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Ms Nicole Lawder MLA

Our ref: CMTEDD2021/1109

Chair

Standing Committee on Economy and Gender and Economic Equality

ACT Legislative Assembly

LACommitteeEGEE@parliament.act.gov.au

12 March 2021

Dear Ms Lawder

I write to provide the Committee with further information in relation to the trial of the ChooseCBR initiative, following the Committee's hearing on 23 February 2021.

The aims of the trial were to encourage people to shop locally at COVID-19 affected businesses and stimulate sectors of the economy heavily impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic.

The ChooseCBR trial was promoted across the ACT from 23 November 2020 to 24 December 2020.

The first stage of the campaign ran from 23 November 2020 to 9 December 2020 and focused on encouraging businesses to register. The second stage of the campaign ran from 9 December 2020 to 24 December 2020 and focused on encouraging consumers to register and use their digital discounts.

The digital and social media marketing campaign resulted in a total 2,076,956 impressions (exceeding its target of 1,000,000) and 10,561 clicks (exceeding its target of 4,000).



There were 2,000 promotional flyers delivered to businesses across the following locations:

- Gungahlin
- Kingston
- Macquarie (Jamison)
- Holt (Kippax)
- Griffith (Manuka)
- Weston (Cooleman Court)
- Wanniasa (Erindale)
- Belconnen
- Tuggeranong (Southpoint)
- Holt
- Chifley
- Gowrie
- Dickson
- Gold Creek

In total, 336 business registered for the ChooseCBR trial, with 206 of those in North Canberra and 130 in South Canberra. Of the 130 businesses registered in South Canberra, 15 were in Tuggeranong (nine in Greenway, four in Kambah, one in Wanniasa, and one in Fadden).

For the trial, a total of \$310,078 in discounts were redeemed and \$1,940,661 in spending occurred in participating businesses affected by COVID-19. This equates to a \$6.30 direct injection to business for every \$1 in government spending.

Nearly two-thirds of survey respondents indicated that they would be more likely to shop at Canberra businesses because they were participating in the ChooseCBR program.

Thank you for your ongoing interest in ChooseCBR.

Sincerely



Tara Cheyne MLA

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Assessment Report Highlights

The ChooseCBR Digital Voucher Program was instigated as a stimulatory measure for business.

It aimed:

1. To encourage people to shop locally at COVID-19 affected businesses
2. To stimulate sectors of the economy heavily affected by the COVID-19 pandemic.

A trial of the ChooseCBR Digital Voucher Program was conducted from 23 November to 24 December 2020. The Trial was designed to inform how the program could be rolled out into the future. The Trial offered customers discounts that could be redeemed at participating businesses which then received the discounted amount from the ACT Government.

Business and customer registration for the trial opened on 23 November 2020. Vouchers were able to be redeemed from 9 to 24 December 2020. Up to \$500,000 worth of vouchers were available during this period.

Participating businesses were within the retail, tourism and accommodation, arts and recreation, personal services and hospitality sectors (as per ANZSIC codes) and had:

- o a physical shopfront in the ACT;
- o an annual turnover of under \$10m; and
- o at some point during 2020, had received JobKeeper

Customers consisted of people over the age of 18 years old who were living in or visiting the ACT. People created a login at choosecbr.act.gov.au. Each discount was single-use only and the full value of the discount needed to be used at each transaction. Each voucher required the customer to spend a minimum amount to be able to use it.

Each day registered customers could access:

- 2 x \$2.50 vouchers (minimum spend \$10 per voucher)
- 1 x \$5 voucher (minimum spend \$20 per voucher)
- 1 x \$10 voucher (minimum spend \$40 per voucher) and
- 1 x \$20 voucher (minimum spend \$80 per voucher)

The minimum spend requirement ensured a minimum of \$4 was spent at local businesses for every \$1 of ACT Government funds spent.

Voucher Use Data

Table 1: Voucher Redemptions and Multiplier

Total discounts	\$310,078
Average daily discounts	1591
Average discount amount	\$12.20
Average daily discount subsidies	\$19,380
Average transaction value	\$76
Discounts redeemed	25,456
Spending	\$1,940,661
Multiplier	6.3

Overall, 25,456 discounts were redeemed, which resulted in a total of \$310,078 in discounts and \$1,940,661 in spending, showing a \$6.30 direct injection to business for every \$1 government dollar spent.

