2025

THE LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY FOR THE

AUSTRALIAN CAPITAL TERRITORY

ELEVENTH ASSEMBLY

Environment, Planning and Sustainable Development Directorate Half Yearly Statement of Performance (as at 31 December 2024)

pursuant to the *Financial Management Act 1996*, Division 3.2, Section 30E

Presented by
Chris Steel MLA
Minister for Planning
February 2025

ENVIRONMENT, PLANNING AND SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT DIRECTORATE

2024-25 Half Yearly Statement of Performance

The following Statement of Performance sets out the performance of the Environment, Planning and Sustainable Development Directorate (EPSDD) against the accountability indicator targets set during the 2024-25 Budget Process.

When reading the following Statement of Performance please note:

- All tables in this report should be read in conjunction with the accompanying notes;
- All variances are rounded to the nearest whole number;
- All variances are calculated before rounding;
- The variance is based on the actual results to 31 December 2024 compared to the targeted result for the same period.

Output Class 1: Statutory Planning

Output 1.1: Statutory Planning

Facilitates and manages growth and change within the ACT through development assessment and leasehold management, with the overarching objective of promoting and facilitating economically productive, sustainable, attractive, safe and well-designed urban and rural environments in the ACT.

Table 1: Accountability Indicators Output 1.1

	2024-25 Original Targets	2024-25 YTD Targets	2024-25 YTD Result	Variance %	Note
Total Cost ($'000)	**26 482**	**13 241**	**11 383**	**(14%)**	1
Controlled Recurrent Payments ($'000)	**20 057**	**10 029**	**11 057**	**10%**	2
a. Development application processing times:					
- Median processing times in working days for significant development applications	60	60	117	(95%)	3
- Median processing times in working days for other (non-significant) development applications	37	37	30	19%	3
b. Percentage of development application decisions made within statutory timeframes	75%	75%	68%	(9%)	4
c. Proportion of minor housing developments (exemption declaration applications) approved within statutory timeframe (10 days)	80%	80%	93%	16%	5
d. Proportion of Survey plans examined within standard timeframes as published by the Surveyor-General	85%	85%	73%	(14%)	6

Explanation of Material Variance (+/- 10%)

1. The result is lower than target due to procurement delays associated with projects including Implementing Planning Reforms.
2. The result is higher than target due to additional cash required to fund expenditure on creditors carried over from the 2023-24 financial year.
3. The Territory Planning Authority exceeded its performance target for processing of standard ('non-significant') development applications. 258 of these applications were determined. 'Significant' DAs represent a small proportion of DAs (7) determined within the reporting period. Extended timeframes for significant DAs may be attributed to a number of factors such as complexity of proposal, entity requirements, additional information required by applicants. Timeframes for these applications are expected to improve as familiarity with the new planning system increases. The standard of applications and documentation is also expected to improve as familiarity with the new system increases.
4. 180 of 265 development applications were determined within the statutory timeframe for significant and standard applications. Extended timeframes, particularly for significant DAs, are due to the reasons mentioned above in Note 3. During the reporting period, the Authority also determined a further 84 merit track development applications lodged under the previous planning system, i.e. the Planning and Development Act 2007 (repealed).
5. 358 of 383 exemption declaration applications were determined within the statutory timeframe. Improved website information and internal processes have created efficiencies in the processing of these applications.

6. 89 of 122 submissions were examined within the standard timeframes. Factors that have contributed to this variance include:

   - Timeframes, particularly initial lodgements, can be largely dependent on the quality of applications and plans submitted. Examination often requires multiple requisitions, and timeframes improve once documentation is to an acceptable standard, following the first requisition.
   - A large volume of applications were received mid-year. The volume is expected to stabilise over the course of the year.

Output Class 2: Environment

Output 2.1: Environment

Provides protection, conservation and enhancement of the ACT's natural environment through delivering functions under the *Nature Conservation Act 2014, Environment Protection Act 1997, Animal Diseases Act 2005, Plant Diseases Act 2002, and Pest Plants and Animals Act 2005*.

