



Inquiry into Annual and Financial Reports 2023-24

Answer to question taken on notice

Asked by: MR ED COCKS MLA

Addressed to: Mr Russ Campbell, Acting Under Treasurer, Treasury, CMTEDD

Redirected to: Mr Chris Steel MLA, Treasurer

In relation to: ANNUAL REPORTS – OBJECTIVES AND FUNDING

Hearing: 17 February 2025

Uncorrected Proof Transcript pp 3, 4

Transcript provided: 24 February 2025

Answer Due: 3 March 2025

Mr Russ Campbell took on notice the following question:

Mr Cocks: Thank you. One of the big challenges that we have in looking through annual reports and through budgets is the difficulty in tracing from one financial year to another, and shifting programs from one outcome to another, redefining outputs and just generally an inconsistency from one year to another. That is a real difficulty from our end as MLAs. How do you deal with that from a finance perspective, and how do you make sure the objectives and the funding that is attached at the start of a program continue to be tracked throughout subsequent budgets, where there seem to be changes every year?

Mr Campbell: Well, I might throw to my colleagues, the deputy in charge of budget and reporting. We may need to come back to you in a bit more detail to answer that question in its full scope, but fundamentally, though, once a decision is taken through the budget process, it is a matter for then the relevant agency to be tracking their current program spending, and they will feed those figures through into the general budget management system, and that is our mechanism. It is certainly in the Treasury side of things to monitor and track reporting. The hierarchy of reporting, it is something that each of the directorates will need to turn their mind to, but I am just thinking, is there anything further we can give to update on that?

Mr Austin: Thanks, Mr Cocks. Scott Austin, Acting Deputy Treasurer for Budget Procurement, ACT Investments and Borrowings and Shared Services Finance. I think the primary way we track decisions is through the initiatives in the budget. So you will see that in every budget, every budget review will have initiatives, and that is what we track through our expense system. So as you point out, there might be changes in outputs, or there might be MOG changes or that sort of thing, but the fundamental basis for it is those initiatives. That is what we track.

Mr Cocks: Okay, but those initiatives can move between different agencies to deliver and sit under different outcomes within that agency?

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Mr Austin: Potentially, if there was a MOG change, a machinery of government change, that is true. Yes, yes. But we track those movements.

Mr Cocks: Okay, thank you. And you were saying, Mr Campbell, there is more information you can provide on notice. Is that what you are saying?

Mr Campbell: Yes, I will see if there is any further that would help direct to your question.

I refer the Members to the response provided to QTON 21.

Approved for circulation to the Standing Committee on Public Accounts and Administration

Signature:



By the Treasurer, Mr Chris Steel MLA

Date:

24/3/25