QTON No. 21

Legislative Assembly for the Australian Capital Territory

Standing Committee on Public Accounts and Administration

Inquiry into Annual and Financial Reports 2023-24

Answer to question taken on notice

Asked by: MS FIONA CARRICK MLA

Addressed to: Mr Russ Campbell, Acting Under Treasurer, Treasury, CMTEDD

In relation to: OUTPUTS IN ANNUAL BUDGET

Hearing: 13 February 2025
Uncorrected Proof Transcript pp 34
Transcript provided: 20 February 2025
Answer Due: 27 February 2025

Mr Russ Campbell took on notice the following question:

Ms Carrick: So do you just have a list of all the outputs, just like in a table of all the outputs in their annual budget and their year-to-date budget and their year-to-date expenditure, and a variance for where there is a greater than 5 per cent variance?

Mr Campbell: So there is a system called the GBMS where we actually receive that tracking data. I am happy to take it on notice and come back to you in some detail about what is there, just to help inform.

Ms Carrick: Yes, because I am just interested in how you track your expenditure and where it is—

Mr Austin: A lot of what you just asked for is in the annual reports so you can see some of that tracking there against the actuals versus the budget. But we can come back to you on—

Ms Carrick: But it is like, you know, I get scattered all over the place, like—

Mr Austin: Yes, there are quite a lot of outputs across the ACT public service, yes.

Ms Carrick: Yes, like, so if there is just one document that had a table of the outputs and how they were going—

Mr Austin: Yes, we will see what we can do, yes.

Ms Carrick: That would be great. Thank you.

Mr Austin: The other thing is, with the financial statements on a quarterly basis we can track against agencies as well. So you will be able to see—

Ms Carrick: Yes, I saw that. It is against agency but it is such high level. Like, how do you know where your pressures are at that level?

Mr Austin: Yes, yes.

Mr Campbell: So we will take that on notice because, I mean, I think it would probably help everyone if we just step through what is collected, who collects it and what information flows are, quarterly, monthly, that sort of—

Ms Carrick: Because it dials back into the forecast because without knowing your trends and your pressures and not putting any expenses in the forward estimates, it makes your bottom line look better.

MR CHRIS STEEL MLA, TREASURER: The answer to the Member's question is as follows:

Financial information is collected by Treasury in the following way:

- **Forecasts and estimates:** collected in the Government Budget Management System (GBMS) at agency level, entity segment (controlled and territorial), output class (operating statement only), outputs (total cost and recurrent appropriation only), initiative and Commonwealth grant against a whole of government chart of accounts and internal trading structure.
    - This information is collected at various points through the year to support production of the budget review, budget and any other updates (for example, a pre-election budget update).
- **Actuals:** actuals are collected in the Treasury Actual Reporting System (TARS) monthly from September through to June and various subsequent audit periods. No data is collected in July and August due to the finalisation of prior year financial statements and audits. Actuals data is collected at agency level and entity segment (controlled and territorial) against a whole of government chart of accounts and internal trading structure. Information at a lower level is not currently collected by Treasury outside of the capital works program which captures information on individual capital projects and milestones.
    - Phasing of the annual budget and updated estimated outcome is also collected in TARS (typically twice a year following a budget review or budget) to allow reporting of year-to-date actuals against year-to-date budgets (operating statement and cash flows only).
    - Variance narratives are also collected for all financial statement line items (for example, employee expenses, supplies and services, sales of goods and services) which exceed 5 per cent and $2 million compared to the year-to-date budget for the operating statement and cash flow.

Approved for circulation to the Standing Committee on Public Accounts and Administration

Signature:

Date: 26/2/25

By the Treasurer, Mr Chris Steel MLA