Table 2: Accountability Indicators Output 2.1

		2024-25 Original Targets	2024-25 YTD Targets	2024-25 YTD Result	Variance %	Note
Total Cost ($'000)		**34 331**	**17 166**	**20 997**	**22%**	1
Controlled Recurrent Payments ($'000)		**31 314**	**15 657**	**23 698**	**51%**	2
a.	Monitoring evaluation reporting and improvement (MERI) reports submitted to the Commonwealth	100%	100%	50%	0%	
b.	Prepare and submit National Environment Protection Measure jurisdictional reports to the National Environment Protection Council within agreed timeframe	1	1	1	0%	
c.	The area treated to reduce risk from invasive species	60,000 ha	30,000 ha	29,140ha	-3%	
d.	Index of monitored threatened species	>75%	N/A[a]	N/A[a]	N/A[a]	
e.	Ecosystem health (vegetation; climate-adjusted) score	2 or above	N/A[a]	N/A[a]	N/A[a]	

Note(s):

a. Performance of this indicator is based on a full year result and has no progress measures. This will be reported in the Full Year Statement of Performance

Explanation of Material Variance (+/- 10%)

1. The result is higher than target due to payments required during the biosecurity response to Avian Influenza 2024.
2. The result is higher than target due to additional cash required to fund expenditure on creditors carried over from the 2023-24 financial year.

Output 2.2: Parks and Conservation

Includes management of the ACT's parks, reserves, unleased public land as per the *Nature Conservation Act 2014* and management of the ACT's commercial pine plantations and offset areas. Also under this output is delivery of development, implementation and review of land management programs including for conservation, fire, pests and weeds, and nature-based recreation.

Table 3: Accountability Indicators Output 2.2

	2024-25 Original Targets	2024-25 YTD Targets	2024-25 YTD Result	Variance %	Note
Total Cost ($'000)	**67 167**	**33 584**	**37 887**	**13%**	1
Controlled Recurrent Payments ($'000)	**45 223**	**22 612**	**29 597**	**31%**	2
a. Customer satisfaction with the Management of protected areas (Tidbinbilla Nature Reserve, Namadgi National Park and Canberra Nature Park)	90%	N/A[a]	N/A[a]	N/A[a]	
b. Percentage of annual Bushfire Operations Plan actions completed	90%	N/A[a]	N/A[a]	N/A[a]	

Note(s):

a. Performance of this indicator is based on a full year result and has no progress measures. This will be reported in the Full Year Statement of Performance

Explanation of Material Variance (+/- 10%)

1. The result is higher than target due to increased forestry operations as well as increased operational requirement associated with weather events and seasonal operational events.
2. The result is higher than target due to additional cash required to fund expenditure on creditors carried over from 2023-24 financial year.

Output 2.3: Heritage

Delivers statutory functions under the *Heritage Act 2004* to recognise, register and conserve Aboriginal places and objects or heritage places and objects that have natural or cultural heritage significance. It includes supporting the ACT Heritage Council to exercise its functions under the *Heritage Act 2004*, delivery of the ACT Heritage Grants Program and the annual Canberra and Region Heritage Festival.

Table 4: Accountability Indicators Output 2.3

		2024-25 Original Targets	2024-25 YTD Targets	2024-25 YTD Result	Variance %	Note
Total Cost ($'000)		**5 497**	**2 749**	**2 877**	**5%**	
Controlled Recurrent Payments ($'000)		**4 969**	**2 485**	**3 210**	**29%**	1
a.	Notification on the legislation register of Heritage Council decisions within 5 working days of the decision	100%	100%	100%	0%	
b.	Development application advice issued within 15 working days of referral by the planning and land authority (now Territory Planning Authority)	90%	90%	78%	(13%)	2
c.	Decisions about heritage registrations by the ACT Heritage Council made within statutory timeframes	100%	100%	100%	0%	

Explanation of Material Variance (+/- 10%)

1. The result is higher than target due to additional cash required to fund expenditure on creditors carried over from the 2023-24 financial year.
2. The volume of applications and submissions to the ACT Heritage Council remains high. Most applications are processed within a short time after the required 15 working day deadline.

Output 2.4: Water

Delivers statutory functions of the *Water Resources Act 2007* to provide for the well managed and sustainable use of the ACT's water resources. It includes development and implementation of catchment plans, water quality monitoring programs, and assets to enhance the quality of ACT's potable and non-potable water. It includes implementation of the ACT's Water Strategy and contributions to national water reforms.

