



Inquiry into Annual and Financial Reports 2023–2024

Answer to question on notice

Asked by: Mr Peter Cain MLA

Addressed to: Yvette Berry MLA

Reference: Homelessness and Statistics/Community Services Directorate

Hearing: 11 February 2025

In relation to: Homelessness and Statistics

Question received: 17 February 2025

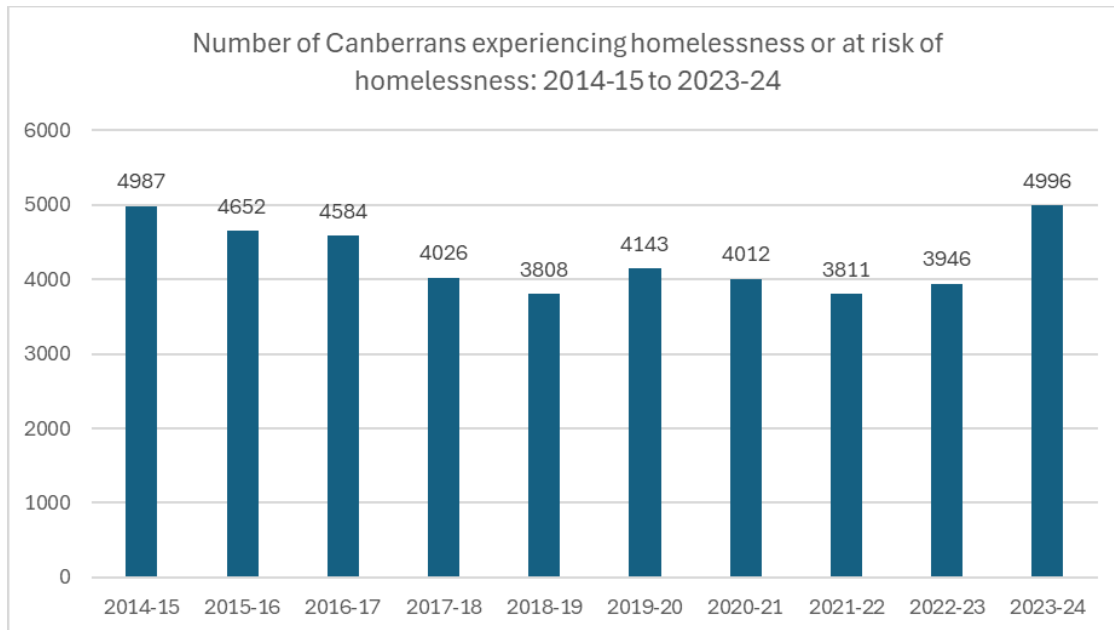
Answer Due: 24 February 2025

- (1) Please provide figures for the number of Canberrans experiencing homelessness or at risk of homelessness in 2023-24?
- (2) Please provide annual figures for the number of Canberrans experiencing homelessness or at risk of homelessness over the last ten years?
- (3) Please provide the predicted figures for the number of Canberrans experiencing homelessness or at risk of homelessness in 2024-25?
- (4) Please provide the predicted figures for the number of Canberrans experiencing homelessness or at risk of homelessness by 2029-30?
- (5) Please provide figures for the number of Canberrans experiencing chronic homelessness, or homelessness surpassing a period of six months, in 2023-24?
- (6) Please provide annual figures for the number of Canberrans experiencing chronic homelessness, or homelessness surpassing a period of six months, over the last ten years?
- (7) Please provide figures for the number of Canberrans sleeping rough, i.e., sleeping on streets, in parks, or squatting, in 2023-24?
- (8) Please provide annual figures for the number of Canberrans sleeping rough, i.e., sleeping on streets, in parks, or squatting, over the last ten years?

Yvette Berry MLA: The answer to the Member's question is as follows:

- (1) The number of clients experiencing homelessness or at risk of homelessness seeking assistance through ACT specialist homelessness services in the ACT in 2023-24 was 4006.

- (2) Annual figures for the number of Canberrans experiencing homelessness or at risk of homelessness supported through Specialist Homelessness Services over the last ten years are taken from the Specialist Homelessness Services Collection (SHSC) managed by the Australian Institute of Health and Welfare (AIHW) are shown below.



- (3) It is not possible to accurately predict the number of Canberrans who will be experiencing homelessness or at risk of homelessness for the whole of 2024-25.

Monthly data from the AIHW for July to September 2024 indicates that the monthly average number of Canberrans who were experiencing homelessness or at risk of homelessness in the ACT was 1,830. This is below the monthly average of clients across each year from 2020-21 to 2023-24 at 1,906.

