



LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY FOR THE AUSTRALIAN CAPITAL TERRITORY

SELECT COMMITTEE ON ESTIMATES 2023-2024

Mr Mark Parton MLA (Chair), Ms Jo Clay MLA (Deputy Chair),
Mr Michael Pettersson MLA

ANSWER TO QUESTION ON NOTICE

Mr James Milligan MLA : To ask the Treasurer, Mr Andrew Barr MLA

Ref: Output class 1.2: Office for disability

Hearing Date: 25/7/2023

In relation to: ACT Taxi Subsidy scheme

(1) In June of 2022 the ACT Auditor General in its report recommended that the ACT government remove the cap and subsidy limits for the ACT Taxi subsidy scheme. Instead, you raised it by 15 percent and for scheme members to be entitled to an increased number of trips equivalent to two a day (BO p. 113).

(a) What happens when a member runs out of trips as they have to attend multiple appointments?

(b) I note on p. 205 that you estimate it would run to 95 thousand trips in total, what happens when that number is reached?

(c) The increase cost of this initiative has only increased the overall cost to the scheme by \$150 thousand – why not just implement the Auditor’s report recommendations and remove the cap and subsidy limits altogether?

(i) Was an assessment done of the total cost of removing the cap and subsidy limits?

(ii) What was the outcome of that assessment?

Andrew Barr MLA: The answer to the Member’s question is as follows: –

- (1) The audit report did not recommend removing the trip cap or subsidy limit. Rather, the report recommended using the purpose and objectives of the scheme as a basis for identifying a policy for, and principles associated with subsidy amounts and subsidy caps. The 2023-24 Budget increased the subsidy caps by 15 per cent from 1 July 2023, informed by policy considerations and feedback received through ACT Disability Strategy consultations. The 15 per cent increase is in line with the increase in taxi fares from 2014 to 2022.

- a) The 2023-24 Budget increased members' automatic entitlement to 854 subsidised trips per year from 1 July 2023. Previously, members were allocated 126 trips per year and had to apply to the ACT Revenue Office for further subsidised trips up to a maximum of 854.

Members can take as many trips as needed on a given day, as long as the total number for the year remains within the cap. As noted in the audit report, the overwhelming majority of members use less than 126 trips per year and only a small number of members use between 250 and 854 trips in a year. The Government will continue to monitor the need for any future changes to the trip cap.

- b) There will be no change to members' entitlements if the actual number of trips in total is higher than this estimate.
- c) As above, the audit report did not recommend removing the trip cap or subsidy limit.

Approved for circulation to the Select Committee on Estimates 2023-2024

Signature: 

Date: 2.8.23

By the Treasurer, Andrew Barr MLA