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

ELEVENTH ASSEMBLY

Tabling Statement

**2024-25 Minister's Annual Report under the
Climate Change and Greenhouse Gas Reduction Act 2010**

**Presented by
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Mr Speaker, I rise today to table the 2024–25 Minister’s Annual Report under the Climate Change and Greenhouse Gas Reduction Act 2010, and to provide the Assembly with a statement on the ACT Government’s progress in addressing climate change and reducing greenhouse gas emissions.

Progress Toward Net Zero Greenhouse Gas Emissions in 2045

The ACT continues to lead the nation in climate action. In 2024–25, we maintained 100% renewable electricity supply, continued to reduce emissions across transport and gas, and supported thousands of households in transitioning to clean energy technologies.

Last year’s greenhouse gas inventory showed that the ACT had already met its 2025 interim emissions reduction target. However, each year the method used to calculate greenhouse gas emissions is reviewed to ensure consistency with best national and international practices. This year’s report used an improved method for calculating emissions from industrial processes and product use, including refrigerants used in refrigeration and air conditioning. There were also updates to the Australian National Greenhouse Accounts calculation of emissions from land use, land use change, and forestry. With these improved methodologies, the 2025 interim greenhouse gas target of 50% reduction on the 1990 baseline was not met. The total greenhouse gas emissions for the ACT in 2024-25 was 1,658 kilotonnes of carbon dioxide equivalent. This is a 47% reduction on the 1990 baseline.

As required by the legislation, if a target is not met, I, as the Minister, must present a statement to the Assembly on why the target was not met and what action will be taken to meet subsequent targets.

The ACT is leading the way with climate action and has ambitious targets. Although the 2025 interim target has not been met, I am pleased to be able to report that both per-person and territory-wide emissions have decreased. Fossil fuel gas emissions fell by 10% and ground transport fell by 1%. This shows that Government

policies and community actions are delivering positive results but there's still more work to be done by everyone.

The Climate Challenges we all face

Climate change is one of the greatest challenges we face. By 2050, average temperatures could rise by around 2°C. Summers will be longer and hotter, with more days over 35°C and more frequent, intense heatwaves. Nights will stay warmer, especially in urban areas. This is only 25 years from now, and the majority of Canberrans here today will experience this in their lifetimes.

Bushfire seasons will start earlier and last longer due to drier conditions and extreme heat. Rainfall will come in shorter, heavier bursts, increasing flash flood risk, while droughts may reduce water availability. Rainfall will remain erratic, with greater risk of droughts and floods putting pressure on water, agriculture, and emergency services. Nature in urban areas and our tree canopy cover will be vital to cool our city and protect public health. We must act now to prepare our city and community for the changes ahead.

Key Achievements

In 2024-25 we made significant progress in a range of areas. I would like to briefly mention a few key achievements that show the range of actions Government is taking to tackle climate change.

Strong disaster resilience and social recovery is essential to weather the changes we are and will experience. In response to the ACT's changing risk profile the ACT Government released the ACT Disaster Resilience Strategy 2024-2030. This strategy provides an overarching framework for building resilience to disasters across all parts of society and establishes a common vision for a disaster-resilient Territory and a shift in focus to shared responsibility – one where government, industry and community all have a role to play.

This year we saw tangible progress in the implementation of the Integrated Energy Plan: nearly 2,100 customers left the gas network, and reticulated fossil gas demand fell to a record low of under 6PJ per annum. With over 15,000 connections unused for more than a year and three consecutive years of declining gas customers, it's clear our community is embracing the shift. Through regulations preventing new gas connections, direct support for households and businesses, government action on electrification and strong messaging, we're removing barriers and accelerating electrification—ensuring every Canberran can benefit from a cleaner, more sustainable energy future.

The Government recognises the vital role Community Service Organisations (CSOs) play in supporting community resilience. The City and Environment Directorate are working with ACT Council of Social Services (ACTCOSS) and local CSOs and Aboriginal Controlled Community Organisations (ACCOs) to co-design and trial a toolkit. The toolkit contains resources that will assist CSOs to assess climate change impacts to their organisation and undertake adaptation planning to identify and implement actions that will lower their risk and increase their resilience.

The ACT Government funds a number of community grant programs for not-for-profit organisations and individuals to support community action on climate change. Various grant programs enable a range of projects that aim to reduce emissions, increase resilience, make urban areas cooler through nature-based means, and support the delivery of community gardens. In 2024-25, twenty-one projects totalling \$403,000 were supported.

We all recognise that support for small to medium-sized businesses to achieve net zero is essential to maintain a productive and competitive economy. In 2024/25 the Sustainable Business Program supported 110 businesses to improve their energy efficiency, accredited 298 businesses under the program and diverted more than 72,179m³ from landfill to recycling.

I would now like to outline a number of achievements in the natural environment.

