workforce.

3.2 Changes in the Student Population

In 1995 there were 6774¹ students enrolled in nine secondary colleges and one combined high school/college operating in the ACT.

There has been a significant change in the nature of the college student population over the last twenty years. In the 1970s most college courses were designed for students who were intending to enter university. Since the 1970s, however, Commonwealth and Territory government policies have progressively moved towards achieving higher retention rates after year 10 within the post compulsory secondary school system.

¹ February 1995 Student Census - data provided by the Department.

As the student retention rate increased there has been a corresponding increase in the need for courses/units relating to employment/social skilling rather than for preparation for tertiary education.

The ACT college system is hybrid in nature, containing elements of secondary schooling, the tertiary/training environments that many students will soon experience, and elements where students learn to apply 'life skills' aimed at assisting them to manage as independent adults.

In recent years resources have been devoted to devising implementation strategies for the National Training Reform Agenda (arising from the Finn, Mayer and Carmichael Reports). These strategies direct education systems towards creating effective links between general education and vocational education. The main vehicle for this change has been the implementation of Australian Vocational Certificate Training Scheme (AVCTS) pilot courses in the ACT college system. This strategy of change has been managed by the ACT Board of Senior Secondary Studies(BSSS), which has responsibilities for curriculum development and accreditation for the ACT College system.

3.3 College Management Responsibilities

The ACT public secondary colleges now operate in a largely devolved and independent manner except for overall staff allocation and management. This is consistent with decisions taken when the colleges were created to give college Principals a higher degree of autonomy than other school Principals. As a result Central Office has a largely 'hands-off' managerial relationship with the colleges.

3.4 Competition Between Colleges

Colleges operate in an environment where they are encouraged to pursue growth and the added viability which results from achieving economies of scale. Students are able to select freely between colleges. As the student population is static, there is extensive and intense competition amongst colleges to attract and retain students.

To some extent, competition between colleges for students can be advantageous, especially where it is based on quality of education and leads to higher levels of achievement.

However, the downside of free movement of students is that student choices are not always made on quality of education grounds. Students may choose to go to a particular college because of its location, or the non-academic courses available, or simply because it is fashionable among friends and peers.

In such an environment, smaller colleges are progressively disadvantaged by the diseconomies of reducing scale. The average cost of educating a student in these colleges rises and the standard range of course offerings may diminish, resulting in a reduction in the range of educational offerings.

3.5 Allocation of Responsibility for College Education

Responsibility for college education is divided between the Department of Education and Training and the colleges themselves. The following table (*Table 3.6*) provides an overview of the responsibilities of the Colleges and the Department's Central Office in relation to key areas.

GOVERNMENT SECONDARY COLLEGES

Table 3.6 Responsibilities for College Education

	Central Office	Colleges
Policy and Standards Setting	Corporate Policy in relation to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - college staff terms & conditions - industrial awards - number, location & size of colleges Start/Finish Times Approval	College Policy in relation to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - opening hours reductions from teaching time - courses available - codes of behaviour
Finances	Budget Planning Annual Estimates	Budgets for Discretionary Expenditure Rates of Voluntary Contributions
Human Resources	Salaries Personnel Management Policy on Points System Points System Records	Management of Points System for Allocating Teaching Staff
Information Technology	IT Policy and Standards Hardware IT Security Mainframe LAN IT Training Student Records	College Hardware and Software Acquisition and Maintenance Student Records Local IT Security
Teaching Services	Course Approval and Accreditation: Board of Senior Secondary Studies Executive Directors Teacher Appointments and Development Promotions Personnel Management	Teaching Curriculum Development Personnel Management
Student Services	Student Records Issue of Year 12 Certificates	Enrolment Counselling Welfare AUSTUDY Career Advice Library Acquisitions and Management
Other Administration	Legal Industrial Relations Cleaning Services Personnel Management of Non-Teaching Staff Facilities and Property Management Services Running Costs Utilities Phone Cleaning Security Major Capital Works	Personnel Management of Non-Teaching Staff Management of Some Running Costs Minor Maintenance Day to Day Monitoring of Cleaning Contracts School Specific Expenditure
Training	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • PD Courses 	In-House PD Courses External courses

In some areas, for example personnel management and student records, Central Office and colleges have separate distinct responsibilities.

3.6 Resource Management System

The following resource usage and funding map sets out an overview of the funding and resource flows that affect the college system.

The map focuses on the colleges themselves and shows that, from a resource management perspective, the colleges have relatively little responsibility for managing the level or composition of expenditure. They operate within a centralised budgetary system which provides Principals with only limited control over the cost of resource use in colleges. The colleges do, however, have significant responsibility for how they use the resources available, especially in terms of human resource management and, to a lesser extent, asset management.

Table 3.7 Overview of College Management System

3.7 Summary - Central Features of the ACT College system

In summary, the central features of the public secondary college environment in the ACT are:

- the colleges operate in the post-compulsory student years;
- a range of courses are offered covering elements of secondary schooling, vocational training, tertiary education preparation and life skills;
- students are able to select relatively freely among colleges. As a result there is strong competition between colleges for student numbers; and

GOVERNMENT SECONDARY COLLEGES

- colleges operate within a centralised budgetary system which provides Principals with only limited control over the cost of resources used in colleges.

4. Financial Profile

4.1 Introduction

This Chapter presents the following financial information on the colleges:

- Capital costs
- Operating expenditure
- Central office overheads

4.2 College Capital Costs

The total value of college land, buildings and equipment as at 30 June 1994 was \$171.6m. Details for each college and the main categories of assets are presented in the table below:

Table 4.1 Value of College Assets as at 30 June 1994

	Total \$M	Copland \$M	Dickson \$M	Erindale \$M	Hawker \$M	L Gin \$M	L Tug \$M	Narrabh \$M	Phillip \$M	Stirling \$M
Buildings	153.579	17.700	20.483	13.365	16.780	17.277	16.367	19.235	16.013	16.360
Land	10.034	1.115	1.450	1.000	1.364	0.260	0.850	1.375	1.370	1.250
Equipment	7.981	0.766	0.787	0.775	0.873	0.967	1.061	1.149	0.815	0.789
TOTAL	171.594	19.581	22.720	15.140	19.017	18.504	18.278	21.759	18.198	18.399

The values for buildings and land include improvements to buildings and land. Land improvements are usually sportsgrounds and playing fields associated with the colleges. Buildings and equipment were valued on the basis of cost or replacement value. It does not take depreciation into account.

Land values were determined on an existing use basis, ie. on the basis of use for an educational institution. This valuation mainly identifies the cost of clearing and preparing the site, and the cost of improvements, usually playing fields. Depending on the location, values could be greater if the land was valued for an alternate use such as for commercial or residential purposes.

The largest element of cost is the cost of buildings. On the basis of the data in the table, it is estimated that it would cost about \$20 million at current prices to build and equip a new college.

4.2.1 Value of Assets Per College Student

Using the information in Table 4.1, average college assets are equivalent to about \$25,000 per student over the whole college system - see *Table 4.2*. The values of assets per student varies substantially between colleges, mainly because of differences in student numbers.

Table 4.2 Value of College Assets Per Student - 1994

	Total	Copland	Dickson	Erindale	Hawker	L Gin	L Tug	Narrabh	Phillip	Stirling
VALUE OF ASSETS PER STUDENT	\$25,000	\$29,000	\$37,000	\$19,000	\$20,000	\$21,000	\$21,000	\$24,000	\$24,000	\$38,000

With the exception of Lake Tuggeranong College, the colleges in the ACT were funded and constructed by the Commonwealth Government before self-government. As a result the ACT has not had to fund most of the existing college (or other education) infrastructure. Nevertheless, it is useful to use the values of college assets per student at each of the colleges to compare the level of use of the existing infrastructure.

The larger per student values for Copland (\$29,000), Dickson (\$37,000) and Stirling (\$38,000) (the average is \$25,000 per student) suggest considerable under-utilisation of existing college infrastructure at these colleges.

Falls in the numbers of students enrolled at Stirling and Copland have resulted in substantial increases in 1995 in the value of college assets per student to \$47,000 and \$34,000 per student respectively.

4.2.2 Annual Financing Cost of Assets Per Student

The notional annual financing cost (or the opportunity cost) of providing a college place for a student can be calculated. The notional financing cost provides an indication of what it would have cost to service a loan to construct a college if the ACT had to borrow the funds. It enables the capital cost to be expressed in annual terms. As was mentioned above, most of the college assets were provided by the Commonwealth before self-government.

On the basis of an interest rate of 8% the overall financing cost in 1995 of a college place is approximately \$2,000 per student per annum (ie. \$25,000 x 8%).

For the purposes of this financial profile, the notional financing cost is treated as a single cost across the college system. For any particular college, the cost will depend on the number of students. However, while the number of students and the number of colleges remains stable, the cost over the whole system will not change.

4.3 College Operating Costs

The resourcing of ACT public secondary colleges involves staff of about 540 teachers and 100 administrative staff, with total direct expenditure of approximately \$34m. These costs do not include depreciation and staff superannuation costs.

Operating expenditure on the colleges is made up of two elements:

- Department based expenditure, and
- College based expenditure.

