



# Inquiry into Annual and Financial Reports 2023–2024

## Answer to question on notice

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Asked by: Ms Jo Clay MLA

Addressed to: Minister for Climate Change, Environment, Energy and Water

Reference: Environment, Planning and Sustainable Development Directorate

Hearing: 14 February 2025

In relation to: Climate Emissions From Waste

Question received: 20 February 2025

Answer Due: 28 February 2025

In January this year in response to question on notice number 17, I asked you for an estimate of emissions from household and commercial food waste sent to landfill. You told me it wasn't possible to estimate this.

The Federal Government produces national greenhouse accounts factors to help governments, individuals and businesses estimate emissions from many sources, including from food waste (see p 33 of DCCEW National Greenhouse Accounts Factors workbook). Governments and businesses use these factors to estimate emissions and from January this year, many Australian businesses have been required to report Scope 3 emissions.

ACT Government knows how many tonnes of food waste it sends to landfill from waste audits.

- (1) Can the ACT Government provide estimated annual emissions from food waste being sent to landfill, either using tonnes of food waste sent to landfill multiplied by the National Greenhouse Accounts Factors or using some other industry-recognised method?
- (2) If so, what is this annual estimate for 2023-24, what factors did you use to produce this estimate and do you need to correct your previous answer?
- (3) If not, why is ACT Government unable to produce this estimate?

Minister for Climate Change, Environment, Energy and Water, Suzanne Orr MLA: The answer to the Member's question is as follows:

- (1) The calculation of food waste is based on the total tonnes landfilled at Mugga Lane Landfill, categorised by waste stream. Waste audits are utilised to estimate the specific tonnages of food waste. The following table presents quantities of food waste to landfill in 2023-24 and

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their corresponding scope 3 emissions based on the scope 3 emission factor for food waste (2.1 t CO<sub>2</sub>-e/tonne) as provided by the National Greenhouse Accounts (NGA) Factors 2024.

Waste stream	Food waste (tonnes)	Scope 3 emissions (t CO <sub>2</sub> -e)* without methane capture
Household	44,772	94,021
Commercial	9,084	19,076
<b>Total</b>	<b>53,856</b>	<b>113,097</b>

\*The NGA Factors notes that this method is used to produce an estimate of lifetime emissions from waste degradation in a landfill. In reality, waste disposed in a landfill will degrade and emit over a period of decades. The method does not take into account any landfill gas capture occurring at the landfill. As methane capture occurs at Mugga Lane Landfill, this is not an accurate representation of food waste emissions.

- (2) Based on the available data and method, it is not possible to accurately quantify the emissions from an individual waste type, including food waste, sent to landfill in a year.
- (3) The ACT Government reports scope 1 emissions from waste to landfill within the ACT boundary using the National Greenhouse and Energy Reporting (Measurement) Determination 2008 (and related Solid Waste Calculator) as recommended by the NGA Factors 2024.

Methane capture is associated with organic waste deposited in landfill over a period of decades. As such it is not possible to attribute the methane capture, and corresponding reduction in emissions, to a specific volume of waste disposed to landfill in a given year. Based on these complexities, as well as the use of estimates and assumptions in the data and method, it is not possible to accurately estimate scope 1 emissions from food waste sent to landfill.

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

Signature:

Date:

By the Minister for Climate Change, Environment, Energy and Water, Suzanne Orr MLA

29/02/25