Table 5: Accountability Indicators Output 2.4

	2024-25 Original Targets	2024-25 YTD Targets	2024-25 YTD Result	Variance %	Note
Total Cost ($'000)	**13 148**	**6 574**	**3 669**	**(44%)**	1
Controlled Recurrent Payments ($'000)	**12 784**	**6 392**	**3 452**	**(46%)**	2
a. Proportion of annual requirement of water samples processed under the Waterwatch Program.	100%	N/A[a]	N/A[a]	N/A[a]	

Note(s):

a. Performance of this indicator is based on a full year result and has no progress measures. This will be reported in the Full Year Statement of Performance

Explanation of Material Variance (+/- 10%)

1. The result is lower than target due to recruitment and procurement delays due to Caretaker period.
2. The result is lower than target as Controlled Recurrent Payments (CRP) not being drawn until funds are to be paid out, which is largely reflective of the lower than targeted Total Cost.

Output Class 3: Climate Change and Energy

Output 3.1: Climate Change and Energy

Develops policy, provides advice and supports delivery of a range of programs in relation to the ACT Climate Change Strategy 2019-25 and the Zero Emissions Vehicles Strategy 2022-30. It includes investments in renewable electricity, the Energy Efficiency Improvement Scheme, administration of ACT's Zero Emissions Government Scheme, the Integrated Energy Plan in support of community and urban adaptation and resilience.

Table 6: Accountability Indicators Output 3.1

	2024-25 Original Targets	**2024-25 YTD Targets**	**2024-25 YTD Result**	**Variance %**	**Note**
Total Cost ($'000)	**147 216**	**42 875**	**41 853**	**(2%)**	
Controlled Recurrent Payments ($'000)	**35 412**	**17 706**	**17 633**	**(0%)**	
a. Households improving sustainability through participating in government initiatives	5,155	2,578	2,573	0%	
b. Businesses improving sustainability through participating in government initiatives	398	199	192	-4%	
c. Publish an annual inventory - The inventory is the ACT greenhouse gas inventory that provides the annual amount of greenhouse emissions and the greenhouse gas per capita for the ACT	Dec 24	Dec 24	Dec 24	0%	

Explanation of Material Variance (+/- 10%)

Nil

Output Class 4: Development and Implementation

Output 4.1: Development and Implementation

Delivers studies, assessments and engagement to inform strategic planning for future land development opportunities. This work also includes undertaking strategic projects and government initiatives, as well as infrastructure capacity studies, related to future land development opportunities and facilitating the direct sale of land for community use.

Table 7: Accountability Indicators Output 4.1

	2024-25 Original Targets	2024-25 YTD Targets	2024-25 YTD Result	Variance %	Note
Total Cost ($'000)	**12 980**	**6 490**	**6 690**	**3%**	
Controlled Recurrent Payments ($'000)	**12 007**	**6 004**	**7 781**	**30%**	1
a. Completion of Infrastructure Capacity Studies	2	N/A[a]	N/A[a]	N/A[a]	
b. Completion of Flood Studies	2	N/A[a]	N/A[a]	N/A[a]	
c. Publish Land and Property Report within six months of the end of the reporting period	2	1	1	0%	
d. Complete Territory wide planning assessments to support District Strategies implementation	2	N/A[a]	N/A[a]	N/A[a]	

Note(s):

a. Performance of this indicator is based on a full year result and has no progress measures. This will be reported in the Full Year Statement of Performance

Explanation of Material Variance (+/- 10%)

1. The result is higher than target due to additional cash required to fund expenditure on creditors carried over from 2023-24 financial year.

Output Class 5: Loose Fill Asbestos

Output 5.1: Loose Fill Asbestos

Delivers the Loose Fill Asbestos Insulation Eradication Scheme and the Mr Fluffy legacy projects, providing support and advice to affected homeowners, the Canberra community, industry and Government.

Table 8: Accountability Indicators Output 5.1

	2024-25 Original Targets	2024-25 YTD Targets	2024-25 YTD Result	Variance %	Note
Total Cost ($'000)	**2 641**	**1 321**	**497**	**(62%)**	1
Controlled Recurrent Payments ($'000)	**1 232**	**616**	**0**	**(100%)**	2
a. Removal of properties demolished during the financial year from the Affected Residential Premises Register	3	1	1	0%	

Explanation of Material Variance (+/- 10%)

1. The result is lower as the program is now due to be delivered over a longer time period than originally budgeted.
2. The result is lower than target due to CRP not being drawn as payments were made using existing cash reserves.