4.3.1 Department Based Expenditure on Colleges

The Department of Education and Training provides a range of services for colleges. As well as Central Office overhead activities, the Department pays the salaries for teaching and non-teaching staff and manages expenditure for services such as cleaning, utilities, rates, telephone, repairs and maintenance, furniture and some minor plant and equipment.

Most college operating expenditure (about 86%) is for salaries of persons working in the colleges.

Table 4.3 below shows 1994 Department based expenditure.

Table 4.3 Departmental Based Operating Expenditure

	Total	Copland	Dickson	Erindale	Hawker	L Gin	L Tug	Narra'h	Phillip	Stirling
Salaries	29.289	2.841	2.855	2.982	3.938	3.652	3.644	3.709	3.405	2.262
Other	3.694	0.357	0.371	0.489	0.498	0.376	0.470	0.400	0.380	0.352
Total Dept.	32.983	3.198	3.227	3.471	4.436	4.027	4.114	4.110	3.786	2.614

4.3.2 College Based Expenditure

Colleges have responsibility for managing some expenditure and operate their own bank accounts for this purpose. Expenditure management by Colleges includes:

- minor new works up to \$1,500 per item;
- faculty requirements including text books; and
- minor operating expenses.

College based expenditure is predominantly met from a per capita grant by Central Office. For 1995, the college student rate is \$117. Colleges have other sources of income, including:

- voluntary contributions;
- Parents & Citizens fundraising activities; and
- contribution from overseas student funds (currently Central office pays to Colleges \$300 per student).

The level of college based expenditure varies but generally has been around \$200,000 to \$300,000 for each college with the total being \$2m across the colleges. Because of inconsistencies in available data on college-based expenditure, it has not been possible to present individual college information in this Report.

4.4 Operating Expenditure Per Student

The total of operating expenditure in colleges is closely related to student numbers as colleges are largely funded on the numbers of students enrolled. However, there are significant differences in the average cost per student across the colleges. The following table shows the level of Departmental based expenditure per student in each college. The absence of college based expenditure data does not disturb the results shown which are for 1994.

Table 4.4 Operating Expenditure per College Student

	Total	Copland	Dickson	Erindale	Hawker	L Gin	L Tug	Narra'h	Phillip	Stirling
No - Students	6,927	679	620	781	933	883	890	904	756	481
Per Student	4,762	4,710	5,204	4,444	4,755	4,561	4,623	4,546	5,007	5,435

The average operating cost per student across the college system was approximately \$4,762 in 1994. The average cost varied between \$4,444 at Erindale College to \$5,435 at Stirling College.

Annual depreciation charges are not included in the preceding figures. Costs per student increase more significantly in smaller colleges when depreciation and other costs such as superannuation are allocated.

In general, the smaller colleges have a higher cost per student than the larger colleges. This largely reflects the proportionately higher impact of school management costs on the overall cost structure.

The scattergram in the next Table relates the size of each college with the average cost per student. It will be seen that as the number of students at a college increases, the average cost per student decreases.

Table 4.5 Average Cost per Student and College Size - 1994

Although the small number of colleges raises some doubt about the detailed conclusions that can be drawn, the graph indicates that:

- the lowest average cost per student is reached when the college size is between 800 and 900 students; and
- the average cost per student may rise when colleges have more than 900 students.

4.5 Central Office Overhead

It is possible to make an estimate of the proportion of total Central Office costs which relate to the college system by allocating Central Office costs on the basis of the number of teachers in the colleges compared with the primary and secondary schools and then by dividing by the number of college students.

This calculation shows that Central Office overhead cost for colleges per student as estimated by the Audit Office was approximately \$1,000 for 1994.

4.6 Conclusion

The total cost per student of the college system per annum in the ACT is around \$7,800 per student. This cost is made up of:

	\$
Capital cost:	2,000
Operating cost:	4,800
Central Office overhead:	1,000
TOTAL	7,800

4.7 Summary - Significant Financial Figures

In summary, the significant financial information for the ACT secondary college system is:

- Total value of college assets is \$171.6m;

GOVERNMENT SECONDARY COLLEGES

- It is estimated that it would cost about \$20m at current prices to build and equip a new college;
- The value of college assets per student averaged \$25,000 across the colleges, however in the smallest college (Stirling), the value was significantly higher at \$47,000 per student; and
- The average total cost for each student in the college system is approximately \$7,800 annually.

5. Teacher Loads

5.1 Employment Conditions

Within the ACT education system, teachers are paid on the basis of a 36¾ hour working week with a requirement to be in attendance at their colleges during college opening hours. Colleges are usually open for about 30 to 35 hours per week. (Details of college opening hours are included in the Appendix.) Where teachers are required to attend beyond these hours, they may take time off in lieu in a free part of their timetable during the college's opening hours.

Teaching staff are entitled to four weeks annual leave. Annual leave is taken notionally from the end of the school year.

As well, they receive 6 weeks stand-down for the periods of school vacations when they are not on annual leave. Stand-down periods are not leave. During stand-down periods teachers can be asked to work, eg. to provide assistance for projects in Central Office. Increasingly, some professional development is being undertaken during stand-down time. Some teachers also use the stand-down periods (particularly during the school year) for lesson preparation.

It is understood that although the use of stand down time for non-teaching tasks is increasing, few teachers are asked to return to work in stand down time.

5.2 Teaching Load - Comparison with Other States

Teachers in the ACT, by industrial agreement, are required to undertake a maximum of 18 face to face teaching hours per week during term. As will be seen from Table 5.1, this workload is low in comparison with all other States, including Tasmania which, like the ACT, operates a Year 11 and Year 12 college system.

Table 5.1 Face to Face Teaching Hours - Across State Comparisons

State/ Territory	Face to Face Teaching Hours (Secondary)
ACT	18h (18h 42m if including 2h of sports supervision)
NSW	20h (20h 40m if including 2h of sports supervision)
VIC	20h
WA	21h 20m
SA	Not Defined
NT	21h 20m
TAS	20h

Current national face to face teaching hours are shown in the table. The comparison is not exact as the data covers Years 11 and 12 for the ACT and Tasmania but Years 7 to 12 for the other States.

The lower teaching load in ACT Government colleges is estimated to involve extra direct staff costs of the order of \$2m.

5.3 Teaching Lines

In ACT colleges, the teaching load is broken up into lines of teaching where a line represents one unit of a course. A line usually involves 4 hours or 4 hours 25 minutes of face-to-face teaching. A full-time teacher has 4.0 or 4.5 lines of teaching per week, depending on the hours in a line resulting in 18 hours of face to face teaching. In addition to the face-to-face teaching, it is estimated that ongoing preparation, assessment and marking involve 2 hours per line per week.

Within colleges, some allowance is made for teachers who may have non-teaching duties such as administration, work experience co-ordination or marketing. The number of lines taught per week may be reduced to provide 6 hours per line for the other duties.

5.4 Types of Courses

The courses provided by colleges are classified into four categories:

- **Accredited (“A”) courses** considered by BSSS to be sound and appropriate for students in Years 11 and 12;
- **Tertiary (“T”) courses** are “A” courses considered by BSSS to provide a good preparation for higher education. Currently, about 30-40% of ACT Year 12 students proceed to higher education;

- **Employment (“E”) courses** which may be generic such as hospitality or AVTS courses which are pathway courses and may have class sizes restricted by training facilities and employment opportunities. These are commonly accredited with and available from other agencies such as the Canberra Institute of Technology (CIT) and may attract an additional fee for service; and
- **Registered (“R”) courses** which are primarily recreational or personal development units.

Tertiary, Accredited and Employment courses usually involve 4 hours of face-to-face teaching ie. 1 line each. Registered units usually involve 2 hours, that is half a line.

An examination of teacher course workloads indicates that most teachers have workloads with:

- 4 lines (16 hours) of T, A or E units, and
- 1 line (2 hours) usually an R unit.

While there is no doubt that R units involve a level of teacher preparation and involvement, they do not involve the same demands as face-to-face teaching for T, A or E units.

5.5 ACT Assessment and Moderation

The ACT college system does not use Year 12 external examinations for assessment and moderation of students. Instead, students are graded throughout Years 11 and 12 on the basis of assignments, internal exams and other means. An overall ranking of students is achieved through a moderation procedure carried out by colleges under guidelines set by the Board of Senior Secondary Studies.

College teachers have advised that the reason for the lower number of hours of face-to-face teaching in the ACT is due to the ACT assessment and moderation system. It has been suggested that teachers in ACT colleges have a greater burden than in other systems because detailed student assessments, including across college moderation, are undertaken at the college level and not centrally. The view has been put that the extra assessment and moderation duties involve a workload on teachers of about two hours per week.

There is no doubt that school based assessment and moderation procedures involve some extra workload on teachers. However, reductions from face to face teaching (see *Chapter 7*) are more common in the college system and while these do not necessarily reduce the level of activity, they nevertheless reduce the assessment and preparation load.

It is also pointed out that in practice, colleges finish classes a week before primary and secondary schools. Semester assessment and moderation processes will usually be carried out in that last week of term after students have left.

In view of the fact that assessment and moderation are performed at the end of the semester or term, it should be possible for these tasks to be performed at the start of college vacations in what would be otherwise stand-down time so as to free resources for other priority tasks during the school term.