There were different multipliers across different businesses.

Figure 1: Voucher Redemption Across Industries

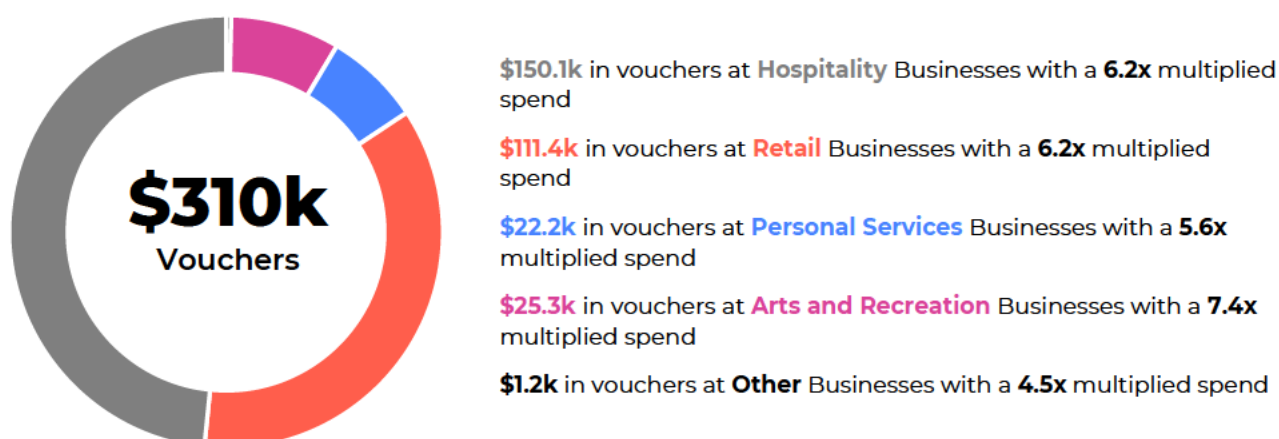
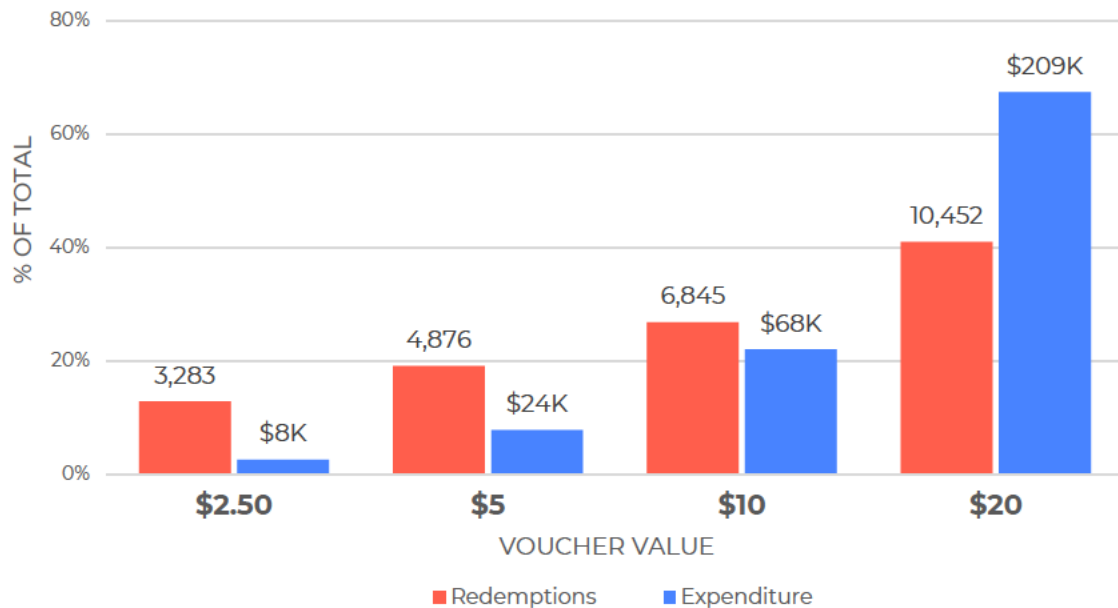
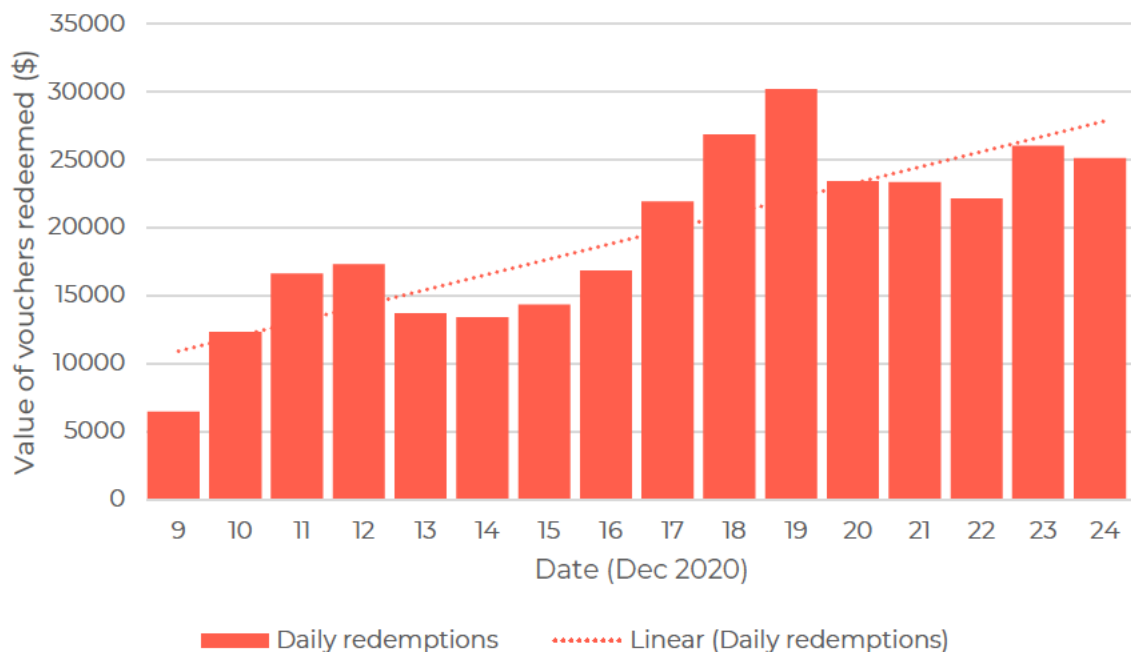