Output Class 6: Planning and Urban Policy

Output 6.1: Planning Policy

Delivers strategic planning and policy work, including the planning strategy, district strategies, the Territory Plan and design guides so that the planning, development and building policy settings support the economic growth and prosperity of the ACT, and so that the ACT is a place of choice for the community, today and into the future.

Table 9: Accountability Indicators Output 6.1

		2024-25 Original Targets	2024-25 YTD Targets	2024-25 YTD Result	Variance %	Note
Total Cost ($'000)		**11 748**	**5 874**	**5 786**	**(1%)**	
Controlled Recurrent Payments ($'000)		**11 490**	**5 745**	**6 701**	**17%**	1
a.	Number of Environment and Planning Forums held during the year to assist in community consultations	6	3	2	(33%)	2
b.	Decision on Major Plan Amendment (MPA) Applications completed within Statutory timeframe	75%	75%	66%	(12%)	3
c.	Number of planning reports completed in group centres as identified in the District Strategies	5	N/A[a]	N/A[a]	N/A[a]	
d.	Proportion of development proposals receiving design advice within 10 business days following the National Capital Design Review Panel considerations.	90%	90%	100%	11%	4

Explanation of Material Variance (+/- 10%)

1. The result is higher than target due to additional cash required to fund expenditure on creditors carried over from 2023-24 financial year.
2. Due to the caretaker period a third meeting was not able to be scheduled prior to the end of the calendar year. However, the meeting schedule for the second half of the financial year should accommodate this.
3. The variance is due to the small sample size. Two of three MPAs within this period were completed within the statutory timeframe.
4. There were 20 proposals considered by the Panel and all were issued on time for the period 1 July to 31 December 2024.

Output 6.2: Building Reform

Delivers building reforms that improve the ACT's building regulatory system, provides transparent and efficient regulation of the building and construction industry and develops policies for safe, healthy, climate resilient, liveable and quality buildings.

Table 10: Accountability Indicators Output 6.2

	2024-25 Original Targets	2024-25 YTD Targets	2024-25 YTD Result	Variance %	Note
Total Cost ($'000)	**3 833**	**1 917**	**1 262**	**(34%)**	1
Controlled Recurrent Payments ($'000)	**3 448**	**1 724**	**1 426**	**(17%)**	2
a. Publish an annual report card on progress of building reforms	1	N/A[a]	N/A[a]	N/A[a]	

Note(s):

a. Performance of this indicator is based on a full year result and has no progress measures. This will be reported in the Full Year Statement of Performance

Explanation of Material Variance (+/- 10%)

1. The result is lower than target due to procurement and recruitment delays associated with projects.
2. The result is lower than target due to CRP not being drawn until funds are to be paid out, which is largely reflective of the lower than targeted Total Cost.

Output Class EBT: Office of the Commissioner for Sustainability and the Environment

Output EBT 1: Office of the Commissioner for Sustainability and the Environment

Publication of the State of the Environment Report, investigations by Ministerial direction, and complaints where a Territory agency's actions may have a substantial impact on the environment.

Table 11: Accountability Indicators Output EBT 1

	2024-25 Original Targets	2024-25 YTD Targets	2024-25 YTD Result	Variance %	Note
Total Cost ($'000)[a]	**1 978**	**989**	**$773**	**(22%)**	1
Payment for Expenses on Behalf of the Territory ($'000)[a]	**1 968**	**984**	**$0**	**(100%)**	1
a. Report on the uptake of recommendations on the ACT State of the Environment and special reports as part of the annual report	Oct 24	Oct 24	Oct 24	0%	
b. Complete Ministerial initiated investigations in accordance with the Minister's direction within the timeframe outlined in the Minister's direction letter	100%	N/A[b]	N/A[b]	N/A[b]	
c. Report on the complaints about the management of the environment by the Territory or a Territory agency as part of the annual report	Oct 24	Oct 24	Oct 24	0%	

Note(s):

a. Total cost and Payments for Expenses on Behalf of the Territory are in relation to the Office of The Commissioner for Sustainability and the Environment. It excludes costs and payments for other Expenses on Behalf of the Territory.

b. No investigations were directed by the Minister within the reporting period.

Explanation of Material Variance (+/- 10%)

1. The result is lower than target due to delays in planned work resulting from procurement and work pressures.