5.6 Conclusion

ACT teachers are required to undertake 10% less face to face teaching (and less again counting the lower workload of R units) than their equivalents interstate. There seems no reason for that difference to apply, even allowing for the fact that course assessment and moderation is undertaken by college teachers in the ACT.

Savings in direct salaries in the order of \$2 million per annum would be achievable if college teacher levels were adjusted to provide a face to face teaching load per teacher comparable with other Australian public education systems.

5.7 Future Action for Consideration

Face to face academic teaching requirements for ACT college teachers should be increased to 20 hours per week, bringing them into line with teaching loads in other States.

The Department of Education and Training should review the feasibility of colleges carrying out assessment and moderation procedures in college vacations during stand-down time.

6. Curriculum Development and Course Offerings

6.1 Introduction

The ACT secondary college system is characterised by college based curriculum development. The resource demands and efficiency implications of college based curriculum development and the range of courses on offer are addressed in this Chapter.

There has been a change in the nature of the college student population over the last twenty years. In the early years most college courses were designed for students who were intending to enter university. However as the student retention rate increased the demand for courses/units not directed to higher education but to wider student requirements, and the need for courses relevant to areas such as employment and social skilling have increased dramatically.

6.2 Range of Course Offerings in Colleges

The college based curriculum development process has been a key feature of the ACT secondary college education system. It has encouraged a highly diverse range of offerings and is considered to be of assistance in meeting individual needs and contributing to the quality of educational services delivered.

In addition it allows teachers with particular expertise and interests to utilise these in developing specialist units. More recently, development of particular courses/units has been a feature of the increasing competition between Colleges for students in an environment of declining enrolments.

As also discussed elsewhere, under current curriculum arrangements, the following types of courses can be developed:

- **Accredited (“A”) courses** considered by BSSS to be sound and appropriate for students in Years 11 and 12;
- **Tertiary (“T”) courses** are “A” courses considered by Board of Senior Secondary Studies (BSSS) to provide a good preparation for higher education. Currently, about 30-40% of ACT Year 12 students proceed to higher education;
- **Employment (“E”) courses** which may be generic such as hospitality or AVTS courses which are pathway courses and may have class sizes restricted by training facilities and employment opportunities. These are commonly accredited with and available from other agencies such as the CIT and may attract an additional fee for service; and
- **Registered (“R”) courses** which are primarily recreational or personal development units.

Some colleges have more than 600 T, A, E and R units listed as available to students. Most colleges run about 200 to 300 units each semester.

Within the ACT responsibility for curriculum development is shared between the colleges and Central Office. The responsibilities of the colleges and Central office are discussed following.

6.3 College Responsibilities

Under college based curriculum development, colleges are responsible for choosing, and developing (if necessary) their own educational programs. The process includes development of a curriculum document by a teacher or teachers, occasionally with a small grant of hours from the resources of the Board of Senior Secondary Studies for Type 2 courses, or more frequently, in paid time outside face to face teaching hours.

Courses or units proposed for accreditation cannot be forwarded to the Board without the approval of the College Curriculum Committee and the College Board. The process of accreditation is likely to take over twelve months and may involve considerable effort from a range of players. Units usually cannot be offered before accreditation.

6.4 Central Office and BSSS Responsibilities

At Central Office level, the curriculum development process is undertaken by college teachers and oversighted by the BSSS. The Board manages the development of policy and procedures for curriculum development, the systemic management of the course accreditation process and the award of certificates for Year 12 students for all government and non-government schools.

At Central Office, there is a small pool of permanent staff as well as additional teaching staff from Colleges undertaking special projects. The number of additional staff varies according to the range of projects and resources made available.

Once a course has been accredited by the BSSS, it may be offered by any other public secondary college, provided the college is able to provide teaching resources to present the course.

6.5 Measures to Streamline Curriculum Development

Some measures have been introduced to streamline the curriculum development process. These include:

- introduction of Type 2 courses, ie. courses jointly developed by two or more colleges; and
- Type 3 courses which are Type 2 courses which have been amended or varied.

This collaboration is a relatively new development with only approximately 30 Type 2 courses now developed.

New language courses, which are a priority under Government policy, are to be developed as Type 2 courses. Computing courses are also developed as Type 2 courses.

Another initiative introduced in 1993 to streamline the curriculum development process has been the introduction of Course Frameworks. These are umbrella documents for course and assessment development, intended to simplify curriculum development and reduce the time required to develop new courses. The frameworks include a model structure and common templates for rationale and goals, and common strands.

6.6 Impact of New Courses

Under the current system, once a college has accredited a course it is available to the whole system. New courses are thus available to any college at no further development cost to the system. Courses can also be obtained from the non-government sector.

However because there is a drive at each college to increase, or at least maintain, student number shares, new and attractive courses are likely to be offered at more than one college, potentially dividing the available student population and resulting in inefficient class sizes particularly for highly specialised courses.

An example of this is the recent development of a Flight course by one college. The course was complex, time consuming and costly to develop as it did not fit within existing guidelines. In addition, it is resource intensive to offer. In its first year it did not attract large numbers of students. The numbers have significantly increased and now two other colleges are interested in offering the course, thereby putting at risk its viability in any one college.

Expansion of such highly specialised courses across colleges puts at risk the ability of any one college to generate sufficient enrolments to run such courses.

6.7 Wide Range of Offerings

Several factors have caused the present wide range of offerings at each college:

- students are free to choose which college they will attend and therefore colleges seek to provide a wide range of courses/units, and at least match the offerings of nearby or very competitive colleges in order to retain and/or attract students;
- the subjects offered at the feeder high school(s) also need to be offered at the local college if students from the feeder high school(s) are to be attracted to the college; and

- Government policies, such as promoting the teaching of languages, and greater retention of students beyond year 10 and the consequent need for employment focussed courses.

6.8 Implications for Efficiency

Teacher involvement in curriculum development involves a considerable cost across the system. As mentioned earlier, some colleges have around 600 units listed as available to students. All of these units have involved significant costs, including initial development costs and ongoing maintenance costs of varying amounts depending on the complexity and size of the units. Through lack of student demand, about half overall of the listed courses may not necessarily be provided in any semester.

Extensive development of courses is made possible by the availability of teachers and is motivated to a large degree by inter-college competition for students. The greater the number of courses on offer, the higher are BSSS costs, and the greater the likelihood of smaller class sizes.

The capacity of colleges to develop and offer a wide range of courses, many with small class numbers suggests that the current level of staffing is generous.

While the quality of educational offerings is beyond the scope of this audit, there has to be some doubt as to whether such a wide variety of courses is necessary for the delivery of quality education and/or whether such variety may be achieved at less cost. There would also be a reduction in the time required by the BSSS to manage the process and additional resources could be made available for other educational priorities.

Greater use of Type 2 courses will have the effect of reducing the variations in courses across the system and assist in reducing the amount of time spent producing curriculum. Notwithstanding, there would still remain scope for duplication and unnecessary course development activity. An option which could be explored is whether the BSSS should apply greater restraint on course development activities and investigate greater use of courses developed in other States.

Broader systemic control over the number of courses developed and offered would encourage the redirection to other priorities of teacher time currently allocated to curriculum development.

A Central Office policy of constraining the availability of highly specialised courses to particular colleges would enable the system to deliver a wide variety of courses/units more cost effectively.

6.9 Conclusion

College based curriculum development has resulted in a large range of course offerings for students. As curriculum development is resource intensive, there are doubts as to whether a full continuation of the current practices is an efficient use of teaching and Department resources.

The capacity of colleges to develop and offer a wide range of courses, many with small class numbers, suggests that the current level of staffing is generous.

The findings from this chapter are:

- curriculum development is resource intensive for colleges and for the BSSS;
- competition amongst colleges for student numbers encourages extensive development of courses;
- highly specialised courses can be offered by several colleges simultaneously to attract students even where it is not economical for the course to be offered in more than one location;
- the capacity of colleges to develop and offer a wide range of courses, many with small numbers, suggest that the current level of staffing is generous; and

- while the BSSS is attempting to achieve efficient course development to avoid waste and duplication, it has apparently not considered the feasibility of options such as limiting the range of courses able to be developed or exploring whether appropriate courses might be imported from other States.

6.10 Future Action for Consideration

While recognising the academic importance of college based curriculum the Department should exercise more control over the range of courses in order to encourage the use of teaching resources more effectively and efficiently.

7. Teachers' Non-Teaching Duties

7.1 Reductions in Teachers' Face to Face Teaching Requirements

Under award conditions, teachers are required to provide 18 hours of face to face teaching per week. The balance of their time is expected to be spent on preparation and assessment, supervision of students and other related tasks.

Principals , Deputy Principals and Level 2 teachers have lower teaching workloads because of their executive and administrative workloads. Using information provided by the colleges, the Auditor-General's Office estimated that the overall workload for senior executive and administrative responsibilities was the equivalent of approximately 20 full time teachers (FTEs) per annum.

Some Level 1 teachers are given reductions (by principals) from face to face teaching requirements to undertake a range of other college activities.

In general, reductions are given on the basis of teaching lines. A reduction of 1 teaching line (4 to 4.5 hours of face to-face teaching per week) will result in 6 hours of work on the reduction (because it included an allowance of 2 hours per line for preparation and assessment).