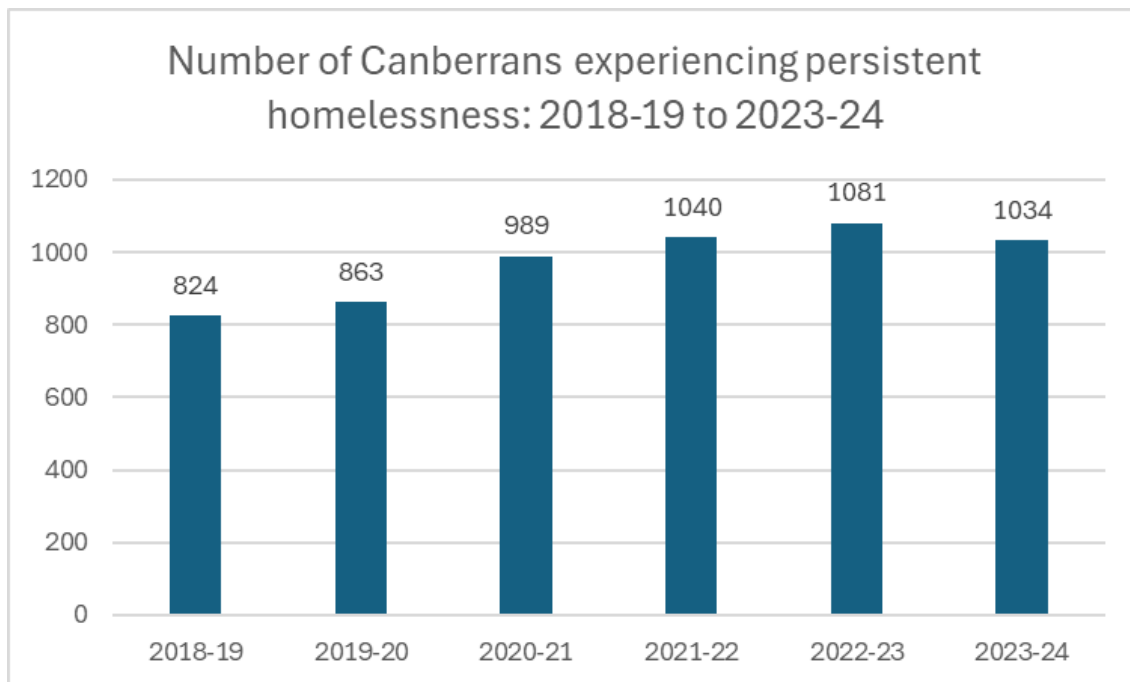
- (4) It is not possible to predict the number of Canberrans who will be experiencing homelessness or at risk of homelessness in 2029-30.

A number of factors influence the numbers of homelessness including structural and individual drivers. Structural factors include lack of income (for example, cost of living crisis), employment and access to affordable housing. Individual drivers include personal circumstances such as relationship changes (divorce or separation), disability, mental or health issues and family and domestic violence.

- (5) Existing national homelessness data under the Report on Government Services (ROGS, authored by Productivity Commission) utilises persistent homelessness as a measurement of the number of clients who experience homelessness for more than 7 months in a 24-month period. ROGS data indicates that there were 1,034 Canberrans experiencing persistent homelessness in the 2023-24 reporting period.

- (6) Annual figures for the number of Canberrans experiencing persistent homelessness for the period 2018-19 to 2023-24 are shown below (ROGS). The measurement of persistent

homelessness was first incorporated as a National Performance Indicator for the National Housing and Homelessness Agreement which commenced 1 July 2018. Data preceding this period is not available.



- (7) The average number of unique rough sleepers identified in Canberra per month from in 2023-24 is 68.
- (8) The number of rough sleepers in Canberra has only been formally counted by the homelessness sector since January 2021. Annual figures since this date are shown below.

Calendar Year	Number of unique rough sleepers (average per month)
2021	49
2022	68
2023	58
2024	74

OneLink receives rough sleeper counts from providers who support rough sleepers (Street To Home, Early Morning Centre, Ainslie Lodge); OneLink collates the data and cross-checks to ensure that clients aren't counted multiple times through interaction with multiple services.

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Census data for the number of rough sleepers in the ACT from 2001 to 2021 is shown below.

Census Year	Number of unique rough sleepers identified at Census
2001	61
2006	51
2011	29
2016	54
2021	59

Approved for circulation to the Standing Committee on Social Policy

Signature:

Minister for Homes and New Suburbs, Yvette Berry MLA

Date:

27/02/25