

2019

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

**GOVERNMENT RESPONSE TO THE
STANDING COMMITTEE ON ENVIRONMENT, TRANSPORT AND CITY SERVICES
REPORT NO 8**

REPORT ON ANNUAL AND FINANCIAL REPORTS 2017-2018

**Presented by
Mr Andrew Barr MLA
Chief Minister**

Introduction

On Thursday, 25 October 2018, the 2017-18 Annual and Financial reports of all ACT Government agencies were referred to the relevant Standing Committees of the Assembly for inquiry and reporting.

The following annual reports, or sections of annual reports, were referred to the Standing Committee on Environment and Transport and City Services (the Committee):

- Chief Minister, Treasury and Economic Development Directorate (Environment Protection Authority, Sport and Recreation);
- Environment, Planning and Sustainable Development Directorate;
- Office of the Commissioner for Sustainability and the Environment; and
- Transport Canberra and City Services Directorate.

Response to Committee Recommendations

Recommendation 1

4.8 The Committee recommends that the ACT Government undertake further promotion of the Straws Suck campaign to reduce use of single use plastic straws.

Government Response – Agreed

The ACT Government will continue to promote the Straws Suck campaign at events, direct engagement with businesses and through various forms of media to increase the take up. Pledged businesses are included on the Actsmart website and social media. They are provided with a media kit to promote the campaign at their premises and raise public awareness of the initiative.

Recommendation 2

4.14 The Committee recommends that the ACT Government continue to develop the Parkcare program to enable community participation in management of nature reserves.

Government Response – Agreed

The ACT Government is committed to the continued support of ParkCare recognising the social and environmental benefits to the entire community. In 2017/18 over 20 000 hours of community time was invested through ParkCare and this continues to grow. The ACT Government has established a new ParkCare hub to broaden reach including encouraging younger people, people with culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds and encouraging people of all abilities to participate. New programs under ParkCare includes Ranger Assist, Wildlife Assist and Visitor Assist. Further information can be found at [ParkCare Hub](#).

Recommendation 3

4.18 The Committee acknowledges the ACT Government's expressed intention to engage young families in the Heritage Festival and recommends that the ACT Government continue to look at ways to target marketing of the Heritage Festival to younger demographics to boost future attendance.

Government Response – Agreed

The promotional campaign for the 2019 Heritage Festival has contracted artist Trevor Dickinson (of Canberra bus shelter fame) to design three graphics which have had a positive reaction with the younger demographic. Pop-up stands promoting the Festival in Garema Place, Old Bus Depot Market and the Canberra Centre engaged with hundreds of locals handing out cloth bags printed with the graphics and printed program. Badge-making using Dickinson's drawings at these pop-ups as well as the appearance of the Gang Gang mascots allowed further interaction with children. An increased presence on social media, targeting suitable events at the younger demographic has proven successful with a higher click through rate by young adults and young families. Further information can be found at [Heritage Festival Website](#).

Recommendation 4

4.22 Noting the ACT Government response to the Review of the ACT Plastic Shopping Bag Ban is due in February 2019, the Committee recommends that the ACT Government act on the recommendations of the Review and report to the Assembly on plans for implementation.

Government Response – Noted

The final Government Response to the Commissioner for Sustainability and Environment's Review of the Plastic Bag Ban was tabled in the Legislative Assembly in May 2019.

Recommendation 5

5.13 The Committee recommends that the ACT Government continue to investigate the feasibility of recycling of household food and organic waste.

Government Response – Agreed

Transport Canberra and City Services has commenced work on developing options for the diversion of organics from landfill.

Recommendation 6

5.14 The Committee recommends that the ACT Government continue to investigate the feasibility of composting and anaerobic digestion, in order to reduce the amount of waste going to landfill.

Government Response – Agreed

Transport Canberra and City Services has commenced work on developing options for the diversion of organics from landfill.

Recommendation 7

5.15 The Committee recommends that the ACT Government report to the Assembly on the outcome of the current investigation into a possible landfill levy.

Government Response – Noted

A waste levy has been announced as part of the 2019-20 Budget.

Recommendation 8

5.17 The Committee recommends that the ACT Government report publicly on the incidence of dog control offences and the number and nature of infringements issued each year.

Government Response – Agreed in principle

Noting that there are a variety of sanctions utilised in relation to dog control offences in addition to infringements; reporting would be based on the ready availability of data via electronic systems which are currently under development.