Activities noted during the audit which were covered by reductions include:

- operation of the school library;
- subject co-ordination;
- administrative tasks associated with assessment;
- co-ordination of sports;
- student welfare in addition to the time provided by the school counsellor;
- activities associated with work experience, including assisting with finding appropriate placements and subsequent supervision;
- drama productions;
- career counselling and advice related to course choices;
- marketing activities and community liaison;
- preparation of the college handbook; and
- maintenance of technical equipment such as computers etc.

Existing college management information systems do not provide a consistent measure of the full extent and impact of teacher time given as reductions in face to face teaching hours. *Table 7.1*, which was compiled from information collected in the audit, indicates the proportion of college teachers receiving reductions for one reason or another ranges from 20% to 73% of total college teaching service staff.

Table 7.1 Proportion of Teaching Staff having "Reductions"

College	No. of Teaching Staff	% of Teaching staff with Reductions
Copland	44	73
Dickson	51	20
Erindale	Not Available	Not Available
Narrabundah	100	47
Hawker	79	42
Lake Ginninderra	Not Available	Not Available
Lake Tuggeranong	73	36
Phillip	Not Available	Not Available
Stirling	36	58

Data limitations did not allow accurate identification of the total direct cost in teacher salaries of activities allowed as reductions. However, a broad estimate is that reductions involve total time equivalent to approximately 50 full time teachers (about 10% of the overall number of teachers) across the college system.

This analysis suggests that reductions involve a direct staff cost of the order of \$2 million.

7.1.1 Managing Reductions

At present, principals have little flexibility to use other than teaching staff on tasks resourced by reductions. Teachers represent a relatively costly resource. Greater use of either administrative staff on normal working conditions of 48 weeks per year on site, or contracting out some of the work (eg IT maintenance, handbook preparation) could offer opportunities for achieving efficiency in the use of teaching resources.

Some of the activities covered by reductions (operating libraries for example) may be more efficiently performed by non-teaching staff. As well, some tasks need not be carried out in school term time.

7.2 Student Welfare/Counselling

Demands are placed on teachers to provide a wide range of support activities to ensure that all students are able to participate effectively in post compulsory secondary education. Although counsellors are available, the hours allocated are not extensive.

It has been suggested that the nature of the college student population has changed over the last 20 years with students requiring a greater amount of, and more complex advice and support. The college system has moved from being a provider of pre-tertiary education to a system which cares for a wide range of students in pre-employment and non-academic training.

Teachers are expected to take on a broader parental and carer role for students. Issues dealt with by teachers include homelessness and substance dependence as well as course and career counselling. Teaching staff are providing this service through reductions in face to face teaching hours and through devoting other time outside the classroom.

It is difficult to measure the extent to which there has been an increase in the welfare need of students. There does not appear to be systematic information on the number of students seeking assistance, the nature of the assistance and the time taken to address issues. Such detailed information should be sought and may need to be produced for legal reasons. In addition, consideration should be given to how services could be flexibly delivered by specifically qualified persons, eg. on a contract basis as an alternative to the current practices.

7.3 Non-Use of Stand-Down Time

College resourcing includes .5 of a day per full time equivalent for professional development per year. Other professional development opportunities are resourced separately, eg. Study leave, pupil-free days, vocational education and training. The 0.5 day FTE is taken as a reduction from face to face teaching and colleges are given an allowance of hours to cover this. Information in the following Table indicates that the current allowance across the system is 271.5 days.

GOVERNMENT SECONDARY COLLEGES

Table 7.2 Professional Development Allowance

College	Actual Enrolments 1995 ^{1.}	Teacher FTE ^{2.} 1995	Professional Development Days (.5 day per FTE)
Copland	571	48.6	24.30
Dickson	641	51.8	25.90
Hawker	928	65.6	32.80
Lake Ginninderra	866	72.7	36.35
Erindale	853	67.8	33.90
Lake Tuggeranong	893	67.7	33.85
Narrabundah	909	73.1	36.55
Phillip	719	63.5	31.75
Stirling	395	32.2	16.10
TOTAL DAYS	6774	543	271.5

1. Based on March 1994 Staffing Returns data provided by the Department.
2. FTE: "Full Time Equivalent" Permanent and contract full time and part time staff expressed as FTE which allows PD allowances. Casual staff over and above these FTE do not attach the PD allowance.

In recognition of the impact of undertaking professional development in normal teaching hours, some teachers are increasingly using stand-down for such activities. Such an approach should, as far as practicable, become the norm to ensure teacher time is most efficiently applied.

7.4 Future Action for Consideration

Under the current arrangements, reductions in teachers' face to face teaching involve time equivalent to approximately 50 full time teachers, ie. about 10% of the overall number of teachers. Teaching resources are employed on other activities such as counselling, student welfare and administration. While these activities are required within colleges, they could be an inappropriate use of professional teachers.

The use of stand-down time in holidays for professional development activities is rare. To ensure that teacher time is applied efficiently, use of stand-down time for professional development should be encouraged.

8. Class Sizes

8.1 Average Class Size

Teaching salaries make up approximately 77% of the operating costs in the secondary college system.

Teaching costs are largely dependent on the level of the average class size. The larger the average class, the less teachers (and the less costs) are required to provide teaching services. There are obviously many factors involved in determining the ideal number of students in any particular class only one of which is the cost of teaching that class. At some point, the loss of quality which comes from increasing class numbers cannot be justified by the savings in teaching costs.

At the same time, there are also differences between subject complexities and student abilities which will impact on the appropriateness of class sizes. Some classes, such as those for special needs students, require small numbers of students. Some tertiary level courses can be effectively held in classes of more than 20 students.

The average class size is a rough indicator as it is derived from a wide range of necessarily differing class sizes in colleges and in the college system. It can be used, however, to provide an understanding of what drives the overall level of teaching costs.

GOVERNMENT SECONDARY COLLEGES

Details of the average class sizes for each of the colleges are provided below:

Table 8.1 1995 Average Class Sizes

College	Actual Enrolments 1995 ^{1.}	Average Class Size (All subjects)
Copland	571	17.6
Dickson	641	16.6
Hawker	928	18.0
Lake Ginninderra	866	17.9
Erindale	853	18.0
Lake Tuggeranong	893	17.8
Narrabundah	909	16.8
Phillip	719	17.8
Stirling	394	15.7
ALL COLLEGES	6,774	17.5

1. March 1995 enrolments extracted from the March 1995 Staffing Returns data provided by the Department.

Across the college system, the average class size was calculated to be approximately 17.5 students per class. There were some differences between the various colleges.

8.1.1 Number and Size of Classes

A better understanding of the importance of class sizes is gained from an examination of the number and size of classes at each college. The table below presents for each college and in total, the percentage of the number of classes in certain size categories. Composite classes, as identified by colleges in source documents were treated as single classes.

Table 8.2 Proportion of the Number of Classes in Various Class Size Categories - May 1995

College	1 - 5	6 - 10	11 - 15	16 - 20	21 - 25	26+
	Students per class %					
Copland	1	12	27	31	25	4
Dickson	8	10	20	28	29	5
Hawker	4	13	14	23	37	8
Lake Ginn	2	6	22	36	31	3
Erindale	1	5	22	37	34	1
Lake Tugg	0	8	25	35	25	7
Narrabundah	5	10	20	24	23	17
Phillip	3	15	19	29	26	8
Stirling	5	14	27	27	24	2
All Colleges	3	10	21	30	29	7

1 Data taken from documents supplied by each college and collated by the Audit Office.

About 34% of classes overall are at or below the level of 15 students per class. The audit was advised that there are several reasons why this may occur. These reasons include:

- there are some courses where the maximum allowable class size is as low as 15. These are employment courses where size is restricted by training facilities and employment opportunities, or where there are occupational health and safety limits on the size of the class;
- the existing wide range of courses/units available to students means that there will be some courses where it will be necessary to continue units to enable students to complete majors;

- numbers in a course may decline during the year, but the commitment to continuing students must be maintained;
- where the popularity of courses/units is waning, enrolments may decline before the course is eventually dropped;
- new courses/units required under government policy or seen as necessary to create a competitive edge over other colleges may take some time to build up; and
- a disproportionate distribution of enrolments may result because of the popularity of a teacher or a topic.

8.2 Maximum Class Sizes

A maximum class size of 25 generally applies. In most cases, the classes in excess of 25 in Table 8.2 were for activities which did not involve face-to-face teaching for example, sports and other R unit classes such as the Rock Eisteddfod.

8.3 Conclusion

There was considerable evidence that college Principals are well aware of the issues relating to class sizes. Class sizes appeared to be managed effectively over the range of T, A and R units and other activities to address teaching requirements and to make good use of teaching resources made available to the colleges.

8.4 Future Action for Consideration

Nevertheless, 34% of classes are of 15 students or less. In view of the findings in earlier chapters of this Report, there would appear to be scope for reducing the number of small classes (perhaps by reducing the range of courses available) so as to increase the overall average class size and release teaching resources for other uses.

9. Management of the Number of Teaching Staff

9.1 Determining the Level of College Teaching Staffing

9.1.1 Introduction

Both the allocation of staffing resources to ACT schools and colleges, and to the Department of Education and Training, and the management of these resources at the school or college level, use a staffing 'points formula system' based on the number of student enrolments. This chapter describes how the system works and its impact on the operations of the colleges.

