2025

THE LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY FOR THE

AUSTRALIAN CAPITAL TERRITORY

ELEVENTH ASSEMBLY

Community Services Directorate Half-Yearly Performance Report (31 December 2024)

pursuant to Section 30E of the *Financial Management Act 1996*

Presented by
Yvette Berry MLA
Deputy Chief Minister
February 2025

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Community Services Directorate
Statement of Performance
For Half Yearly 1 July 2024– 31 December 2024

OUTPUT CLASS 1: STRATEGIC POLICY, INCLUSION AND PARTICIPATION

OUTPUT 1.1: INCLUSION AND PARTICIPATION

Description:

Inclusion and Participation provides strategic advice to strengthen the inclusion and participation of all people in Canberra's community, including people from multicultural backgrounds, youth, women, veterans and seniors and people with disability. The contribution and support for the engagement of all people is recognised through community events, awards, ceremonies and grants. Inclusion and Participation administers and funds community sector services and programs.

Measures	2024-25 Targets	2024-25 Dec YTD Targets	2024-25 Dec YTD Results	Var. %	Notes
Strategic Indicators					
3. Value of community services support programs ($'000)	17,904	8,952	9,766	9	1
4. The proportion of Canberrans who agree that Canberra as a community accepts people from different cultures.	90%	N/A	N/A	N/A	2
5. The proportion of women who feel safe when they are by themselves, walking in the neighbourhood during the day.	93%	93%	87%	-6	3
5. The proportion of women who feel safe when they are by themselves, walking in the neighbourhood at night.	42%	42%	40%	-5	3
Accountability Indicators					
a. Number of community building, participation grants and scholarship programs administered.	18	9	2	-78	4
b. Percentage of participants who successfully complete the Work Experience and Support Program.	90%	90%	84%	-7	5
c. Proportion of funded services that were visited by a Relationship Manager during the financial year.	75%	38%	20%	-47	6
d. Number of community engagement opportunities for veterans in the ACT	8	4	4	-	
e. Number of community engagement opportunities for seniors in the ACT	7	4	4	-	
f. Satisfaction of funded organisations with government contract administration (as measured by annual survey)	90%	N/A	N/A	N/A	7

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Measures	2024-25 Targets	2024-25 Dec YTD Targets	2024-25 Dec YTD Results	Var. %	Notes
TOTAL COST ($'000)	**52,483**	**26,242**	**25,450**	**-3**	
CONTROLLED RECURRENT PAYMENTS ($'000)	**50,093**	**25,047**	**38,011**	**52**	8

The above Statement of Performance should be read in conjunction with the accompanying notes.

Explanation of Accountability Indicators

a. This indicator measures the number of grants allocated to assist community organisations to strengthen capacity, sustainability and address disadvantage in the community.

b. This indicator measures the percentage of people who finish the program which is designed to assist Canberrans from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds enter the workforce by providing an opportunity to improve skills and confidence, as well as develop important networks with the ACT Public Service.

c. This indicator measures the proportion of funded services organisations visited during the financial year. The service visits could be either in-person or virtual.

d. This indicator measures the number of Ministerial Advisory Council meetings and community engagements held for veterans in the ACT.

e. This indicator measures the number of Ministerial Advisory Council meetings and community engagements held for seniors in the ACT.

f. This indicator measures the extent to which non-government entities that administer and provide services contracted by the government are satisfied with the way their contracts are administered, including management of contract compliance through monitoring contractual requirements and service delivery quality, disbursement of contract payments and offering advice and support to service providers.

Explanation of Material Variance (=>5%):

1. The higher than targeted result is mainly due to timing and the programs are expected to meet the target by the end of financial year.
2. The annual Canberra Omnibus Survey will be conducted in either the third or fourth quarter of the financial year. The result will be reported in the respective quarter.
3. Due to a national change in the data collection methodology for the National Survey of Community Satisfaction with Policing (NSCSP), the 2024–25 data is not comparable to previous years' results. The new methodology for collection has shifted for all jurisdictions to a mix of online and phone modes using a sample mix combination of mobile Computer Assisted Telephone Interviewing (CATI) and online (through a probability-based online panel). This change has significantly impacted the NSCSP results as respondents' answers differ between CATI and online. Sampling mix also differs between jurisdictions.

