



LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY
FOR THE AUSTRALIAN CAPITAL TERRITORY

QTON No. 15

STANDING COMMITTEE ON PLANNING, TRANSPORT, AND CITY SERVICES
JO CLAY MLA (CHAIR), SUZANNE ORR MLA (DEPUTY CHAIR), MARK PARTON MLA

Inquiry into referred 2019–20 Annual and Financial Reports and Budget Estimates 2020-21
ANSWER TO QUESTION TAKEN ON NOTICE
Thursday, 4 March 2021

Asked by Jo Clay:

In relation to: Tonnage of Bulky Waste

THE CHAIR: Awesome. So we might move on. Look, I am interested in the bulky waste collection service, and I gather we have paid Suez \$9 million for that, which is quite a lot of money, and most of it is going to landfill, so I understand it is a very popular community waste project, but it does not get great recycling results.

I am wondering how the recovery rate on that program compares to the previous program. Is it performing better?

Mr Steel: To the contrary, Ms Clay, the recycling recovery rate has actually been higher than expected.

THE CHAIR: Yes?

Mr Steel: And our target that we set, which was 30 per cent resource recovery under the bulky waste scheme, is actually a lot higher than what other jurisdictions have been able to recover through their like schemes. And Mr Haraldson can provide some data around that.

To date, the scheme, in terms of its rollout both through concession card holders across the ACT, and also in relation to Gungahlin and in Tuggeranong where it has been rolled out thus far, is 38.8 per cent. So that is much higher than the target that we set, much higher than the benchmarks in terms of other jurisdictions have been able to recover.

And we are also the first jurisdiction that has been able to partner with Give It to make sure that the items are then paired with actual need in the community, which is quite a different approach to other jurisdictions, and is promoting resource recovery, but also providing a community service to the community. And then the other organisations that we work with, like St Vincent de Paul and the Salvation Army, to be able to provide those items to people that they work with, and also for sale to support their charitable purpose through their shopfronts.

So we have actually had such a great recovery of items that we have not had a Last Chance Saturdays event yet, which is the event where people can come and collect any items that have not been used. They have all been taken thus far, which is fantastic. All of the usable items. And of course, any other items then find their way into the landfill, which is probably where they were going anyway, or at very worst potentially dumped in the community, which is a real problem, and costs the community around \$2 million a year to clean up.



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So the scheme, we hope, will continue that high level of recovery rate as we go forward to the Belconnen pick-up, which will occur in April, and the rest of Canberra from July. In relation to comparison rate for resource recovery, when it was just in relation to concession card holders—I am not sure whether you have got that information on hand, Mr Haraldson, but we can certainly provide that.

THE CHAIR: If you have it. So we have got 62 per cent is going to landfill now, and I am interested in how much went to landfill under the previous contract.

Mr Haraldson: I will take that on notice, the actual tonnages.

Chris Steel MLA: The answer to the Member's question is as follows:—

The previous bulky waste collection service was only available to eligible concession card holders in the ACT and the contractual reporting provisions did not include the resource recovery or actual tonnages of items collected. All items collected under the previous contract were taken directly to the respective Green Shed and not through a weighbridge. This current contract reporting requirements records actual tonnages received and recovered. The percentage landfilled as at end of January 2021 is 58% (or 312.7 tonnes).

Research carried out by ACT NoWaste prior to the bulky waste service commencing indicated the following recovery rates from councils across Australia:

- South Sydney Regional Organisation of Councils investigated the management of bulky waste service across 16 Sydney councils and found 16% of the materials collected from single unit dwellings was recovered. The recovery rate from multi-unit developments was slightly lower at 14%; and
- Research by MRA Consulting Group suggests the national average recovery rate for council bulky waste services is around 10%, with NSW at 12%, Victoria 13% and WA 7%.

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

Signature:

Date:

12/3/21

By the Minister for Transport and City Services, Chris Steel MLA