In May 2025, the ACT Government released the first ever Environment Protection Authority (EPA) Statement on Climate Change. This document provides clarity on how the EPA will consider climate change and greenhouse gas emissions during statutory decision-making processes and will support businesses to reduce emissions and increase resilience to extreme weather events.

Progress towards the Urban Forest Strategy target of a 30% tree canopy cover in Canberra by 2045 continued with approximately 12,730 trees planted across the Territory. This will enhance the character of the bush capital and reduce the urban heat island effect.

Increasing the number of sustainable and climate-wise buildings is essential to have resilient built infrastructure. In August 2024, the ACT Government released the ACT Sustainable Buildings Pathway. The Pathway is part of the ACT's existing program of building reforms, which make sure our buildings are safe and fit for purpose now and into the future.

The ACT Government Low Carbon Concrete (LCC) Policy commenced on 1 January 2025. This policy aims to reduce embodied carbon emissions in ACT Government projects through increasing the use of LCC. LCC was successfully used in projects at different scales including the Molonglo River bridge, North Wright Sustainable Precinct, public housing and Raising London Circuit.

Activities to support reductions in ground transport emissions were ongoing. The public electric vehicle charging network was expanded and there are now 198 chargers powering 274 charging bays in the ACT. The ACT is the first jurisdiction in Australia to sign a Global Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) on Zero-Emission Medium- and Heavy-Duty Vehicles. The non-binding MOU seeks to enable 100% zero-emission new truck and bus sales by 2040.

I will now outline some of the work undertaken by the ACT Government to reduce emissions from its own operations.

The zero-emissions vehicle fleet was extended with the Government passenger fleet now consisting of 573 zero and low emissions vehicles. A number of innovative trials were completed in 2024/25. This included an electric utility used by the mowing team; electric panel van with Libraries ACT and Yarralumla Nursery for deliveries; a low-floor battery electric mini-bus for Flexible Transport; a 2-tonne electric forklift with Roads ACT; and a 2.5 tonne excavator for Urban Treescapes.

The Electrification of Government Gas Assets program continued to be implemented to reduce emissions from buildings. In 2024/25, 85 assets powered with natural gas were replaced with electric solutions and construction on the Weetangera Primary School geothermal pilot project commenced. This pilot project will be the first geothermal solution on an ACT Government owned site and involves installation of in-ground heat source technology to replace gas heating.

The transition to zero-emission public transport continued. Construction of the new Woden Bus Depot was completed in April 2025, and as at 30 June 2025 there were 79 electric buses with 106 expected by the end of 2026.

I will now highlight some of the activities to support ACT households.

The Sustainable Household Scheme continued to provide ACT residents and community groups with zero-interest loans for energy-efficient products like battery storage, electric heating and cooling and electric vehicles. In 2024/25, the scheme provided \$37 million in loans to 3,562 recipients.

Targeted support for vulnerable and low-income households continued to be delivered. The Home Energy Support Program provided 130 rebates for rooftop solar and 299 rebates for insulation and energy-efficient appliances. Upgrades in public housing properties included 1,535 ceiling insulation installations and 1,700 gas-to-electric appliance upgrades across 1,103 properties. It's programs like this that work to support a just transition for all Canberrans.

The key achievements that I have outlined in this Assembly and detailed in the annual report demonstrate how the ACT Government is delivering lower emissions, reduced energy bills, climate resilience and improved quality of life for Canberrans.

Independent Review of ACT Government action on climate change

Under the Climate Change and Greenhouse Gas Reduction Act 2010, the Minister must, at least once every five years, ask an independent entity to assess, and report to the Minister about government policies, programs and practices to address climate change in the ACT, including actions taken to mitigate and adapt to climate change.

The first review was finalised in February this year. The Review found that the ACT has strong foundations to deliver net zero emissions and strengthen climate resilience. The review also found strong community support for climate action in the ACT, reflecting the collective efforts of government, community and industry. Importantly, the Review will inform the development of a new climate change strategy.

Next Climate Change Strategy

Over the coming years, we will need to navigate complex challenges and take advantage of new opportunities. The ACT Government has a clear understanding of the longer-term climate challenges that must be addressed. This includes meeting our emissions reduction targets and preparing Canberra for the impacts of climate change. The ACT community is central to driving climate action, and we're committed to working collaboratively to shape the ACT's next Climate Change Strategy.

Conclusion

Mr Speaker, the ACT's climate journey is one of leadership, collaboration, and determination. I thank my colleagues, our public servants, and the Canberra community for their continued support and action in responding to climate change.

The annual report I am tabling today shows the achievements we have all made and we should all be proud. The climate challenges we face in the present and future are significant but not insurmountable. We must all continue to work even harder to address the global challenge of climate change and ensure a safe climate and just transition for current and future generations.

I commend this report to the Assembly and reaffirm our commitment to a cleaner, fairer, and climate-resilient future.

ENDS.