9.1.2 Staffing Generally

In estimating the following year's staffing requirements, each college advises Central Office about the enrolments which are expected on the basis of demographic factors, preliminary enrolments and other data. This information enables a forecast of the level of teaching resources required for the next year. Principals also advise of expected changes to staffing as a result of resignations, transfers and leave.

Central Office manages a central recruitment process to fill college teaching and non-teaching positions. Positions are filled from both internal and external sources. Principals review all applications and indicate which particular staff they would prefer to be appointed to their own colleges. A 'best fit' of the available pool is then made by principals and Central Office to meet the requirements of the individual colleges as far as possible.

9.1.3 The Staffing Points Formulae

At the college level, a formula determines how many "points" a specific college is entitled to receive for its requirements for teaching staff and non-teaching staff. Similar allocations are made for primary and high schools.

There are separate points allocations for teaching and non-teaching staff. Staff at particular levels are valued at a number of points - a level 1 teacher for example is equivalent to 20 points. College Principals have authority to manage the use of their staffing resources using this points system so long as their allocated numbers of points for teaching and non-teaching staff are not exceeded.

Under the points system, a point has a certain value of salary dollars. In 1995, 1 point was equivalent to about \$1,996 salary. Separate calculations of points are carried out for teaching and non-teaching staff.

The points system uses a simple formula made up of four components as follows:

$$(A \times B) + C + D = \text{Total points available}$$

where:

A = an enrolment component;

B = a multiplier;

C = a site component; and

D = a special needs component.

Information on each of the components is provided following.

For 1995, the total points calculated by the formula for the colleges were:

Table 9.1 College Points - 1995

College	Actual Enrolments 1995¹	Total Points 1995
Copland	571	990.4
Dickson	641	1069.9
Hawker	928	1596.1
Lake Ginninderra	866	1473.1
Erindale	853	1422.0
Lake Tuggeranong	893	1522.2
Narrabundah	909	1608.5
Phillip	719	1189.2
Stirling	395	685.0
	6774	11,576.4

1. Based on March 1995 Staffing Returns data provided by the Department.

The points formula calculation is used by both the Central Office of the Department of Education and Training and by colleges.

Using the points calculations, the Central Office is able to estimate the amount of teacher (and non-teacher) salaries across the various education sectors for given levels of enrolments. This information is used for budget and human resource planning.

Colleges are able to use the information to plan for the numbers of teachers to which they will be entitled.

9.1.3.1 The Enrolment Component

Most of the points available for allocation to teacher staffing are generated by the enrolment component of the formula. The enrolment component (A x B in the above formula) is determined by a simple multiplication of the enrolments by the multiplier.

The multipliers used at college level in 1995 to calculate the points allocation of the college sector as a whole were 1.6175 for teaching staff and 0.1382 for non-teaching staff.

The multiplier is the basis for the teacher/student ratio in colleges. The current multiplier for teachers results in 1 teacher for approximately 12.4 students. Taking the site and special needs components into account (described following) produces a ratio of 1 teacher for approximately 11.5 students.

The multipliers and the teacher/student ratios are different for primary and high schools. For 1995, the multipliers and ratios for these were:

Kindergarten	- 1.032	- 19.4 students per teacher
Primary	- 0.889	- 22.5 students per teacher
High School	- 1.3896	- 14.4 students per teacher

The multipliers can be changed to reflect varied productivity requirements, Government funding decisions etc. They have, however, been substantially unchanged since the 1970s when the formula system was introduced. This reflects the fact that the teacher/student ratio has not changed significantly over this long period.

Table 9.2 shows the multipliers for colleges over the last six years.

Table 9.2 College Enrolment Multipliers - 1990 - 1995

Year	College Multipliers	
	Teaching Staff	Non-teaching Staff
1990	1.6520	0.1382
1991	1.6430	0.1382
1992	1.6340	0.1382
1993	1.6340	0.1382
1994	1.6175	0.1382
1995	1.6175	0.1382

The Department's explanation of the points system states:

“The staffing entitlement for mainstream students is based solely on the number of students. However, each sector (college, high school, primary school, etc) does not have equal entitlement. Sector staffing entitlements are based on a weighting (the multiplier) which reflects the staffing relativities and the different organisational arrangements between the sectors when the formula was introduced (reflecting the resources required to provide each sector's curriculum range). Subsequent budget reductions have resulted in some changes to the multipliers.”

9.1.3.2 The Site Component

The site component provides a basic staffing entitlement to operate the school. It is intended to cover a Principal and a Bursar/Registrar, and part of the costs of a Deputy Principal and a Janitor. The balance for a Deputy Principal and a Janitor is covered by the enrolment component.

The level of the site component reflecting colleges' student enrolments is seen in Table 9.3.

Table 9.3 Site Component Points - All Colleges, 1995

College	Enrolment (Feb 1995 Census)	1995 Site Component Points	
		Teaching Staff	ACTGS Staff
Copland	571	40	20
Dickson	641	40	20
Hawker	928	42	20
Lake Ginninderra	866	40	20
Erindale	853	40	20
Lake Tuggeranong	893	40	20
Narrabundah	909	42	20
Phillip	719	40	20
Stirling	394	36	20

The table highlights differences between site points allocations to larger and smaller colleges to meet the management and administration loads. The fixed management (site) points are a higher proportion of total points in the colleges with lower enrolments.

9.1.3.3 The Special Needs Component

The Special Needs component makes available supplementary resources for certain special needs, for example, English as a Second Language (ESL) and special needs students. The special needs allocations are based on assessed needs by the colleges and the Central Office (either individual or in broader terms) and depend on the type and extent of needs.

9.1.4 Allocation of Points

Once the staffing formula has calculated the number of points available to a college, the Principal staffs the college from within the points allocated to the college. Usually the current staff at the college will take up most of the points. Points not used for either current staff or additional permanent staff are reserved by colleges as a casual relief capacity. If extra staff are needed, they are generally provided from a pool of staff managed by the Central office through the recruitment processes described earlier in this chapter. Excess staff identified at a college (because of reducing student numbers) are advised to Central Office for possible placement elsewhere.

Where colleges require additional staff, in many cases for short term teaching work due to absences or project work requiring specific teaching expertise, they are obtained either from within the Department or by the use of part or full time casual teachers.

In March of each year, the college Principal provides a "Staffing Return" to Central Office. This return sets out the allocation of the college's points between various levels of staffing, ie. how the Principal has applied the college's allocated points.

9.1.4.1 Relief days

The staffing formula generates a system-wide entitlement for certain relief assistance. For short term absences, colleges receive 45% of the replacement cost (expressed in points) from the system-generated 'pool'. For longer term leave (eg. long service leave, maternity leave), full replacement cost is provided from the pool. Colleges are required to provide for all replacements needed through the absence of staff on professional development and the unfunded part (55%) of other relief from their specific staffing entitlements.

Within Central Office, records are maintained of the current balance of staffing points and relief time available to each college and adjustments are made as allocations change.

At the end of the year, relief days remaining are accumulated across colleges and each college is allowed to carry forward 30% of its one ninth share of the combined pool. The balance of the pool is lost to the colleges.

9.2 Does the Staffing System Enable the Department to Manage Overall Teaching Costs Effectively?

The multipliers in the enrolment component specify the teacher/student ratios in the three education sectors. As long as the multipliers remain unchanged, overall teaching costs will depend directly on student numbers and pay rates.

The allocation of points is independent of any changes to the dollar value of the points. Where additional funding is required, for example, because of increases in teacher salary rates, it is provided either by way of Budget supplementation or by economies pursued by Central Office, rather than by reductions in the number of teachers.

If a variation is expected to be made in teaching expenditure, the multiplier in the points formula would be adjusted until the desired total school-based staffing budgeted expenditure is achieved. Adjusting the multiplier would vary the teacher/student ratio.

It will be seen from Table 9.2 that changes to the multiplier are infrequent. In practice, teaching salary costs have been mostly quarantined from Government schooling expenditure reductions.

The continued use of a system which is based on a long-standing teacher/student ratio prevents the Department from managing overall teaching costs efficiently. The teacher/student ratio preserved in the formula may no longer be appropriate in view of the findings in other chapters of this Report related to class sizes, teacher loads, etc.

9.3 Does The Staffing System Let Principals Manage College Teaching Costs Efficiently?

The current points system provides a simple means of allocating teaching resources over the colleges. However, if principals are to have the incentive to make the most efficient use of teaching staff, it is necessary for the system to adequately reflect the actual cost of providing particular teachers. This will provide an incentive to manage workloads so that the experienced and expensive staff are made responsible for more complex or sensitive workloads than the junior colleagues.

It is recognised that currently many Level 1 teachers are at or near the top of the increment scale. This situation of itself limits the capacity of Principals to alter costs through decisions about teachers as most teachers presently cost around the same since they mostly are at similar levels on the incremental scale.

Until this situation changes, whether through eventual natural attrition or otherwise, Principals' capacity to manage teaching costs is severely limited whether the current points system continues or some other system is introduced. The following comments should be read in this context.

