



Inquiry into the Fiscal Sustainability of the ACT

Answer to question on notice

Asked by: Ms Jo Clay MLA

Addressed to: Treasurer

In relation to: Commonwealth funding

Hearing: 05 March 2026

Transcript provided: 12 March 2026

Answer Due: 20 March 2026

(1) Did the ACT Government receive Commonwealth funding or commitments for these?

a) A dive pool for Canberra

b) Public housing funding in HAFF round 1, round 2 and round 3

c) The \$1 billion mental health facilities commitment in this announcement:

<https://www.markbutler.net.au/news/media-releases/strengthening-medicarelabor-to-deliver-1-billion-for-more-free-mental-health-services>

d) The \$10 billion City Deals program referenced in this paper:

<https://www.infrastructure.gov.au/sites/default/files/documents/regionalministerial-budget-statement-2022-23-investing-in-our-regions-with-purposeand-integrity.pdf>

e) Funding for public schools infrastructure, noting this AEU report -

<https://www.aeufederal.org.au/news-media/media-releases/2025/38-billionschool-infrastructure-gap-public-schools-left-behi>

f) Funding for Canberra to Sydney railway line, noting the recent \$230m Commonwealth funding provided for the Newcastle link.

g) Disaster Ready Fund

(2) If yes, please provide details like the funding amount, dates it will be provided and what the funds are for.

(3) If no, please provide details about what steps ACT Government took to get funding, such as applying for grants, submitting business cases or writing to decision makers.

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

Question 1 and 2:

- a. The Commonwealth Government has committed \$68.9 million in funding to plan, design and deliver the new Canberra Aquatic Centre in Commonwealth Park. The final scope of the facility will be subject to the development and finalisation of the business case and be informed by the Territory's finalised Aquatic Strategy.
- b. The ACT did not receive any funding in round 1 of the Housing Australia Future Fund (HAFF). However, 85 dwellings in the ACT were supported in Round 2 of HAFF, with funding flows to be received following completion. Round 3 of HAFF is still being considered.
- c. A Medicare Mental Health Centre was announced by the Commonwealth Government in Tuggeranong in August 2025. This is not funding through a federal financial agreement with the ACT Government. The ACT Government and Commonwealth Government made further joint announcements about mental health supports in March 2026: [New Youth Trauma Service launches to support young Canberrans - Chief Minister, Treasury and Economic Development Directorate](#)
- d. The ACT does not have a 'city deal' agreement with the Commonwealth Government.
- e. Public school infrastructure is predominantly the responsibilities of State and Territory Governments. The ACT has an extensive pipeline of public school infrastructure investment, available at [ACT Infrastructure Plan Update – Education](#). The Commonwealth has committed \$10 million as part of the Building Early Education Fund for an Early Childhood Education and Care Centre (ECEC) at the Whitlam ECEC – Year 6 primary school.
- f. The Government has not received Commonwealth funding towards the Canberra to Sydney railway line, but notes the recent listing of the project by Infrastructure Australia on the 2026 Infrastructure Priority List.
 - i. The Government has been successful in obtaining \$2.8 million in matched funding to support planning for urban renewal at the Kingston Railway Precinct through the Commonwealth's Urban Precincts Partnership Program.
- g. The ACT has received various amount of funding through rounds of the Disaster Ready Fund, including:
 - i. The ACT received \$6.859 million in 2023-24 with funding used to support a variety of projects including climate change ready infrastructure within Canberra's Nature Parks to allow safe passage for recreational users and emergency services personnel, flood studies and monitoring systems, and future proofing eroding landscapes and water ways to improve water quality entering the Cotter Dam.
 - ii. The ACT received \$7.615 million in 2024-25 with funding used to support several projects, including emergency readiness training for people from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds, improved resilience of

Canberra's urban forest to the impacts of climate change related natural disasters, and improved flood resilience for Canberra Avenue and nearby community assets.

- iii. In relation to future rounds, all states and territories are awaiting the release of the updated Guidelines from the Commonwealth, which will facilitate the development of project proposals. Once the Guidelines are released, the Justice and Community Services Directorate will work across government and with Community Service Organisations to collate project proposals that will constitute the ACT submission. It is anticipated the Guidelines will be released this financial year, and the outcomes known before the end of 2026.

Question 3:

- a. The ACT Government is working with NSW on future funding proposals to the Commonwealth regarding improvements to Canberra to Sydney rail consistent with the commitment between the Chief Minister and NSW Premier to establish a working group to develop a proposal for short term improvements.
- b. Under the National Capital Framework, the ACT Government has entered into a Federal Funding Agreement schedule for funding for the Canberra Aquatic Centre and Canberra Convention and Entertainment Centre Precinct.
- c. The ACT Government is also working closely with the Commonwealth on their master planning exercise for the Bruce Sports, Health and Entertainment Precinct inclusive of the AIS campus.
- d. The ACT Government was also successful in both gaining new and maintaining existing listings on Infrastructure Australia's 2026 Infrastructure Priority List.
- e. The ACT Government has routinely submitted proposals for consideration as part of the Disaster Ready Fund above and beyond approved projects by the Commonwealth.

Approved for circulation to the Select Committee on the Fiscal Sustainability of the ACT

Signature:



By the Treasurer, Chris Steel MLA

Date:

30/4/26