



STANDING COMMITTEE ON ENVIRONMENT, CLIMATE CHANGE AND BIODIVERSITY
Dr Marisa Paterson MLA (Chair), Ms Jo Clay MLA (Deputy Chair), Mr Ed Cocks MLA

Inquiry into the ACT environment's bushfire preparedness
ANSWER TO QUESTION TAKEN ON NOTICE
02 April 2024

Asked by Ms Jo Clay MLA on 2 April 2024: Ms Rebecca Vassarotti MLA took on notice the following question:

In relation to Maintenance of Tracks and Trails (Page 14 Uncorrected Proof Transcript):

MS CLAY: Yes, thank you. And I will—we will try and keep it to five minutes, so my colleague gets another question.

We heard a lot about resourcing, and we had a great session with Neil Cooper. And he suggested that perhaps there was not enough being spent on track maintenance. This is a common complaint that we have heard a lot. It is partly about how much money you spend on it. It is also the skills. You cannot get somebody who builds roads to go out and do Namadgi trails. The figure put to us was that five per cent of the value of the asset each year should be spent on maintaining the asset.

I am wondering if someone could tell me what percentage of the value of those tracks and trails, we currently spend on maintenance each year or each four years, or whatever is convenient? And whether it is sufficient to actually maintain them to a point where they are usable both for ongoing management purposes and for emergency purposes.

Ms Vassarotti: We will probably need to take that on notice in terms of what the proportion is and what that looks like. And certainly, I think in terms of the trail management work, there is probably a few things just to reflect in relation to that.

MINISTER VASSAROTTI: The answer to the Member's question is as follows:

The average Bushfire Operation Plan maintenance budget for management trails averaged over the last four years (2020-21 to 2023-24) is \$1.921m. This represents an average of 1.2% of the formal asset value of \$96.858m.

This level of funding has been sufficient to undertake priority works in the context of restrictions on the ability to physically access some areas during the La Nina period of 2020-2023 and the need to focus efforts in areas of highest risk. However, climate change and fire impacts since 2020 have resulted in a need for an increased resourcing to address increased levels of repairs and maintenance. Such an increased allocation is anticipated to be needed for the medium term (5-10 years) to manage

predicted ongoing climate-related impacts and support a program to install more robust, climate-resilient infrastructure.

Approved for circulation to the Standing Committee on Environment, Climate Change and Biodiversity

Signature: 

Date: 11/4/2024

Minister for the Environment, Parks and Land Management