



STANDING COMMITTEE ON ENVIRONMENT, CLIMATE CHANGE AND BIODIVERSITY  
Dr Marisa Paterson MLA (Chair), Mr Andrew Braddock MLA (Deputy Chair),  
Ms Leanne Castley MLA

**Inquiry into ACT Budget 2021–22**  
**ANSWER TO QUESTION TAKEN ON NOTICE**  
**19 October 2021**

Asked by Jo Clay MLA on 19 October 2021: Madelin Bayer, Environment Protection Authority, took on notice the following question(s):

[Ref: Hansard Transcript 19 October 2021, Page 25]

In relation to: Smoke complaint resolution

**THE CHAIR:** Ms Castley, we will move on to Ms Clay. Do you have a substantive question?

**MS CLAY:** I do. I am interested in the 307 complaints about air pollution; how many of those are about wood smoke and whether you resolved them. I am also interested in how that level of complaints compared to whatever level of air pollution complaints you received during the smoke apocalypse after the bushfires.

**Ms Cheyne:** Ms Clay, we will hand over again to Ms Bayer to provide you with that level of detail.

**Ms Bayer:** In 2020-21, with the air pollution complaints, I can break them down into 228 in relation to smoke, 45 in relation to odour, 29 in relation to dust and five in relation to toxic or poisonous gases—complaints about those.

**MS CLAY:** With the 228 smoke ones, were you able to resolve those satisfactorily, to the satisfaction of the complainant?

**Ms Bayer:** I can take that on notice in terms of the outcomes in each of those.

**MINISTER CHEYNE:** The answer to the Member's question is as follows:–

The Environment Protection Authority (EPA) is unable to comment on the satisfaction of the complainant when smoke complaints were resolved.

In 2020-2021 there were 307 air pollution complaints. Of these, 46 complaints related to smoke from domestic wood fire heaters. The outcomes of those 46 complaints are as follows:

Wood Fire or Heater	No.
Advisory letter sent to activity manager (woodfire heater operator)	15
No breach identified	16
Resolved	14
(No status recorded)	1
<b>Total</b>	<b>46</b>

The EPA operates in accordance with the Access Canberra Accountability Framework, which can be viewed via its website: [www.accesscanberra.act.gov.au](http://www.accesscanberra.act.gov.au). Within this Accountability Framework, there is an Environmental Protection compliance framework document that outlines the objectives and general principles for compliance and enforcement activities undertaken by the EPA to ensure a healthy environment that supports a thriving and liveable ACT. The Customer Service Charter also sets out service expectations and how complaints about service delivery or regulatory decisions are managed by Access Canberra.

Please refer to QTON ECCB7 for the EPA's response to the question about air pollution following the 2019-2020 bushfires.

Approved for circulation to the Standing Committee on Environment, Climate Change and Biodiversity

Signature:



Date:

26/10/21

By the Minister for Business and Better Regulation, Tara Cheyne MLA