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**THE LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY FOR THE  
AUSTRALIAN CAPITAL TERRITORY**

**TENTH ASSEMBLY**

**ACT AUDITOR-GENERAL'S PERFORMANCE AUDIT – PROCUREMENT OF A HYBRID ELECTRIC  
FIRE TRUCK – REPORT NO 4 / 2023 – GOVERNMENT RESPONSE**

**Presented by  
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## Introduction

The ACT Auditor-General's Office has undertaken Performance Audit titled *ACT Auditor-General's Performance Audit – Procurement of a Hybrid Electric Fire Truck – Report No. 4 / 2023* (the Report).

The scope of the audit included consideration of the administrative and decision-making processes of the ACT Emergency Services Agency (ESA) in procuring the design, development, and delivery of the hybrid electric fire truck.

The audit also considered the supply of the hybrid electric fire truck, the administrative and decision-making processes, and the activities of the ESA in procuring the hybrid electric fire truck.

The audit also included consideration of:

- whether appropriate processes were followed when conducting the procurement, including adherence to ACT Government procurement rules and guidelines;
- whether the procurement fully considered the risk environment; and
- whether the procurement represented value for money.

The Report contains one recommendation, advising that the ESA should, prior to its deployment, formally assess and confirm that the hybrid electric fire truck meets the needs of the ESA as an urban pumper in the Territory'.

The Report is also critical of the value for money assessment in the overall conclusion.

## ACT Government Response to Recommendations

### Recommendation 1

The ESA should, prior to its deployment, formally assess and confirm that the hybrid electric fire truck meets the needs of the ESA as an urban pumper in the Territory.

#### ***Agreed (Existing Government policy)***

It is standard ESA process to complete an evaluation plan, and implement a training plan, for all new ESA vehicles, prior to them becoming operational. This process will also be undertaken for the hybrid electric fire truck. As the hybrid electric fire truck is the first of its kind in the ESA fleet, this approach will be particularly important.

With the hybrid electric fire truck becoming the pinnacle of the current fleet of urban pumpers, the ESA will use this vehicle as the baseline for its future fleet. A comprehensive, and robust evaluation and training plan will inform future decisions as the ESA seeks to continuously improve its fleet as new technology emerges.

While the Auditor-General's recommendation requires the ESA to ensure the hybrid electric fire truck meets its needs as an urban pumper, the ESA's intent was to procure a vehicle that would provide benefits for firefighters and the community that go above and beyond what the current urban pumpers offer.

The ESA called upon the knowledge and expertise of the end users (firefighters) to design and test the final specification and layout for the hybrid electric fire truck. As a baseline, the

firefighters were asked to apply a comprehensive statement of requirements and agreed layout consistent with the standard urban pumper.

## **Conclusion**

The Report makes some observations in relation to the procurement of the hybrid electric fire truck, and the value for money assessment, prior to the vehicle being ordered in January 2021. The ESA notes the observations in the Report and will use them to inform and improve future purchasing practices.

Being the first emergency service to welcome a hybrid electric fire appliance of this kind, not only in Australia but in the Southern Hemisphere, naturally made it more challenging for the ESA to assess and/or compare the market. However, there are significant benefits in acquiring the appliance, including innovation, the environment and sustainability, firefighter safety, and community safety.

### *Innovation*

The ESA is leading the nation in this innovative technology, being the first emergency service in Australia to welcome a hybrid electric fire appliance of this kind.

### *Environment and Sustainability*

The world around us is rapidly changing, both in terms of technology, workplace diversity, and the environment. The hybrid electric fire truck is an important first step towards transitioning to lower emissions in the ESA's emergency vehicle fleet.

### *Firefighter Safety*

The hybrid electric fire truck has been designed by firefighters, for firefighters. With safety and comfort at the forefront of the design, the hybrid electric fire truck will assist the safety and wellbeing of our firefighters, keeping the number of workplace injuries low.

### *Community Safety*

High in the considerations of any decisions made by an emergency service is the safety of the community. The hybrid electric fire truck is the cutting edge of firefighting technology and equipment in the world, which will assist the ESA in keeping the ACT community safe.

The true benefits of the hybrid electric fire truck will be realised in years to come.