Figure 2: Voucher Redemptions Across Voucher Class



The higher the voucher value, the more popular it was. The most expenditure occurred using the \$20 voucher (\$209,040), and it was also the most popular (10,452 redemptions). The least expenditure occurred through the \$2.50 voucher (\$8,028), and it was also the least popular (3,283 redemptions), despite customers having two to use per day.

Figure 3: Voucher Redemptions Over Time



Voucher redemptions rose steadily throughout the course of the Trial. The first three days saw an average of \$11,870 worth of vouchers redeemed per day. The daily average across the last three days of the Trial was \$24,426. The average rate of increase was around \$1,250 per day.

Registration Data

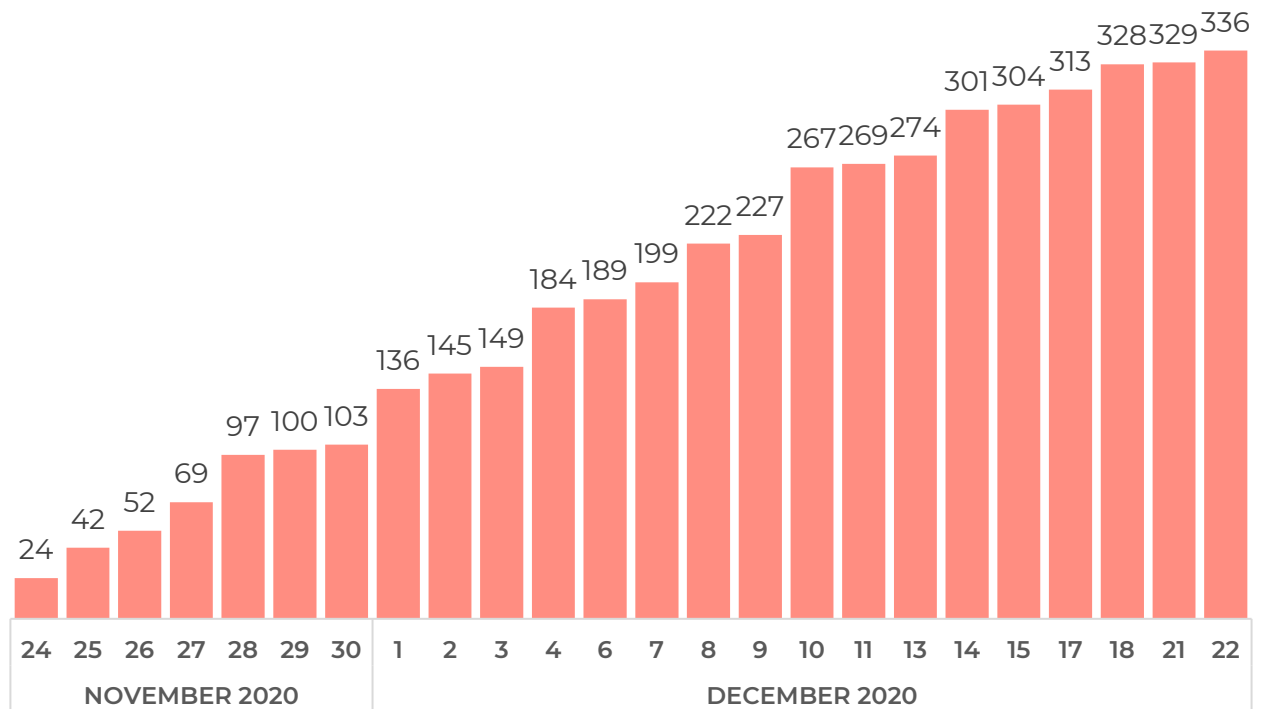
336

Registered Businesses

47,733

Registered Customers

Figure 4: Cumulative Business Registrations Over Time



Business registrations increased steadily over time.