9.3.1 Increment Scale

Under the industrial arrangements, Level 1 teachers (who make up most teachers) are paid on an ascending annual incremental scale based on the number of years of experience. The scale provides for up to 11 annual increments between \$28,780 and \$42,333, with an additional grading of Master Teacher (\$45,122). For some teachers on the top increment, there is an Advanced Skills Teacher allowance of \$1,338 p.a. Progression up the incremental scales is largely automatic.

There are two increment points for Level 2 teachers and for the salaries of the Principal and Deputy Principal relating to the size of the school.

Although it may be expected that the more experienced (and therefore the more highly paid) teachers would take on heavier teaching responsibilities, there are no requirements for this to occur.

By way of contrast only, it is advised that the equivalent range of salaries in the ACTGS pay scales covers four salary grades with increments within each of these grades. Under this arrangement, ACTGS managers have an ability to more closely align the work performed with the pay earned.

This lack of flexibility in the teacher pay scale has implications for the efficient management of teaching staff.

GOVERNMENT SECONDARY COLLEGES

The following table shows the various college staffing levels and the points per full time teacher (FTE) for each level in the third column ("Points per FTE"). The third and fourth columns will be discussed later in this Chapter.

Table 9.3 Points Entitlements 1995

Staffing Level	Salary	Points per FTE	Adjusted points
Teaching Staff (from teaching points)			
Principal level 5 (Exec)	71,855	36	36
Principal (Enrolments 900+)	69,069	35	35
Principal (Enrolments 451 - 899)	65,728	33	33
Principal (Enrolments 279 - 450)	59,045	30	30
Principal (Enrolments 126 - 280)	55,773	28	28
Deputy Principal (Enrolments 451+)	53,862	27	27
Deputy Principal (Enrolments 276 - 450)	51,632	26	26
Level 2 Teacher - Increment 2	48,291	24	24
Level 2 Teacher - Increment 1	46,573	24	23
Level 1 Teacher - Master teacher	45,122	20	23
Level 1 Teacher - Increment 11	42,333	20	21
Level 1 Teacher - Increment 10	40,944	20	21
Level 1 Teacher - increment 9	39,702	20	20
Level 1 Teacher - Increment 8	38,329	20	19
Level 1 Teacher - Increment 7	36,899	20	18
Level 1 Teacher - increment 6	35,718	20	18
Level 1 Teacher - increment 5	34,597	20	17
Level 1 Teacher - Increment 4	33,102	20	17
Level 1 Teacher - Increment 3	31,485	20	16
Level 1 Teacher - Increment 2	30,053	20	15
Level 1 Teacher - increment 1	28,780	20	14

The second column ("Salary") shows the current salary for each of the levels and increment points.

In the fourth column ("Adjusted Points"), the points have been recalculated using the actual salary paid at each of the levels and increments. (For ease of calculation, the highest points level -36- was made equivalent to the highest salary - \$71,855).

The points equivalent across the higher levels is generally proportional to the salary levels. However, within Level 1 the points equivalent is not proportional to the various increments of the salary range. 20 points is actually equivalent to the salary at the ninth increment ie. the increment for nine year's service. Salaries below \$39,702 should actually have less points than 20 (in fact, as low as 14 points). Salaries above \$39,702 involve more than 20 points.

If the points equivalents reflected the level of salary, then the most junior teachers would be allocated substantially lower numbers of points than more senior teachers.

The points system does not reflect adequately the cost of teaching resources provided to colleges. All Level 1 teachers "cost" the same number of points, despite having substantial differences in salary.

This anomaly and the lack of flexibility in the teacher pay scales have two implications for the management of teaching resources within colleges:

- there is no power or incentive for principals to use less experienced (and cheaper) teachers, and
- there is no incentive for principals to require teachers to take on the more complex and/or sensitive responsibilities as their experience and pay increases.

A simple example illustrates the first dot point. Ten teachers at Level 1 Increment 11 cost \$423,330 each year in direct salaries. For this amount of money, a college could employ 13 teachers at the equivalent pay levels to the third and fourth increments.

By choosing to employ teachers at these pay levels, a college could take on three extra teachers. Alternatively, using only ten staff at these pay levels would provide savings of more than \$100,000 to be spent elsewhere.

There are other advantages in using more junior teachers. Colleges can benefit from the introduction of new ideas and fresh approaches and a wide mix of experience levels. Use of more junior teachers provides for the future.

9.4 Future Actions for Consideration

There is no doubt that the management of teaching staff across the education system involves complex issues and long standing industrial practices. While the staffing points formula points system offers a simple, easily implemented means of estimating overall teaching costs and of allocating numbers of teachers to colleges, it has several limitations, including:

- The system prevents the Department from managing overall teaching costs efficiently by preserving a long standing teacher/student ratio which may no longer be appropriate in the ACT;

- the inflexibility that arises from the broad range of increments in the Level 1 pay scale inhibits the efficient management of teaching staff;
- the points scale does not adequately reflect the salary cost of Level 1 teachers. Principals do not have incentive or the flexibility to manage with less costly resources or to require more costly resources to take on matching responsibilities; and
- principals do not have flexibility in managing the cost of staff at a college. The points system does not enable college principals to achieve the most efficient mix of teaching, non-teaching or outsourced resources to provide the range of educational and student services required within colleges. Colleges can also benefit from the use of more junior teachers who can bring new ideas and fresh approaches to the college.

9.5 Recommendations

The Department should review the teacher/student ratio assumptions within the points formula to determine the levels of teaching resources which are appropriate for the ACT's financial situation.

The Department should review the administrative policies and procedures for the allocation of resources to colleges in order to enable colleges to:

- identify and manage with the most cost effective mix of teaching resources; and

- achieve an efficient mix of teaching, non-teaching or outsourced resources to provide the range of educational and student services required within colleges.

10. Capacity Utilisation in ACT Colleges

10.1 Introduction

This Chapter examines the utilisation of college capacity across the nine public secondary colleges in the ACT.

10.2 College Enrolments 1992-1995

Total enrolment at the colleges in March 1995 is 6,774 students. Enrolments have been declining at a rate of about 3% per annum over the past four years. The following Table identifies trends in enrolments since 1992.

Table 10.1 College Enrolments 1992-1995

College	Enrolments Feb 1995 Census	Enrolments Feb 1994 Census	Enrolments Feb 1993 Census	Enrolments Feb 1992 Census
Copland	571	684	761	853
Dickson	641	630	700	803
Erindale	853	785	749	699
Hawker	928	938	925	916
Lake Ginninderra	866	883	924	925
Lake Tuggeranong	893	897	901	891
Narrabundah	909	910	893	911
Phillip	719	758	771	749
Stirling	394	477	498	624
TOTAL	6,774	6,962	7,122	7,371

Three colleges - Hawker, Narrabundah and Lake Tuggeranong - have operated at full capacity over the period. Copland and Stirling have had falls in enrolments of more than 30%. The overall decline in enrolments represents a system wide fall in capacity demand from 91% of current system capacity to about 82%.

10.3 Projected Enrolments 1995-99

The Department considers that the decline in the level of enrolments has ceased and that enrolments will remain stable for the next few years. In July 1994, the Department issued projected enrolment figures for the period from 1995 to 1999 with the following comment:

“Total government college projections are based on the premise that the proportion of government to total enrolments will generally remain stable over the projection period. Total projections are dependent on primary and high school projections and on recent progression rates from high schools to college levels”.

The Department's projections for 1994 to 1999 are set out in the table below:

Table 10.2 Projected Enrolments 1994-1999

College	1994	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999
Copland	679	640	620	590	570	590
Dickson	615	625	630	630	630	640
Hawker	933	910	910	910	910	900
Lake Ginninderra	883	890	890	890	890	890
Erindale	781	785	820	850	865	890
Lake Tuggeranong	890	890	890	890	890	890
Narrabundah	904	905	905	905	905	905
Phillip	727	690	660	640	670	660
Stirling	481	455	435	430	420	420
Total (all Colleges)	6,893	6,790	6,760	6,735	6,750	6,785
Actual (Feb Census)	6,962	6,774	-	-	-	-

Although enrolment levels are expected to stabilise at around 6,800 students for at least the next 5 years, there are expected to be some significant rises and falls in enrolments in particular colleges reflecting changes in the locations of students and changing student preferences (see *Student Mobility* below).

10.3.1 Doubts About the Projected Enrolments

There are some doubts (on the part of the Auditor-General's Office) about the accuracy of the projections for individual colleges.

Actual enrolments at Copland and Stirling in 1995 are well below the level of the projected enrolments: Copland had expected enrolments of 640 compared with 571 actual. In Stirling the expected was 455 compared with 394 actually enrolled. The fall in Stirling in the last two years is greater than had been expected over the whole planning period. Other colleges, for example Erindale, had increases on actual enrolments over the projections.

The Department will need to monitor closely the trends in student preferences for particular colleges to ensure that it is able to meet the change in demand.

The Department has advised that:

“it recognises that projections for individual colleges and schools can differ from actual enrolment figures. This is to be expected and is due to a variety of factors including the operation of the principle of freedom of choice, the community perception of various schools and colleges, the programs offered by schools and colleges, transport and other social and economic factors. The operation of these factors is particularly evident at the college level (which has only two years) where an unexpected change in one year can have a pronounced impact.