   Accordingly, the 2024-25 data is not comparable to results in previous years and ACT results are not comparable to other jurisdictions.
4. The lower than targeted result is due to the timing in delivering the grant programs.
5. The result relates to the first of the two rounds scheduled for 2024-25 WESP program. The lower than targeted result is due to participants withdrawing from the program.
6. The lower than targeted result is due to the schedule of works. It is anticipated that the majority of the funded service organisations will be visited during the second half of 2024-25.
7. This is an annual survey and is expected to be conducted and reported in the fourth quarter of 2024-25.
8. The higher than budgeted result is predominately due to the accelerated draw down of appropriation to fund community service partners in accordance with contract terms.

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OUTPUT CLASS 1: STRATEGIC POLICY, INCLUSION AND PARTICIPATION

OUTPUT 1.2: OFFICE FOR DISABILITY

Description:

The ACT Office for Disability promotes social inclusion and community participation of people with disability as outlined in Australia's Disability Strategy and includes supporting the implementation of the NDIS and the Integrated Service Response Program; progressing equal access to justice for people with disability through the Disability Justice Strategy; promoting the International Day of People with Disability; and supporting the Disability Reference Group, the ACT Inclusion Council and the Chief Minister’s Inclusion Awards.

Measures	2024-25 Targets	2024-25 Dec YTD Targets	2024-25 Dec YTD Results	Var. %	Notes
Strategic Indicators					
1.a Number of participants in the NDIS	10,239	10,239	11,141	9	1
1.b Number of people with disability on advisory councils	25	25	37	48	2
Accountability Indicators					
a. Community engagement activities on National Disability Strategy	10	5	7	40	3
b. Implement Companion Card Program – Number of Companion Card affiliates	94	94	95	1	
TOTAL COST ($’000)	**6,275**	**3,138**	**2,720**	**-13**	4
CONTROLLED RECURRENT PAYMENTS ($’000)	**5,863**	**2,932**	**2,880**	**-2**	

The above Statement of Performance should be read in conjunction with the accompanying notes.

Explanation of Accountability Indicators

a. This indicator measures the number of policy and project initiatives that engage directly with the community on issues to inform progress of outcomes against the commitment to the National Disability Strategy.

b. This indicator measures the implementation of the Companion Card Program through the number of Companion Card affiliates recruited.

Explanation of Material Variance (=>5%):

1. The number of active participants with approved plans in the ACT varies according to need.
2. The number of people on advisory councils who identify as people with disability is sourced from the information in the Cabinet Appointments Register, which has been updated to reflect the most recent recruitment rounds. The ACT Disability Reference Group account for 10 of the 37 people who identify as people with disability on Ministerial Advisory Councils.
3. The higher than targeted result is due to timing of engagements activities with the community during the reporting period.

Output 1.2: Office for Disability – Continued

4. The lower than budgeted result is mainly due to timing in delivering programs and initiatives.

OUTPUT CLASS 1: STRATEGIC POLICY, INCLUSION AND PARTICIPATION

OUTPUT 1.3: Strategic Policy

Description:

Strategic Policy works in partnership with its operational counterparts, cross- directorate colleagues, clients, stakeholders, and people with lived experience to deliver integrated strategic policy to set the direction for the directorate's human services responsibilities, including housing, women, seniors, veterans, disability, multicultural affairs, children, youth, and families.

The division uses data, research, and community consultation to develop evidence-informed human services policy to drive service design and deliver reform initiatives with a focus on evaluation, sustainability, and continuous improvement. The division provides strategic legislative reform and policy development to improve long term, human-centred initiatives that focus on early investment and support to achieve positive outcomes for the ACT community.