206

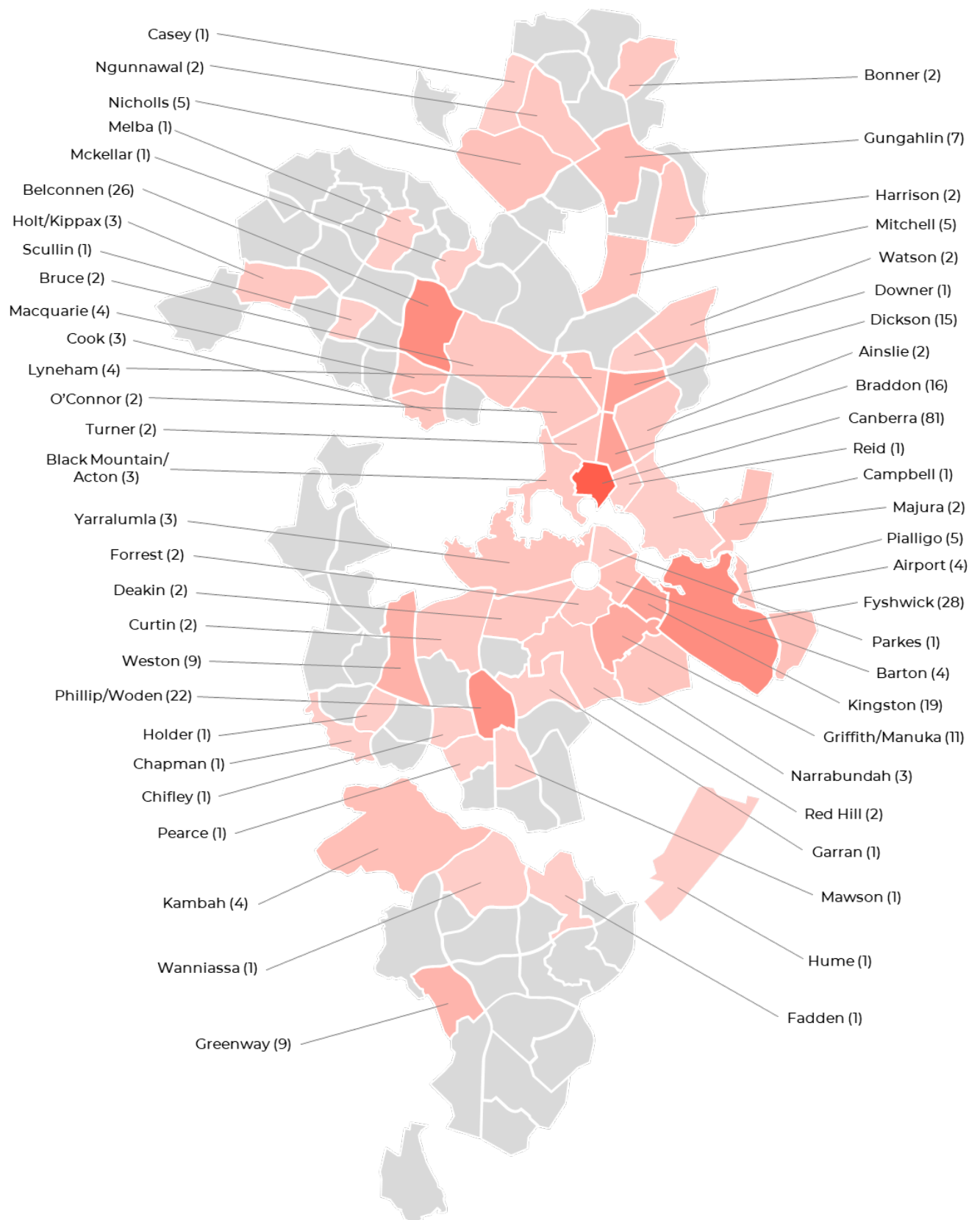
Businesses in **North Canberra**

130

Businesses in **South Canberra**

There was a good spread of business across Canberra, with the larger clusters of business registrations in town centres. Canberra City had the most registered businesses at 81.

Figure 5: Business Registrations Across Suburbs



Customer Insights

Customer User Survey

1. Nearly two-thirds of respondents indicated that they would be more likely to shop at Canberra businesses because they were participating in the ChooseCBR program.
2. 60% of survey respondents had redeemed a voucher. Of those who had redeemed a voucher, 59% were likely to recommend Choose CBR to a friend.
3. A majority of customers said their experience signing up for the ChooseCBR program was very or somewhat easy.

70%

said sign up was **very or somewhat easy**

21%

said sign up was **somewhat or very difficult**

4. Customers made useability suggestions, including introduction of a QR code feature, improved searchability of businesses, and fixing glitches and outages.
5. ChooseCBR resonated most among those aged 25 to 44 years.

Sample verbatim feedback is as follows.

Customers liked...	Customers wanted improved...
Use of government stimulus for businesses doing it tough	General awareness raising
Encouraging people to spend a bit too (co-contribution)	Extend the timeframe of the program
Saving money and helping the household budget	Website glitches/outages
The timing near Christmas	Larger discounts/lower redemption thresholds
Different discounts each day	Searchability of participating business – search filters, map, by location etc
The range/spread of businesses	More businesses involved
Discovering new businesses and supporting/shopping at local businesses instead of other stores/ establishments	Better promotion among businesses signed up (for example, a sign in the window)