“Without considerably increasing the resources devoted to producing enrolment projections, all these factors cannot be realistically incorporated into the projection process. The enrolment projections rely on student retention and pupil generation rate data and generally provide a reliable basis for planning and resource allocation at the individual college, and particularly at the district and macro levels.

“The Department is confident it is able to project and adequately accommodate students seeking enrolment in colleges. This is particularly the case for growing areas where enrolment at a college within reasonable distance is important for students.”

10.4 Capacity Utilisation

Capacity utilisation is an indication of the extent to which the overall capacity of a college is used.

The Department's estimate of a college's capacity is based on the number of classrooms and the number of places in those classrooms. There is some evidence that the Department's estimate of capacity is underestimating the actual capacity of colleges because it does not take into account factors such as flexible use of school opening hours.

Table 10.3 following identifies actual enrolments in 1995 together with Departmental estimates of the capacity of each college. Three colleges - Hawker, Narrabundah and Lake Tuggeranong - are at full capacity. Copland, Dickson and Stirling are well below capacity.

A comparison of total capacity of 8,075 and actual enrolments of 6,774 students suggests an overall utilisation rate of about 82%. This indicates that there is excess capacity of at least 1,400 places (taking into account the possible under-counting of capacity).

Table 10.3 Capacity Utilisation

College	Actual Enrolments 1995	Departmental Estimate of Capacity	Actual Enrolments as % of Estimated Capacity
Copland	571	874	65
Dickson	641	1045	61
Hawker	928	928	100
Lake Ginninderra	866	893	97
Erindale	853	931	92
Lake Tuggeranong	893	893	100
Narrabundah	909	909	100
Phillip	719	912	79
Stirling	394	836	47
TOTAL COLLEGES	6774	8221	82

The present apparent total excess capacity of at least 1,400 student places (or about 18%) raises the question whether the most efficient use of existing ACT college capital infrastructure is being achieved. In particular, the low levels of enrolments at Stirling, Dickson and Copland Colleges against the capacities suggests an inefficient utilisation of the Government's investment in the infrastructure associated with these educational facilities.

10.5 Student Mobility

The ACT college system is characterised by a high degree of student mobility.

Each college has a designated 'priority enrolment area' (PEA). The PEA is the area which each college is allocated as its primary area for obtaining its enrolments. A college is obliged to enrol a student from its primary enrolment area, that is, students in a college's PEA have a right of enrolment at their "local" college. Details of the suburbs included in college PEAs are presented in the Appendix.

Comparing the level of non-PEA enrolments for two years, 1993 and 1995, provides some indication of the level of student mobility to out of area schools.

Table 10.4 Student Mobility Indicators

	Percentage of Students from outside the College PEA		Change in Total Enrolment
	1993	1995	
Copland	15	24	Falling
Dickson	45	48	Falling
Hawker	45	55	Steady
Lake Ginninderra	40	34	Falling
Erindale	31	31	Increasing
Lake Tuggeranong	28	19	Steady
Narrabundah	67	67	Steady
Phillip	56	58	Falling

The information in Table 10.4 indicates that significantly high proportions of students travel out of their local areas to attend the colleges of their choice rather than attending their 'local' college. In 1995, about 40% of college students are attending a college out of their area.

There is anecdotal evidence that students select colleges for location near town centres (for ease of transport, access to facilities and part-time jobs) and colleges where their friends go, as well as for the courses offered.

The table also shows that two colleges with high levels of out of area students - Hawker and Narrabundah - were at capacity, while two of the colleges with falling enrolments - Stirling and Copland - had among the lowest enrolments from out of area.

Although a full analysis of the mobility patterns was beyond the scope of the audit, it was observed that there were about 100 students each from the Stirling and Dickson PEAs enrolled at Narrabundah. There were more than 100 students from the Stirling PEA at Phillip College.

In summary, the level of enrolments at a college appear to depend on two factors:

- demographic changes in the numbers of students in a local area; and
- student mobility to colleges outside of their local areas.

The levels of enrolments at the nine ACT colleges reflect the varying impacts of these factors. Lake Tuggeranong College and Erindale College have strong enrolments (and will continue to do so) as the students in the Tuggeranong Valley grow older.

While Hawker and Narrabundah are located in areas with lower levels of local students, they have attracted sufficient out of area students to work at full capacity.

To some extent, this has been to the detriment of the numbers at other colleges. The remaining five colleges - Copland, Lake Ginninderra, Stirling, Dickson and Phillip - have falling enrolments as the numbers of students in their local areas decline, and because of the movement of "local" students to other apparently more attractive colleges.

10.6 What Size Should a College Be?

There is no ideal size for a college. However, as Table 4.5 in Chapter 4 shows, the average cost per student increases as the number of students falls. Smaller colleges have disproportionately higher costs per student because of levels of fixed costs such as accommodation and administration.

Smaller colleges also have difficulty in providing a full range of subjects. Larger colleges are often able to provide smaller classes in some subjects because they are running larger classes in others. As well, staff are more able to specialise to provide functions such as welfare counselling, sport co-ordination and library services.

As the number of students at a college falls, there are restrictions and increased pressures on the breadth of services and curricula. These restrictions impact on a college's ability to compete for students and can lead to a self-perpetuating decline in enrolments.

Competition for students between colleges is at present extensive and intense. Larger, and consequently better funded, colleges are better placed to be able to market effectively and to offer a wider range of courses. Without policies to provide optimal economic numbers at all colleges, the colleges which now face declining enrolments are likely to become progressively less and less viable.

10.7 The Cost of Providing College Capacity

College places are not free. There is a cost to the community in providing the land, buildings and equipment for colleges.

Most of the college infrastructure in the ACT was provided prior to self-government. Of all the colleges, only Lake Tuggeranong College was constructed by the ACT (and even it was planned before self-government).

As at 30 June 1994, college land, buildings and equipment were valued (at cost or valuation) at \$171.6m. The average value of land, buildings and equipment was approximately \$25,000 per currently enrolled student. On this basis, the replacement cost of a college for 800 students would be in the order of \$20m.

It is estimated that the financing costs of a college place (assuming borrowing costs of 8%) would be about \$2,000 per annum.

Most college operating costs are driven by the number of students because of the staffing points formula resource management system. While operating costs are generally proportional to the number of students, there is some difference in the operating cost per student between small and large colleges (see Chapter 4). The Audit Office has calculated that there is more than a \$1,000 difference between the annual average costs per student at a college with enrolments of 400 and one with enrolments of about 800. As the college gets larger, there is a diminishing reduction in the average cost per student.

The Audit Office estimates that if the present nine colleges were reduced to eight, annual operating savings of at least \$400,000 could be achieved.

10.8 Planning for Capacity

Planning for the efficient and effective use of colleges' capacities requires many factors to be taken into account. These include:

- the value and age of existing capital infrastructure, and the opportunity costs of alternative site use;
- ongoing repairs and maintenance costs, and future replacement costs;
- the cost to the ACT of providing public transport to out-of-area colleges;

- the relevance of the concept of neighbourhood or local community based schooling;
- longer term requirements for college infrastructure in relation to new and/or expanding growth areas (eg. Gungahlin);
- circumstances under which colleges at lower levels of enrolments might receive transitional support to achieve a more sustainable economic size;
- the equity issues associated with the impact of educational services provided to students at small colleges vis-a-vis larger colleges - higher levels of resourcing ensure greater choice and breadth of educational opportunity denied to students attending smaller colleges;
- application of priority enrolment area policies and the extent to which this contributes to college growth/decline;
- use of college capacity and facilities for Year 11 and 12 courses outside existing opening hours;
- student mobility and preferences for specific colleges; and
- the extent and form of competition between colleges for student numbers, and related practical implications including the effects on colleges of declining student support and the availability of highly specialised courses.

Future colleges will need to be funded from ACT sources. On present five year projections the college student population will remain relatively stable overall (albeit with variations between particular colleges).

In the longer term, however, there may be a need to develop a new college for the Gungahlin area. At about the same time, it will be likely that one or more colleges in other areas will be at the ends of their life cycles. In these circumstances, it would be preferable to fund the construction of a new college by realising one of the less used college sites.

10.9 Conclusion

Several colleges are operating well below capacity while others are at or near capacity levels.

Students are largely free to select which college to attend. High levels of student mobility resulting from the effects of competition amongst colleges for student numbers, and some colleges operating at capacity, is contributing to inefficient use of total college infrastructure.

The findings from this Chapter are:

- actual college enrolments in 1995 range from 394 to 928;

- the nine public secondary colleges are presently operating at about 82% of capacity. There is excess capacity of at least 1400 student places in ACT Government colleges. Several colleges are operating well below capacity while others are at capacity levels;
- at present, students are largely free to select which college to attend. About 40% of students choose to attend a college outside the local area;
- high levels of student mobility resulting from competition amongst colleges for student numbers and demographic changes are contributing to inefficiencies in the provision of college education and the use of college infrastructure; and
- the Audit Office estimates that there would be recurrent annual savings of at least \$400,000 if the nine existing colleges were reduced to eight.

10.10 Future Action for Consideration

The Department should review the preferred number, location and use of colleges, taking into account economies of scale, demographics, best use of existing capital assets, policies on competition amongst colleges, priority enrolment areas and maximum college size.