Measures	2024-25 Targets	2024-25 Dec YTD Targets	2024-25 Dec YTD Results	Var. %	Note
Accountability Indicators					
a. Implementation of projects included in the Whole of Government plan on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Agreement	2	2	0	-100	1
b. Provision of strategic policy advice on human services issues to drive improved outcomes for children, young people and their families	4	4	4	-	
c. Performance improvement initiatives	2	2	2	-	
TOTAL COST ($'000)	**20,847**	**10,424**	**9,961**	**-4**	
CONTROLLED RECURRENT PAYMENTS ($'000)	**17,548**	**8,774**	**8,557**	**-2**	

The above Statement of Performance should be read in conjunction with the accompanying notes.

Explanation of Accountability Indicators

a. The 2 projects are:
   1. 'ACT Annual Report for National Closing the Gap Agreement tabled in the ACT Legislative Assembly'
   2. 'Development of capacity and capability building projects for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander agencies'.

b. The four initiatives are:
   1. 'Legislative reform identified by the Our Booris, Our Way Review'
   2. 'Provision of policy advice into service system analysis for raising the minimum age of criminal responsibility'
   3. 'Delivery of a defined model of external merits review'
   4. 'Modernising the Children and Young People Act 2008'.

Output 1.3: Strategic Policy – Continued

c. The 2 initiatives are:
   1.'Australian Early Development Census'
   2. 'The Our Booris, Our Way Dashboard Reporting'.

Explanation of Material Variance (=>5%):

1. The next ACT Closing the Gap Annual Report is scheduled to be tabled later in 2024-25 in alignment with the Commonwealth Government and Coalition of Peaks releasing date for their reporting.

   Following extensive community consultation, the Government established the ACCO Establishment and Expansion Fund (AEEF) to deliver an alternative funding source focusing on supporting establishment, capacity and capability building projects for ACT Aboriginal Community-Controlled Organisations (ACCOs). The grant funding is expected to be released following the finalisation of AEEF Grant Guidelines.

OUTPUT CLASS 1: STRATEGIC POLICY, INCLUSION AND PARTICIPATION

OUTPUT 1.4: REGULATION, ASSURANCE AND QUALITY

Description:

Regulation, Assurance and Quality (RAQ) operates independently from program, funding or policy streams within the Directorate. It seeks to manage risk to vulnerable members of the community and the Directorate, to build the capacity of service providers, including those within the Directorate, through partnership, education, and regulation, to ensure quality outcomes for service users.

RAQ receives, monitors and investigates mandatory notifications of critical incidents and complaints about government and non-government service providers. It includes the Office of the Human Services Registrar, which regulates human services providers under ACT legislation and the Office of the Senior Practitioner for the reduction and elimination of restrictive practices. It also incorporates the Internal Audit and Risk Management function of the Directorate. RAQ provides support to strategic committees and projects and also represents the Directorate on matters relating to quality and safeguards for vulnerable and disadvantaged members of our community.

Measures	2024-25 Targets	2024-25 Dec YTD Targets	2024-25 Dec YTD Results	Var. %	Note
Strategic Indicators					
9. The proportion of suitable entities complaint with registration standards – care and protection purposes	100%	100%	100%	-	
10. The proportion of suitable entities compliant with registration standards – community housing purposes	100%	100%	100%	-	
Accountability Indicators					
a. Regulatory and process reform initiatives	2	2	2	-	
b. Number of regulated service providers	740	740	4,544	514	1
c. Number of tenancies managed by registered community housing providers	2,350	2,350	2,398	2	
TOTAL COST ($’000)	**5,734**	**2,867**	**2,930**	**2**	
CONTROLLED RECURRENT PAYMENTS ($’000)	**4,299**	**2,150**	**2,154**	**-**	

The above Statement of Performance should be read in conjunction with the accompanying notes.

Explanation of Accountability Indicators

a. The two reform initiatives are the: 'Senior Practitioner work towards reducing and eliminating restrictive practices through safeguarding approaches' and 'Strengthening Practice Committee'.

b. This indicator measures the number of regulated services providers.

c. This indicator measures the quantum of tenancies managed by the community housing providers registered under the National Regulatory System for Community Housing.