Ease of sign up and finding participating businesses	Business knowledge/ability to facilitate, being ready to implement so vouchers are not rejected
	Details available without having to sign up
	Streamline process – too many steps/complicated
	Ability to use vouchers online/via an app/using a QR code

Conclusion

The aims of ChooseCBR are:

1. To encourage people to shop locally at COVID-19 affected businesses
2. To stimulate sectors of the economy heavily affected by the COVID-19 pandemic.

The data from the Trial indicates that with a total of \$310,078 in discounts redeemed, \$1,940,661 in spending occurred in businesses affected by COVID-19, with a \$6.30 direct injection to business for every \$1 government dollar spent.

Nearly two-thirds of respondents indicated that they would be more likely to shop at Canberra businesses because they were participating in the ChooseCBR program.

Feedback received and quantitative data will also inform how a further roll out could be improved.

Themes included:

Marketing and Promotion to increase visibility and broaden appeal.

1. Customers expressed a desire for:
 - a. a greater range of businesses at which to use their vouchers;
 - b. greater searchability or visual cues that a business was participating in the scheme.

Options: Explore marketing and promotion options

Technology

2. Feedback about technology was mixed, however 70% of those surveyed found it very or somewhat easy to use.

Options: Improve guidance material for businesses or pursue options for streamlining the process at the point of sale.

Daily Release

3. The larger discount amounts were more popular,

Options: Explore changes to the daily voucher release value, including larger discounts.