11. List of Acronyms

Acronym	Long Form
ACTGS	Australian Capital Territory Government Service
ASL	Average Staffing Level
AVCTS	Australian Vocational Certificate Training Scheme
BSSS	Board of Senior Secondary Studies'
CIT	Canberra Institute of Technology
DET	ACT Department of Education and Training
ESL	English as a Second Language
FTE	Full Time Equivalent
IT	Information Technology
LAN	Local Area Network
MIS	Management Information System
N.A.	Not Available
PD	Professional Development
PEA	Priority Enrolment Area
SRKS	Student Records Keeping System

Appendix 1
College Profiles

Appendix: College Profiles

	Copland	Dickson	Hawker	Lake Ginninderra	Erindale	Lake Tuggeranong	Narrabundah	Phillip	Stirling
Enrolments:									
- 1992 Feb Census	853	803	916	925	699	891	911	749	624
- 1993 Feb Census	761	700	925	924	749	901	893	771	498
- 1994 Feb Census	679	620	933	883	781	890	904	756	481
- 1995 Feb Census	571	630	910	890	785	890	909	719	455
- 1995 Staff Return	571	641	928	866	853	893	909	719	394
- 1996 Feb Projection	620	635	910	890	820	890	905	689	435
- 1997 Feb Projection	590	635	910	890	850	890	905	669	430
- 1998 Feb Projection	570	635	910	890	865	890	905	699	420
- 1999 Feb Projection	590	645	900	890	890	890	905	689	420
Teaching Staff Points:									
- Points - 1995	990	1,070	1,596	1,473	1,442	1,522	1,609	1,189	685
- Points - 1994	1,174	1,096	1,614	1,498	1,331	1,533	1,622	1,248	823
- Points - 1993	1,371	1,287	1,605	1,588	1,291	1,557	1,619	1,282	872
1995 Points Allocation:									
- Level 4 (Principal) - FTE	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
- Level 3 (Dep Principal) - FTE	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
- Level 2 (FTE)	9	9	11	12	10	10	10	12	7
- Master Teachers	1	1	3	1	1	.5	1	-	-
- Level 1 (FTE)	35.6	39.2	55.7	51.8	51.6	54.4	59.1	48.8	22.8
- Counsellors (FTE)	.6	.6	1	1	1	.8	1	.8	.4
- Teacher FTE - 1995	48.2	51.8	72.7	67.8	65.6	67.7	73.1	63.5	32.2
- Administrative Staff (FTE)	8.4	12.0	14.6	12.2	12.6	12.0	12.5	13.2	6.8
- Total Staffing (FTE)	56.6	63.8	87.3	80.0	78.2	79.7	85.6	76.7	39.0
- Total Points Used (1995)	1,023	1,095	1,528	1,426	1,370	1,415	1,525	1,339	688

	Copland	Dickson	Hawker	Lake Ginninderra	Erindale	Lake Tuggeranong	Narrabundah	Phillip	Stirling
1995 Salaries (\$):									
- Teaching (Perm)	2,334,686	2,209,324	2,927,196	2,946,054	2,387,300	3,038,509	3,015,946	2,839,176	1,608,513
- Teaching (Casual)	221,142	235,346	529,665	397,999	208,676	277,133	420,041	235,620	320,589
- Non-teaching (Perm)	274,772	263,398	323,339	279,252	263,741	322,862	263,935	321,218	194,004
- Non-teaching (Casual)	10,208	20,866	28,101	28,454	11,755	5,591	9,329	9,237	22,288
- Evening Classes		126,491	129,954		111,023				116,604
Other Financial Data (\$):									
- Total Salaries	2,840,808	2,855,423	3,938,255	3,651,758	2,982,496	3,644,095	3,709,251	3,405,251	2,261,998
- Total Repairs & Maint									
- Total Expenditure	3,198,001	3,226,579	4,436,246	4,027,381	3,471,193	4,114,488	4,109,538	3,785,510	2,614,359
Total Assets (At cost/val'n - \$M)	19.58	22.72	19.01	18.51	15.14	18.28	21.76	18.20	18.40
- Accumulated Depreciation	6.83	12.93	7.24	3.02	4.70	3.23	11.37	7.62	7.10
- Net Asset Value	12.75	9.79	11.77	15.49	10.44	15.05	10.39	10.57	11.30
Total Site Value (At cost/val'n - \$M)	18.81	21.93	18.14	17.54	14.37	17.22	20.61	17.38	17.61
- Accumulated Depreciation	6.27	12.37	6.66	2.42	4.19	2.72	10.50	7.04	6.50
- Net Site Value	12.54	9.56	11.48	15.12	10.18	14.50	10.11	10.34	11.11
Opening Times:									
- Mon to Wed	9.00 - 4.00	8.30 - 4.30	9.00 - 4.00	8.30 - 4.30	8.30 - 4.00	8.30 - 3.30	9.00 - 4.00	8.30 - 5.30	9.00 - 4.00
- Thurs	9.00 - 4.00	8.30 - 4.30	9.00 - 4.00	8.30 - 1.00	8.30 - 4.00	8.30 - 3.30	9.00 - 4.00	8.30 - 4.30	9.00 - 4.00
- Fri	9.00 - 3.30	8.30 - 4.30	8.45 - 3.30	8.30 - 2.15	8.30 - 4.00	8.30 - 3.30	9.00 - 4.00	8.30 - 3.30	9.00 - 4.00
- Evening College	-	5.00 - 10.00	6.30 - 10.00	-	3.30 - 10.00	-	-	-	7.00 - 10.00

	Copland	Dickson	Hawker	Lake Ginninderra	Erindale	Lake Tuggeranong	Narrabundah	Phillip	Stirling
Ratios:									
- Average Class size (Est.)	17.8	16.6	18.0	17.9	18.0	17.8	16.8 ¹	17.8	15.8
- Students per Teacher FTE (Feb Census)	11.8	12.2	12.5	13.1	12.0	13.2	12.4	11.3	14.1
- Ave Salaries per Teacher FTE	45,968	50,415	49,921	49,322	44,232	47,570	48,772	46,872	57,464
- Total Salaries per Student	4,184	4,606	4,221	4,136	3,819	4,094	4,103	4,504	4,703
- Teacher Salaries per Student	3,764	4,147	3,844	3,787	3,466	3,725	3,801	4,067	4,253
- Repairs & Maint. per Teacher	39	215	152	69	36	318	146	229	304
- Repairs & Maint. per Student	3	18	12	5	3	25	11	20	23
- Net Site Value per Student	21,926	15,176	12,620	16,985	12,961	16,293	11,124	14,385	24,411
- Net Site Value per Teacher	260,192	184,567	157,962	222,966	155,218	214,198	138,425	162,754	344,939
- Net Equipment Value per Student	372	359	318	415	338	611	308	314	431
- Net Equipment Value per Teacher	4,402	4,367	3,984	5,448	4,046	8,027	3,831	3,558	6,087

1. Includes classes which are supported or subsidised by foreign governments.

Annexure

Reports Published in 1992

- 1 Information Technology Management Policies in the ACT Government Service
- 2 Financial Audits with Years Ending to 30 June 1991
- 3 GAO Annual Management Report for Year Ended 30 June 1992
- 4 ACT Board of Health - Management of Information Technology
- 5 Budget Outcome Presentation and the Aggregate Financial Statement for the Year Ended 30 June 1992
- 6 Financial Audits with Years Ending to 30 June 1992

Reports Published in 1993

- 1 Management of Capital Works Projects
- 2 Asbestos Removal Program
- 3 Various Performance Audits Conducted to 30 June 1993
 - Debt Recovery Operations by the ACT Revenue Office
 - Publicity Unaccountable Government Activities
 - Motor Vehicle Driver Testing Procedures
- 4 Various Performance Audits
 - Government Home Loans Program
 - Capital Equipment Purchases
 - Human Resources Management System (HRMS)
 - Selection of the ACT Government Banker
- 5 Visiting Medical Officers
- 6 Government Schooling Program
- 7 Annual Management Report for the Year Ended 30 June 1993
- 8 Redundancies
- 9 Overtime and Allowances
- 10 Family Services Sub-Program
- 11 Financial Audits with Years Endings to 30 June 1993

Annexure (Continued)

Reports Published in 1994

- 1 Overtime and Allowances - Part 2
- 2 Department of Health - Health Grants
- Management of Information Technology
- 3 Public Housing Maintenance
- 4 ACT Treasury - Gaming Machine Administration
- Banking Arrangements
- 5 Annual Management Report for Year Ended 30 June 1994
- 6 Various Agencies - Inter-Agency Charging
- Management of Private Trust Monies
- 7 Various Agencies - Overseas Travel - Executives and Others
- Implementation of Major IT Projects
- 8 Financial Audits with Years Ending to 30 June 1994
- 9 Performance Indicators Reporting

Reports Published in 1995

- 1 Government Passenger Cars
- 2 Whistleblower Investigations Completed to 30 June 1995
- 3 Canberra Institute of Technology - Comparative Teaching Costs and Effectiveness

Availability of Reports

Copies of Reports issued by the ACT Auditor-General's Office are available from:

ACT Government Audit Office
Scala House
11 Torrens Street
BRADDON ACT 2601

or

PO Box 275
CIVIC SQUARE ACT 2608

Phone (06)2070833 / Fax (06)2070826