Output 1.4: Regulation, Assurance and Quality – Continued

Explanation of Material Variance (=>5%):

1. The significant increase in provider numbers reflects the change in the National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS) Quarterly Report and associated Australian Capital Territory (ACT) Quarterly Performance Dashboard. There has been a significant change in the number of reported NDIS providers in the ACT. The change was due to an update in the definition of “active provider” which has been expanded to include both registered and unregistered providers, as opposed to the previous definition which only included registered providers providing supports to agency-managed participants.

OUTPUT CLASS 1: STRATEGIC POLICY, INCLUSION AND PARTICIPATION

OUTPUT 1.5: SAFER FAMILIES

Description:

The Domestic, Family and Sexual Violence Office provides strategic leadership, coordination, policy analysis and innovation expertise to drive cultural change and system reform, and to build whole-of-Government and whole-of-community capability to address domestic, family and sexual violence.

Measure	2024-25 Target	2024-25 Dec YTD Target	2024-25 Dec YTD Result	Var. %	Notes
Accountability Indicator a. Family Violence Statement presented to the ACT Legislative Assembly	1	N/A	N/A	N/A	1
TOTAL COST ($'000)	**23,635**	**11,818**	**9,037**	**-24**	2
CONTROLLED RECURRENT PAYMENTS ($'000)	**23,010**	**11,505**	**13,598**	**18**	3

The above Statement of Performance should be read in conjunction with the accompanying notes.

Explanation of Accountability Indicator

a. This indicator measures the Government's progress and achievements in addressing family and domestic violence.

Explanation of Material Variance (=>5%):

1. The Annual Ministerial Statement is delivered at the end of each financial year to report on achievements of that year and previous financial years, while also outlining the commitments for the next financial year. The 2024-25 Statement is scheduled to be delivered by June 2025.
2. The lower than budgeted result is mainly due to delays in program timeframes to ensure sufficient time to co-design and work in partnership with stakeholders to plan and implement strategies to build capacity across the sector.
3. The higher than budgeted result is due to the accelerated draw down of appropriation to fund community service providers according to the contract terms where contracts and/or agreements for relevant programs are already in place.

OUTPUT CLASS 2: CHILDREN, YOUTH AND FAMILIES

OUTPUT 2.1: CHILD AND FAMILY CENTRES

Description:

Early intervention and prevention services are provided through a universal platform with targeted services available for vulnerable families. Services provided include parenting groups, advice and support, sustained home visiting, specialist clinical services, and community development and education programs. Child and Family Centres also provide case management services to clients in need. Many services are delivered in partnership with other agencies, local community organisations and service providers.

Measures	2024-25 Targets	2024-25 Dec YTD Targets	2024-25 Dec YTD Results	Var. %	Notes
Strategic Indicator					
2. Number of occasions of service to Child and Family Centre clients	9,500	4,750	4,897	3	
Accountability Indicators					
a. Number of Community Development/Education Programs	225	113	93	-18	1
b. Number of Parenting Assistance Sessions	1,125	563	782	39	2
c. Client satisfaction with services	90%	N/A	N/A	N/A	3
TOTAL COST ($'000)	**8,509**	**4,255**	**4,367**	**3**	
CONTROLLED RECURRENT PAYMENTS ($'000)	**6,936**	**3,468**	**3,473**	**-**	

The above Statement of Performance should be read in conjunction with the accompanying notes.

Explanation of Accountability Indicators

a. The number of group sessions run by Child and Family Centres addressing community development and education issues.

b. The combined Parent Group Sessions and Parents as Teachers home visits to achieve a count of all sessions run by Child and Family Centres, which assist with a wide variety of parenting issues being experienced by families.

c. A 'self-report' telephone survey of clients who access the service, received at least one provision of service and had a case opened on Child and Youth Record Information System (CYRIS).

Explanation of Material Variance (=>5%):

1. More focus was given to providing Parenting Assisted Sessions to Atfaal groups and Multicultural families resulting in the smaller number of Community Development/Education Programs required.
2. In-line with ongoing increases in population and vulnerability, the Child and Family Centres continue to provide high levels of support to the community based on demand. The higher than targeted result, is reflective of the level of complexity of family needs and increase in number of families seeking parenting interventions and supports. To address this need, the size of the groups along with the number of sessions have increased.
3. The annual survey will be undertaken, and the result reported, in the fourth quarter of 2024-25.

