



Standing Committee on Planning, Transport and City Services

Inquiry into Annual and Financial Reports 2022-2023 **ANSWER TO QUESTION TAKEN ON NOTICE**

Asked by Ms Jo Clay MLA on 20 November 2023: Mr Fitzgerald took on notice the following question(s):

Reference: Hansard proof transcript 20 November 2023, pages 95 and 96

In relation to: Circular Economy Accountability Indicators F & G

THE CHAIR: We probably have time for one more question on the circular economy. Minister, in the accountability indicators on ACT household waste to landfill and ACT household commingled recycling, we see that both figures were lower than expected. The explanation given is due to COVID and a rising population, which makes sense on one level. Does that mean that our overall waste generation during COVID reduced?

Mr Steel: I might hand over to NOWaste to talk a bit about what trends they are seeing.

Mr Fitzgerald: I do not believe that was the case. Our total generation as an aggregate of all sources was generally pretty stable. I may have to take the exact details, and some of the background data as to how those calculations are formulated on notice, because there are a number of different variables that do impact on the performance indicator.

THE CHAIR: Sure. I might let you know the things that I am interested in, to take on notice. It is the accountability indicators f and g. What interests me is whether our consumption of waste generation increased or decreased over that time. Also, our waste to landfill dropped a little bit, by seven per cent. Our commingled recycling dropped a lot, by 15 per cent, and it looks to me like we just started recycling badly at home. I would love you to take on notice what actually is going on with those figures during that period, and if you can tell me a little bit more than "COVID", it would be really helpful.

Mr Fitzgerald: Sure. The total resource recovery rate stayed largely the same throughout that period. We were around the 72 to 73 per cent resource recovery rate. As a total percentage, we were still doing well, and well compared to other jurisdictions. But the actual detail—

THE CHAIR: It is actually about households as a proportion of that; thank you.

Mr Fitzgerald: Yes

Mr Chris Steel MLA: The answer to the Member's question is as follows: –

Accountability Indicator 2.3f Annual tonnes of ACT household waste to landfill per head of population is calculated by using the total tonnes of household waste collected in the red-lidded bins and hoppers as captured by the weighbridge system at Mugga Lane Landfill divided by the ACT population as published by the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS).

The below provides a breakdown of the past three years.

Description	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23
Household Waste	81,365	84,515	80,608
Population	433,200	454,200	465,000
Result	0.188	0.186	0.173

Accountability Indicator 2.3g Annual tonnes of ACT household comingled recycling per head of population is calculated by using the total tonnes of household comingled recycling collected in the yellow-lidded bins and hoppers as captured by the weighbridge system at the Material Recovery Facility (MRF) in Hume divided by the ACT population as published by the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS).

The below provides a breakdown of the past three years.

Description	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23
Household Recycling	31,598	32,131	29,635
Population	433,200	454,200	465,000
Result	0.073	0.071	0.064

Both per capita household waste and recycling have reduced over the last three years. TCCS does not collect data for the reasons for this reduction, however these could be attributed to a reduction in household waste and recycling due to Canberra's returning to their workplaces for the first time since COVID, a reduction in household waste generation, lighter packaging, reduced printed material (newspapers etc) and regulatory interventions such as the container deposit schemes. This trend will continue to be reviewed as part of future waste audits.

Approved for circulation to the Standing Committee on Planning, Transport and City Services

Signature:



Date:

28/11/23

By the Minister for Transport and City Services, Mr Chris Steel MLA