QON No. 30

Legislative Assembly for the Australian Capital Territory

Select Committee on the Fiscal Sustainability of the ACT

Inquiry into the Fiscal Sustainability of the ACT

Answer to question on notice

Asked by: Ms Jo Clay MLA

Addressed to: Treasurer

Redirected to: Minister for Transport

Reference: Transport Fares and Subsidies

Hearing: 02/06/2026
In relation to: Transport fares and subsidies
Question received: 10 July 2026
Answer Due: 17 July 2026

1. How much revenue did the Government forego from free fares on Friday and Saturday nights?
2. How much revenue does Government expect it would forego each month from making public transport free for all students (including part-time), all concession card holders and all seniors?
3. How much funding did the Government put into the aviation stimulus fund in 2024-25 and 2025-26?
4. Which wellbeing indicators are met by the ACT Government's maintenance of the aviation stimulus fund?
5. What is the aviation stimulus fund spent on? Is any of it used to directly subsidise flights in and out of Canberra?
6. What performance metrics do you use to assess the success of the aviation stimulus fund?
7. How much annual revenue would Government lose from making public transport free for all students (including part time students) and all concession card holders and all seniors, all the time?

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

1. Free fares on Friday and Saturday nights from 6pm commenced on 13th December 2025 and ended on Saturday 28th February 2026. It is estimated that $0.59 million was forgone in revenue from fares during this period.
2. Based on forecasted 2026-27 concession revenue figures, the Government would forego an average of $0.54 million in monthly revenue from making public transport free for all students (including part-time), all concession card holders and all seniors.

3. The Government works with Canberra Airport to attract direct services to Canberra and may enter into a marketing agreement with airlines to promote and support new route development and the marketing of Canberra as a tourist destination. These marketing agreements with airlines are commercial-in-confidence. However, more than $1.9 million has been invested across domestic and international airline partnerships over 2024-25 and 2025-26.

4. Investment in aviation meets wellbeing indicators across the Economic, Access and Connectivity, and Social Connection domains.

   Investment in aviation strengthens the ACT's economy by increasing visitation, supporting local businesses and jobs, and driving growth in a visitor economy that already attracts 4.6 million visitors and generates $3.3 billion in annual expenditure.

   Enhanced air connectivity also improves access to leisure, business, education and trade opportunities, while fostering social connections and community wellbeing by making Canberra more accessible to visitors, families and friends.

5. The Government enters into marketing agreements with airlines that promote and support new route development and the marketing of Canberra as a tourist destination. Subsidies are not included in the arrangements.

6. The commercial-in-confidence marketing agreements include key performance indicators including passenger bookings data and campaign metrics.

7. Based on forecasted 2026-27 concession revenue figures, the Government would lose approximately $6.53 million in annual revenue as a result of making public transport free for all students (including part-time students) and all concession card holders and all seniors, all the time.

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

Signature: Date: 16/7/25

By the Minister for Transport, Chris Steel MLA