LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY
FOR THE AUSTRALIAN CAPITAL TERRITORY

QTON No. 2

STANDING COMMITTEE ON ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND TOURISM
JEREMY HANSON MLA (CHAIR), DEEPAK-RAJ GUPTA MLA, MICHAEL PETTERSSON MLA

Inquiry into referred 2018–19 Annual and Financial Reports
ANSWER TO QUESTION TAKEN ON NOTICE
4 November 2019

Asked by Alistair Coe MLA:

In relation to progress on on-demand transport industry reforms:

MR COE: Yes, thank you. Would you please advise what progress has been made about the on demand transport industry reforms?

Ms Croke: Certainly. So at the moment, there has been additional government licence, taxi licence plates issued. At the moment I think we have—let me just check my notes here. Currently there are 408 taxi licences available. We continue to work with Access Canberra to look at the take-up of those plates, and then to monitor the wait list.

MR COE: Yes, and what is happening with regard to the evaluation?

Ms Croke: So the evaluation—if you just would not mind, Mr Coe, letting me read my notes quickly?

MR COE: Sure.

Mr Barr: Actually in this area policy it is—yes, Access Canberra, Minister Ramsay.

Ms Croke: Yes.

MR COE: Page 34, dot point 4?

Mr Barr: Sure. It is principally in the responsibility of Minister Ramsay, but we will get some information for you. We will take that one on notice.

ANDREW BARR: The answer to the Member's question is as follows: –

- A major evaluation of the 2015-16 reforms was provided to government in September 2018.
- The evaluation of the 2015 Taxi Industry Innovation Review reforms noted the overall positive impact of the reforms. Some issues required further consultation and these were the subject of an additional period of community consultation during 2018 including:
    - the basis for the government increasing or removing the regulated cap on taxi licences – both standard and wheelchair accessible taxis (WAT);
    - whether any environmental conditions should apply to any new on-demand transport

vehicles;

- deregulating the prescribed structure of booked taxi fares; and
- whether there should be a change to the method of calculating the indexation of regulated fares.

- Those consultations occurred with different segments of the community through a range of methods. The resulting Listening Report found that:
  - rather than increasing regulation to adopt environmentally friendly vehicles types, it is preferred that operators and drivers are motivated to gradually adopt such vehicles;
  - several potential benefits of deregulation (removal) of taxi licence cap were identified such as alleviation of supply issues, particularly during Federal parliamentary sittings days; and
  - there is strong support to address issues around the supply of Wheelchair Accessible Taxis and an ongoing need for regulation to ensure support for vulnerable members of the community including with booking services.
- The Government maintains its position to not undertake a perpetual licence buyback or provide financial assistance to perpetual plate owners. The Government is providing access for members of the on-demand transport industry affected by the reforms to personal counselling assistance.
- The government has agreed to the public release of the listening report and it is now available on the Government's YourSay web site https://yoursay.act.gov.au/on-demand-transport-reform
- The Government will take information gleaned from this consultation process but does not plan to undertake any further significant reform at this stage. The Government will maintain a watching brief on the matters raised in the listening report, including environmental standards, taxi supply and taxi fares.
- As the reform and evaluation program has been finalised, responsibility for on-demand transport policy has been transferred to the Minister for Justice, Consumer Affairs and Road Safety as a business-as-usual function.

Approved for circulation to the Standing Committee on Economic Development and Tourism

Signature: Andrew Barr

Date: 8.11.19

By the Chief Minister