



Inquiry into Appropriation Bill 2026–2027 and Appropriation (Office of the Legislative Assembly) Bill 2026–2027

Answer to question taken on notice

Asked by: Ms Deborah Morris MLA

Addressed to: Minister for Women, Seniors and Veterans

In relation to: Women and Women in Construction and Apprenticeships Data Reporting

Hearing: 29 July 2026

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MRS MORRIS: Thank you, chair. The women's budget statement highlights increasing women's involvement in apprenticeships, trades and construction and it highlights 2,900 women now in the ACT construction industry. The most recent action plan report notes metrics for these objectives, but it does not provide any data on it. Why not?

Dr Paterson: I am sorry do you mind repeating that again? The women's budget statement?

MRS MORRIS: So the women's budget statement highlights increasing involvement of women in apprenticeships, trades and construction and it highlights 2,900 women now in the construction industry. The action plan report notes metrics for these objectives, but it does not provide data on it. Is there a reason why the breakdown of the data is not provided?

Dr Paterson: I will take some advice.

Ms Akhter: I am just trying to find where the data is. Can I come back before the session finishes?

MRS MORRIS: Sure. Sure. Yes. And this might assist with that process. I am interested to know what the number and proportion of women in the ACT construction industry is now compared to 2023. Also the number of women in ACT construction apprenticeships and number of women in ACT trades and the number of women in ACT trade apprenticeships too.

Ms Arthy: Mrs Morris, Kareena Arthy, Director-General, Health and Community Services Directorate. Part of those questions will probably be better off directed to Skills Canberra because they hold the data when it comes to women in apprenticeships and trades and they have got that very detailed data there, as well as CIT, might be able to help you on those questions. We can come back to you around just generally around what the statistics are saying about women in construction but if you have not had Skills Canberra yet, that might be for more detailed questions and answers. They might be able to help.

MRS MORRIS: Okay. Thank you. That is helpful. Does that data get fed into the ACT women's plan?

Ms Arthy: Yes, it does.

MRS MORRIS: So it does fit that plan?

Ms Arthy: Yes.

Dr Paterson: So the women's plan is basically a whole-of-government document. So it is where all different directorates and areas of government will—that is the work that they are doing in terms of

contributing to gender equity. So they report to the Office for Women in our reporting of the plan and the response to the plan. But yes, they will hold most of that data.

Ms Akhter: Sanzida Akhter, Executive Branch Manager, Women, Youth, LGBTIQA+ and Multicultural Affairs. I just want to add to what the DG and the minister has said. So yes, previously, we used to receive data on those specific figures from relevant directorate, as the Director-General mentioned, it comes from Skills Canberra. However, the former minister made a decision to not do further reporting on this specific information or aspect. So as a result, as part of the women's plan reporting, we have not been receiving data on this. However, as part of the next plan we would be happy to include that, again, the pending minister's decision and how we can approach that.

MRS MORRIS: Okay. So that was the former Minister for Women who made that decision to not receive that data?

Ms Akhter: Well, in how this will be reported, it was minister's decision how we will be providing the reporting. And because there was an agreement that there would be no further reporting on this particular area, we have not been receiving data. So as a result, I mean, I think that would be the reason that we were not able to provide the data on that particular aspect.

MRS MORRIS: Do you know what year it was that that decision was made?

Ms Arthy: I think, Mrs Morris, we can certainly come back about some history but if we come back to the substantive around what the issue is around the construction industry and statistics. As I said, most of the discussion will either be with Skills Canberra or even Infrastructure Canberra because I know they have been doing a lot of work around increasing employment of women in construction as well. In terms to historical decisions that have been made about what is in and out of the women's plan, of course, as of tomorrow, we will have a new minister, and we will talk through with her about any future reporting as well.

MRS MORRIS: Thank you. And if we could I will put those questions to Skills as well but if you could take on notice to see within that 10-year women's action plan what data you can provide perhaps for each year on each of those metrics if you have it?

Ms Arthy: Well, we will certainly have a look, but we will we will be going to Skills Canberra for the statistics as well.

MRS MORRIS: Thank you, yes.

Ms Arthy: So we might get a bit circular but, no, happy to take that on notice.

Ms Caitlin Tough MLA: The answer to the Member's question is as follows:

The *Third Action Plan 2023-2026* under the *ACT Women's Plan 2016-2026* was launched in 2023. Reporting mechanism on the Action Plan that was approved by both the former Minister for Women and Cabinet was first published in March 2024. Statistics relevant to this question include:

- In 2026, women made up 14.46 per cent of the ACT's construction workforce. This compares to 11.96 in 2023. This represented an estimated 2,861 workers in 2026, and 1,984 in 2023 (Source: ABS, applying methodology used for the Jobs and Skills Australia Skills Atlas).
- As at February 2026, it is estimated that women made up 24.14 per cent of all Trades and Technicians in the ACT (Source: ABS, EQ08 – Employed persons by Occupation unit group of main job).
- **Table 1** below shows the number of women commencing, undertaking and completing trades apprenticeships between 2023 and 2025, as well as the share of the total trades apprenticeships figures (Source: AVETARS (internal Skills Canberra Data)).

Table 1: Women apprentices in all trades qualifications

	2023	2024	2025
Women commencing	240	238	228
Women in training (Q2-April)	347	358	382
Women completing	59	55	97
Share of women commencing (%)	14.4	16.6	15.6
Share of women in training (%)	11.3	11.9	13.5
Share of women completing (%)	10.3	9.5	13.1

Note: 'Trades' occupations includes all vocational programs designated as trade, and includes qualifications in hairdressing.

- **Table 2** shows the number women commencing, undertaking and completing apprenticeships in building and construction qualifications, and their share of the building and construction apprenticeships figures (Source: AVETARS (internal Skills Canberra Data)).

Table 2: Women apprentices in building and construction qualifications

	2023	2024	2025
Women commencing	71	73	65
Women in training (Q2-April)	118	133	145
Women completing	16	16	33
Share of women commencing (%)	6.2	7.4	6.6
Share of women in training (%)	5.2	6.0	7.2
Share of women completing (%)	3.8	3.6	5.9

Approved for circulation to the Select Committee on Estimates 2026-2027

Signature:

Minister for Women, Seniors and Veterans, Ms Caitlin Tough MLA

Date: