

**STANDING COMMITTEE ON CLIMATE CHANGE,
ENVIRONMENT AND WATER**

**INQUIRY INTO THE ECOLOGICAL CARRYING CAPACITY
OF THE ACT AND REGION**

HEARING ON THURSDAY 24 MARCH 2011



Ms Hunter – Asked the Minister for the Environment, Climate Change and Water:

That group [eastern regional transport task force] has been up for six to eight months. What results have they had so far? What are they concentrating on?

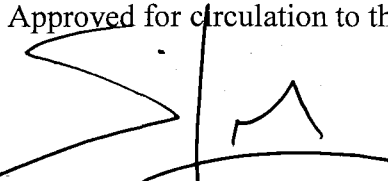
Mr Corbell - The answer to the Member's question is as follows:

The Eastern Regional Transport Taskforce was established in March 2010 by the NSW Minister for Primary Industries the Hon Steve Whan MP, Queanbeyan Mayor Tim Overall and the ACT Chief Minister. The establishment of the Taskforce recognises the importance of strong public transport links between Queanbeyan and Canberra, and supports work towards more effective cross-border transport services.

Since its establishment, the Taskforce and its working groups have met regularly to discuss better arrangements for transport infrastructure, transport planning, public transport integration, pricing and concession arrangements, alignment between the Canberra and Queanbeyan transport systems and transport-related cross border land use and planning matters. The Taskforce has considered issues like:

- the need for public transport priority on Canberra Avenue to help increase the Queanbeyan to Canberra public transport share from less than 2% of trips;
- the need for better public transport service options between the two jurisdictions;
- the need for park and ride options to support public transport mode choice for commuters;
- integration of transport planning models in Canberra and Queanbeyan to align assumptions about population growth and land use; and
- transport-related impacts of future developments like Googong and Tralee.

Approved for circulation to the Member and incorporation in Hansard.

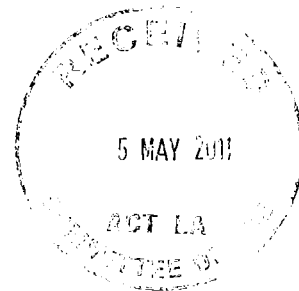

Simon Corbell MLA
Minister for the Environment, Climate Change and Water

Date: 3.5.11

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Mr Rattenbury – Asked the Minister for the Environment, Climate Change and Water:

Is there a time line for coming up with those options? [in relation to enhancing the public transport connections between Canberra and Queanbeyan]

Mr Corbell - The answer to the Member's question is as follows:

There is no timeline, and work is ongoing.

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Mr Seselja – Asked the Minister for the Environment, Climate Change and Water:

- (1) Where are we up to at the moment in relation to the government's targets for walking, cycling, public transport trips to work.

Mr Corbell - The answer to the Member's question is as follows:

- (1) The Government's sustainable transport mode share targets for walking, cycling and public transport trips to work are measured through the Australian Bureau of Statistics Census every 5 years. The 2006 Census showed an ACT mode share for work trips of 7.9% for public transport, 2.5% for cycling, and 5% for walking.

The next Census will be held in August 2011. The Government will report on progress towards the 2011 mode share targets (20% of work trips by public transport, cycling and walking) when the 2011 Census results are available in 2012.

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Mr Hargreaves – Asked the Minister for the Environment, Climate Change and Water:

- (1) Has there been any work done on whether there has been any movement in increasing the number of multi-occupancy commuter trips.

Mr Corbell - The answer to the Member's question is as follows:

- (1) Multi-occupancy commuter trip rates are measured in the ABS Census, which was last held in 2006. The next Census will be in August 2011, and the results will be available in 2012. The Government has continued to encourage car sharing through 3 for Free car parks at Woden and the City; a pilot carpooling program at ACT Health which is being considered for expansion across the ACT Public Service in 2012; and investigating multi-occupancy transit lanes (T2 or T3) as an option in bus priority studies for Northbourne Avenue and Canberra Avenue.

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Ms Hunter – Asked the Minister for the Environment, Climate Change and Water:

I wanted to pick up on the issue of food which was mentioned. You spoke about it most recently around the issue of community gardens and so forth. We do have the eastern broadacre study and I am wondering whether further consideration has been given by the government to allocating some of that area to local food production.

Mr Corbell - The answer to the Member's question is as follows:

Last year, the ACT Planning and Land Authority (ACTPLA) released "Planning the Eastern Broadacre Area Discussion Paper" for public comment. This Paper was supported by the *Eastern Broadacre Planning Study 2009* which identified Pialligo, and in particular the lower lying areas within this precinct, as being suitable for uses such as 'market gardens'. A number of the public submissions supported this position, including those from ACT Greens MLAs which suggested that areas with fertile soil should be used for food production and for community gardens.

ACTPLA is currently considering all the comments received on the Eastern Broadacre discussion paper and the use of the low lying areas for food production will be further investigated.

I have been advised that ACTPLA is also considering the issue of food production as part of its review of the Canberra Spatial Plan. This work is taking a much a broader perspective in regard to considering the most appropriate and sustainable use of land across the Territory and the neighbouring region. Food production, food distribution and enhancing the biodiversity of the ACT region was one of the key issues raised by the community in the Government's *Time to Talk; Canberra 2030* public engagement and ACTPLA's *Sustainable Future Program*.

Again on the issue of community gardens, I would remind the Committee that the Government is actively supporting and planning for community gardens across the metropolitan area. Opportunities in Lawson, Eastlake and Molonglo are being investigated. Further, given the significance these gardens can play in the community, the Government has established a working group to identify and promote sites, and is proposing to prepare a specific policy on community gardens.

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Mr Seselja – Asked the Minister for the Environment, Climate Change and Water:

- (1) Page 9 of your submission talks about regulatory impact statements being required for any new or amending legislation proposals that might impact on a stakeholder group. That is a pretty broad definition. I imagine that would apply to most legislation. How many regulatory impact statements have occurred in your portfolio areas in this financial year?
- (2) How many of yours have been made public?

Mr Corbell - The answer to the Member's question is as follows:

- (1) Environment, Climate Change, Energy and Water – 1
Justice and Community Safety – 0
- (2) Environment, Climate Change, Energy and Water – 0
Justice and Community Safety – 0

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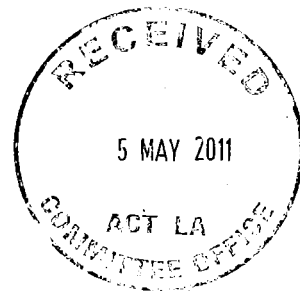
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Ms Hunter – Asked the Minister for the Environment, Climate Change and Water:

The federal government in recent times, you could argue, has taken positive steps to boost the birth rate through provision of the baby bonus, for example. My question is: how does the ACT government feel about that? Have they put a view to the federal government as to whether that should be continued with, for example?

Minister Corbell took the following on notice:

I think our fertility rate is lower than the national average. I do not have that to hand, but I am happy to confirm that.

Mr Corbell - The answer to the Member's question is as follows:

The following data is taken from ABS Cat No. 3301.0 Births, Australia.

- In 2009, Australia's total fertility rate (TFR) was 1.90 babies per woman.
- In 2009, the ACT's TFR was 1.737 babies per woman.

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