



Inquiry into Appropriation Bill 2026–2027 and Appropriation (Office of the Legislative Assembly) Bill 2026–2027

Answer to question on notice

Asked by: Mr Thomas Emerson MLA

Addressed to: Minister for Police, Fire and Emergency Services

Reference: ACT Emergency Services Agency – Justice and Community Safety Directorate

Hearing: 28 July 2026

In relation to: Firefighter Recruitment

Question received: 28 July 2026

Answer Due: 12 August 2026

Contract PIJC0011707, worth \$450,000 and executed in May 2026, is for “a suitably qualified and experienced recruitment services provider to deliver end-to-end management of the ACT Fire & Rescue (ACTF&R) firefighter recruitment process.” Per the tender, “the Supplier will facilitate the recruitment services for a period of one year, supporting two recruitment intakes of approximately 16–20 firefighter recruits per intake.”

- (1) Does the ACT Government struggle to recruit firefighters?
- (2) How many firefighters have been recruited through this contract so far?
- (3) Why was an external recruitment services provider needed for this?
- (4) Who approved the level of expenditure on a recruitment services provider for this contract, and on what basis?

Dr Marisa Paterson MLA: The answer to the Member’s question is as follows:

- (1) No.
- (2) Zero, as the contract was only executed in May 2026. The contractor has been engaged to manage recruitment processes which relate to future Recruit Colleges. It is important to note that while the maximum overall contract value is up to \$450,000, there is an approved expenditure per recruitment process and each recruitment process can cover more than one Recruit College.
- (3) The process to recruit firefighters is comprehensive, with several key stages required to be coordinated, including, but not limited to:
 - application management;
 - aptitude testing;
 - beep test facilitation;

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- teamwork assessments;
- physical aptitude testing;
- formal interviews; and
- medical and psychometric testing.

Using an external provider ensures access to specialist recruitment expertise, enhancing recruitment capability and efficiency, while allowing internal teams to focus on core business and operational priorities.

- (4) Approvals for the contract in question were provided by officers in the ACT Emergency Services Agency. The evaluation team's recommendation and the decision to proceed with the contract were approved by an operational delegate for the services. A separate officer with the appropriate financial delegation provided the subsequent financial approval and approved the execution of the contract.

Approved for circulation to the Select Committee on Estimates 2026–2027

Signature: 

Date: 14/8/26

By the Minister for Police, Fire and Emergency Services, Dr Marisa Paterson MLA