OUTPUT CLASS 2: CHILDREN, YOUTH AND FAMILIES

OUTPUT 2.2: CHILD DEVELOPMENT SERVICE

Description:

The Child Development Service has a focus on early identification and intervention and provides assessment, referral, information and linkages for children birth to 6 years living in the ACT, where there are concerns relating to their development. Autism assessments are provided for children up to 12 years. Children 7 to 8 years with complex needs who have not had a previous assessment by allied health professionals can access the service.

Measure	2024-25 Target	2024-25 Dec YTD Target	2024-25 Dec YTD Result	Var. %	Note
Accountability Indicator a. Hours of service provided to the clients of the Child Development Service	14,787	7,394	9,439	28	1
TOTAL COST ($'000)	**10,727**	**5,364**	**5,349**	**-**	
CONTROLLED RECURRENT PAYMENTS ($'000)	**9,034**	**4,517**	**4,519**	**-**	

The above Statement of Performance should be read in conjunction with the accompanying notes.

Explanation of Accountability Indicator

a. The total hours of services provided to clients of the Child Development Service.

Explanation of Material Variance (=>5%):

1. Recruitment of some vacant clinical positions have been filled, additionally, the complexity of assessments has increased, requiring more time to be invested in evaluating and report writing.

OUTPUT CLASS 2: CHILDREN, YOUTH AND FAMILIES

OUTPUT 2.3: CHILD AND YOUTH PROTECTION SERVICES

Description:

Provision of statutory child protection and youth justice services is aimed at improving and promoting the safety and the wellbeing of children, young people, their families and the community.

Measures	2024-25 Targets	2024-25 Dec YTD Targets	2024-25 Dec YTD Results	Var. %	Notes
Strategic Indicators					
6. Re-substantiation Rate - Within 3 Months	10%	10%	1%	-90	1
6. Re-substantiation Rate - Within 12 Months	20%	20%	16%	-20	2
7. Returns to Sentenced Supervision	35%	35%	14%	-60	3
8. Proportion of children exiting care having experienced no more than two placements in care	75%	75%	58%	-23	4
Accountability Indicators					
a. Number of custody days used annually	4,500	2,250	2,828	26	5
b. Youth Justice Case Plans completed	90%	90%	100%	11	6
c. Child Protection Reports and Child Concern Reports about children and young people	18,000	9,000	9,667	7	7
d. Child Protection Reports requiring appraisal	2,500	1,250	546	-56	8
e. Number of child protection reports received and proceeding to appraisal that were substantiated	500	250	76	-70	9
f. Number of children and young people receiving a service during the year	2,800	2,800	2,021	-28	10
g. Number of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and young people receiving support during the year	630	630	637	1	
h. Total number of children and young people for whom the Director-General has parental responsibility	805	805	697	-13	11
i. Total out-of-home care days used annually	300,000	150,000	144,561	-4	

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Measures	2024-25 Targets	2024-25 Dec YTD Targets	2024-25 Dec YTD Results	Var. %	Notes
j. Number of out-of-home care days used by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and young people	89,000	44,500	43,805	-2	
k. Average investment per out-of-home care day	$275	$275	$328	19	12
l. Number of permanency placements	25	13	8	-38	13
TOTAL COST ($'000)	**187,894**	**93,947**	**111,714**	**19**	14
CONTROLLED RECURRENT PAYMENTS ($'000)	**164,777**	**82,389**	**107,406**	**30**	15

The above Statement of Performance should be read in conjunction with the accompanying notes.

