



STANDING COMMITTEE ON PLANNING TRANSPORT AND CITY SERVICES
Jo Clay MLA (Chair), Suzanne Orr MLA (Deputy Chair), Mark Parton MLA

Inquiry into ACT Budget 2021–22
ANSWER TO QUESTION ON NOTICE

Asked by Nicole Lawder MLA:

Waste and Recycling, Budget Paper H, Page Number 24, Output 2.3

In relation to: Waste Feasibility Study

1. Can the Minister explain why we have not been able to meet our resource recovery waste targets as set out in the Waste Strategy and as outlined as feasible in the Waste Feasibility Study Roadmap in 2018?
2. Can the Minister please explain the reasons for the drop in our resource recovery rate from 2018-2019 of 79% to 76% in 2020-2021?
3. Are we meeting our overall waste reduction target – i.e. that our growth in ACT waste generation is less than the rate of population growth?
4. The accountability indicators [Table 13 page 24 of the Budget Papers] indicate an increase from a predicted outcome of 0.5 tonnes per person of waste to landfill in 2020-2021 to 0.54 tonnes, what is the reason for this increase? What is the historical trend with this indicator, are we going backwards or forwards?
5. There are numerous changes to the Accountability Indicators, can the reasoning for this please be explained?
6. Why are we so slow on implementing a comprehensive food waste program?
7. Have we achieved the projected 8,000 tonnes in reduction in food waste as predicted as possible by the Waste Feasibility Study?
8. What strategies and measures have or are being put in place for business food waste?
9. Is there a separate budget line for the “Love Food, Hate Waste” community education program?
 - a. Can details be given of past and forward budget estimates?
 - b. Is there any benchmarking of outcomes from the program?
 - c. Is the program being run in-house or is it being outsourced?
10. Do we have a 2019 or other year baseline figure on which to report our progress towards achieving the various targets in the National Waste Policy Action Plan, including organic food waste?
11. Can you please provide a breakdown of food waste in the ACT by households, business, and public organisations?
12. Can you please provide a breakdown of garden waste in the ACT by households, business, public organisations, and ACT Government?

Mr Chris Steel MLA: The answer to the Member’s question is as follows:–

1. The *ACT Waste Management Strategy 2011 to 2025* sets an ambitious target of 90% of waste being diverted from landfill by 2025. Notwithstanding the significant changes to Australia’s waste sector since 2018, the ACT continues to work towards increasing resource recovery rates ahead of 2025. The ACT Government has invested in initiatives to improve waste management in the ACT including:

- *Plastics Reduction Act 2020* to ban unnecessary single use plastics;
 - Commenced work on developing circular economy legislation;
 - Established the ACT Container Deposit Scheme to reduce container litter and increase recycling;
 - Entered into a National Partnership Agreement with the Commonwealth for a \$23.2m upgrade of the ACT MRF in response to the COAG waste export bans;
 - Announced the commencement of a FOGO Pilot in Belconnen to inform the city-wide rollout;
 - Delivered an opt-in household green waste collection service across the Territory to reduce green waste going to landfill;
 - Delivered the *Love Food Hate Waste* food waste avoidance pilot; and
 - Provided a household bulky waste collection service achieving almost 40% reuse or recycling of collected material.
2. The ACT resource recovery rate can be influenced by specific impacts within a given year. In 2018-19 and 2020-21 the amount of waste landfilled was roughly the same at around 256,000 tonnes, noting that the ACT's population has increased by over 10,000 people in that time. The key difference was in the amount of construction and demolition (C&D) waste and green waste recycled. In 2018-19 around 460,000 tonnes of C&D waste and 351,000 tonnes of green waste, whereas in 2020-21 only 254,000 tonnes of C&D waste and 269,000 tonnes of green waste were recycled. C&D material recycling is largely driven by infrastructure projects that involve demolition and removal of existing materials. Green waste recycling is typically influenced by the climatic conditions in a given year.
 3. Yes. Waste generated per head of population includes waste generated by households, business and industry, community sector and governments. In 2010-11 waste to landfill per capita was 0.70 tonnes. The result for 2020-21 is 0.52 tonnes.
 4. The 2021-21 Interim Outcome reported in Budget Paper H is 0.54 tonnes per capita, however the actual result for 2020-21 is 0.52 tonnes, which is the best result for the past 10 years since the ACT Waste Management Strategy was published.
 5. In 2020 the ACT Audit Office conducted a performance audit of household waste service contracting. The findings and recommendations of this audit are set out in 'Management of Household Waste Services'. Recommendation 3 of the report states 'ACT NoWaste should review its Accountability Indicators and investigate the feasibility of expanding its Accountability Indicators to include measures on the disposal of household waste to landfill and processing of recycling.' ACT NoWaste reviewed all Accountability Indicators prior to the preparation of the 2021-22 Budget. Four indicators were discontinued and replaced with seven new indicators that better reflect the focus of funding provided for *Output 2.3: Waste and Recycling*. For example:
 - the two per capita of total waste and recycling indicators (a. and b.) have been replaced with three new indicators that report per capita household waste, recycling and organics collected (a. b. and c.);
 - Indicator c., percentage of material recovered from the total waste stream, is the inverse of Strategic Indicator 3.3 (on page 13 of Budget Paper H). It has been replaced with indicator m. 'Percentage of material recovered from the ACT household total waste stream';

- Indicators have been added to provide relevant information about the cost or recycling rate of new and existing services.
6. The Government funded a food waste avoidance pilot in the 2019-20 Budget. The pilot is in the evaluation phase with a report being prepared for consideration by the Government.
 7. The Waste Feasibility Study estimated there was potential reduce food waste by up 8,000 tonnes per annum through implementation of a range of avoidance measures across households and businesses. The ACT is in the process of implementing a number of measures to reduce and manage food waste.
 8. The Parliamentary and Governing Agreement includes a commitment by the Government to 'Create circular economy legislation to, amongst other things, phase out single use plastics and require businesses to have a separate collection for co-mingled recycling and organic waste collection and a food waste reduction plan from 2023.'
 9. A food waste avoidance pilot program was funded over two years in the 2019-20 Budget and was included as a component of the *Managing Waste Better* budget initiative.
 - a. The initiative covered creative development, concept testing, promotion and communications, production of information collateral, community outreach, advertising/media, data collection and evaluation.
 - b. The pilot delivery finished in mid-2021 and is currently being evaluated.
 - c. The pilot was managed in-house by ACT NoWaste.
 10. The National Waste Policy Action Plan (NWPAP) contains seven national targets underpinned by collective action by Governments, industry and the broader community. It is not intended these targets be attributable to individual jurisdictions but will reflect the effectiveness of those collective actions. Like other parties to the NWPAP, the ACT reports progress toward delivery of those Actions in the NWPAP for which it has collective responsibility.
 11. This information is not available.
 12. This information is not available.

Approved for circulation to the Standing Committee on Planning, Transport and City Services

Signature:



Date:

4/11/21

By the Minister for Transport and City Services, Mr Chris Steel MLA