Recommendation 9

5.19 The Committee recommends that Transport Canberra and City Services continue to work with Access Canberra to improve the Fix My Street website, including giving people the capability to track the progress of their case via the website.

Government Response – Agreed

Transport Canberra and City Services and Access Canberra are working together to improve the Fix My Street website and investigating opportunities to improve the communication with the public in relation to tracking the progress of cases via the website. A program is underway to achieve this and we expect to implement improvements throughout the 2019-2020 operational year.

Recommendation 10

5.22 The Committee recommends that the ACT Government report to the Assembly on lessons learned from the storm and flooding event of February 2018 and actions taken to prevent future flooding events.

Government Response – Agreed

The ACT Government has funded in the 2019-20 Budget the development of a Floodplain Management Plan for Sullivans Creek

This is considered national Best Practice for flood management calls as it pulls together planning, hydrology, engineering solutions and community consultation to develop an agreed approach to managing flood risk in the catchment.

Further, the Environment, Planning and Sustainable Development Directorate released flood risk maps (showing the 1% Annual Exceedance Probability (AEP), previously known as the 1 in 100 year flood) on 4 December 2018.

The flooding events of February 2018 provided an opportunity to calibrate the model products against a significant flood event and provided the directorate with confidence on the veracity of the published maps:

https://www.environment.act.gov.au/data/assets/pdf_file/0008/1286909/ACT-Flood-Maps-Sullivans-Creek-ACCESS.pdf.

Recommendation 11

5.27 The Committee recommends that the ACT Government develop the means to capture and record data on buses running full in peak times, requiring them to bypass waiting passengers at bus stops.

Government Response – Noted

Transport Canberra already has the capacity to capture and record data on buses that reach their maximum passenger capacity through the MyWay ticketing system. Using data generated when customers tap on and off using their MyWay cards, and when customers purchase paper

tickets, Transport Canberra can accurately identify when and where buses are operating at capacity.

Additionally, Transport Canberra bus drivers are required to advise the communications centre if, at any time while in service, a bus is at capacity or unable to take additional passengers. This allows Transport Canberra operations staff to determine whether an immediate response is required (for example, dispatching an additional bus).

For this reason, the ACT Government does not believe that any additional action is required to capture and record data on buses running full in peak times.

Recommendation 12

5.30 The Committee recommends that the ACT Government publish data on the percentage of journeys in the new bus network that require transfer at interchanges.

Government Response – Agreed in principle

Journeys may not always require transfer at an interchange. In the new network, it is expected that some customers will choose to transfer at an interchange for a faster journey.

Consideration will be given to whether or how information about transfers should be incorporated into reporting of public transport patronage data.

Recommendation 13

5.33 The Committee recommends that the ACT Government publish a schedule for the construction of a light rail stop in Mitchell.

Government Response – Agreed

Transport Canberra will provide a timeline for the construction of a light rail stop in Mitchell, noting that timing of this is subject to both decisions of Government and commercial negotiations.

Recommendation 14

5.36 The Committee recommends that the ACT Government continue to explore flexible transport options for older people, and people with disability who may have difficulty accessing the public transport network.

Government Response – Agreed

Transport Canberra is procuring a new booking system that will make it faster and easier for customers to book the flexible bus service and allow Transport Canberra to deliver more services with the same buses and drivers through more efficient scheduling.

Over time, Transport Canberra will also explore opportunities to expand the booking platform to other services, such as community transport services. Note that Transport Canberra will also work with other government agencies who share responsibility for this.

Recommendation 15

5.37 The Committee recommends that the ACT Government provide on-demand bus services to the Alexander Maconochie Centre to encourage visitation and assist detainees to maintain links with the community.

Government Response – Agreed in principle

The new integrated public transport network includes a service linking the Alexander Maconochie Centre with Woden Interchange, which is designed to allow customers to visit detainees during visiting hours. It is expected that, in time, this service will adopt demand-responsive functionality and become a service which is more responsive to when people actually need to travel, rather than a fixed timetable.

Recommendation 16

5.39 The Committee recommends that the ACT Government report to the Assembly on the outcomes of the Airbike dockless bike share trial, including overall patronage, key hotspots for beginning and end of rides, instances of bikes being left in inappropriate places, and instances of bikes being retrieved from waterways.

Government Response – Agreed

Transport Canberra is currently finalising an evaluation of the six-month trial with Airbike. The evaluation report will cover key outcomes of the trial, instances of bikes being damaged or left in inappropriate places and responsiveness by the provider.