Explanation of Accountability Indicators

a. The number of days served in custody by the young person.

b. The proportion of case plans prepared or reviewed within six weeks of the start of a supervised sentenced order.

c. The number of contacts by persons who believe or suspect that a child or young person is or has been abused or neglected counted for each individual child or young person.

d. A report is considered to require an appraisal if, on the basis of the information received and known history of the child or young person, there appears to be reasonable risk of abuse or neglect, or that the child or young person is likely to be in need of care.

e. An appraisal of a child or young person and their situation is recorded as 'substantiated' if in the professional opinion of the case manager there is reasonable cause to believe that the child has been, is being, or is likely to be physically or sexually abused, neglected or emotionally abused in a way that has caused or is causing significant harm.

f. The number of individual children and young people receiving appraisal, support and/or ongoing casework from Child and Youth Protection Services during the year.

g. The number of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander individual children and young people receiving appraisal, support and/or ongoing casework from Child and Youth Protection Services during the year.

h. The number of children on a given day who are subject to a child protection court order conferring part or sole parental responsibility to the Chief Executive or a Voluntary Care Agreement under section 397 of the *Children and Young People Act 2008*.

i. The number of days for which the Child and Youth Protection Services made a payment for overnight care of children in out of home care.

j. The number of days for which the Child and Youth Protection Services made a payment for overnight care of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children in out of home care.

k. The average cost per out-of-home care day for the Child and Youth Protection Services in ACT.

l. The number of permanency orders made throughout the year including inter-country adoptions, local adoptions, stepfamily or 'known' adoptions & Enduring Parental Responsibility orders.

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Output 2.3: Child and Youth Protection Services – Continued

Explanation of Material Variance (=>5%):

1. This figure fluctuates regularly and continues to be monitored as small changes have a large impact on the increase or decrease of the percentage. The 1% represents 1 re-substantiation. This indicator is based on measures reported nationally in the Report on Government Services. A reduction in this result is the desired outcome.
2. This figure fluctuates regularly and continues to be monitored as small changes have a large impact on the increase or decrease of the percentage. The 16% represents 11 re-substantiations. This indicator is based on measures reported nationally in the Report on Government Services. A reduction in this result is the desired outcome.
3. This is a positive result, however, it should be noted that the small numbers involved in sentenced supervision data may cause large fluctuations in the results. The 14% represents a total of 3 young people returning to supervision from a total of 22.
4. There are a range of factors that impact on this indicator including placement availability, supports and matching processes. The result indicates that 43 out of 74 children and young people exiting care for the period experienced placement stability and minimal placement disruption.
5. The increase is attributed to factors such as active police operations in the community and the nature and severity of young people's charges resulting in longer periods of remand and sentencing.
6. The above target result is a positive outcome with 100% of the eligible young people having a case plan prepared or reviewed within 6 weeks of the start of a supervised sentenced order.
7. The number of reports received can fluctuate depending on a range of factors, including but not limited to, community expectations and recent events in the media relating to child abuse and neglect, community education and change in the reporting partners.
8. This positive, lower than target result, indicates the number of Appraisals required has reduced and may relate to the increased focus on providing vulnerable families earlier supports.
9. The below target result can fluctuate depending on the results of the appraisal for each child or young person and indicates fewer children and young people reported to Children, Youth and Families experienced substantiated abuse and neglect.
10. This measure includes services across the continuum. Fewer services have been provided in the period partly due to normal fluctuations and in part due to considerably fewer appraisals being required in the period.
11. This is a positive result as it appears that over time, this number is incrementally decreasing from the original estimated target. There are various factors that could be contributing to this result including the number of substantiated abuse and neglect, and continued focus on family finding and on providing support service to ensure children and young people remain in family and home.
12. The higher than budgeted result is due to more intensive responses required for out-of-home care services and engaging more clinical assessments to provide evidence-based response for individuals.
13. The number of permanency orders finalised at court is lower than anticipated for local adoptions, stepfamily or 'known' out of home care adoptions. There are a number of matters that are now before the court and are expected to be finalised by the end of June 2025.
14. The higher than budgeted result is due to more intensive responses required for out of home care services and engaging more clinical assessments to provide evidence-based response for individuals.
15. The higher than budgeted result is predominantly due to the accelerated draw down of appropriation to fund community service providers in accordance with contract terms.