

Chris Steel MLA

Treasurer

Minister for Planning and Sustainable Development

Minister for Heritage

Minister for Transport

Member for Murrumbidgee

RESPONSE TO QUESTION ON NOTICE**Questions on Notice Paper No 7****16 May 2025****Question No. 449****MS BARRY MLA** – To ask the Minister for Planning and Sustainable Development -

1. In relation to shipping containers on residential properties, how many complaints have been made through Fix my Street, contact with a Directorate, contact with a Minister or directly to Access Canberra, in relation to a temporary (less than 12 months) placement on a residential property in the Ginninderra electorate, in the last five financial years including 2024-2025 to date.
2. How many compliance checks have been made in each of the financial years referred to in part (1) in relation to those complaints.
3. Can the Minister provide a table showing the outcomes of compliance actions in relation to those complaints.
4. How many applications have been made, and how many were approved for long term use of shipping containers in the Ginninderra electorate for the financial years referred to in part (1).
5. Can the Minister provide a breakdown of approvals by purpose, i.e. storage, accommodation etc.
6. Are there any requirements for shipping containers to be painted to blend into their environment.
7. Is it possible to object to a shipping container on the basis of appearance or consistency with the environment.
8. What is the minimum distance a container can be placed adjacent to a rear fence, a side fence and the front boundary of a property.
9. What contact has the ACT Government had with companies supplying shipping containers, to ensure installers comply with installation requirements.
10. Has any compliance or enforcement action taken place in relation to shipping container installer's non-compliance with ACT law, in the financial years referred to in (1).



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

1. 22.

2. The number of compliance checks cannot be determined without manual interrogation of each complaint and would require significant diversion of resources.

3. Refer to question two.

4. The specific information requested cannot be provided without a significant diversion of resources. The Territory Planning Authority (Authority) does not keep specific records of shipping containers in the development application process. Recorded information is generally focussed on development type and use, not the materials or specifics of the structure e.g. residential, mixed use, industrial, outbuilding (e.g. class 10 structure) etc.

Shipping container information could be extracted but would need significant manual effort i.e. reviewing every development application. It is important to note that shipping containers may also be exempt from the development application process under Section 1.59 (shipping containers) or Section 1.37 (Temporary buildings and other structures) of the *Planning (Exempt Development) Regulation 2023*.

5. The Authority does not keep records of this information. The specific information requested cannot be provided without a significant diversion of resources.

6. Currently, there are no specific requirements that a shipping container be painted to blend into the surrounding environment. If a shipping container were to be approved by the Authority, there could be scope to ensure the visual impact is minimised by imposing conditions of approval in the decision. An exempt shipping container has no requirements in this respect.

7. In some cases, requirements for the appearance of structures, such as shipping containers, can be made by the Authority placing conditions on the approval. If an application was made to the Authority for a shipping container on a block, a member of the public can object on the basis of appearance and inconsistency with the environment during the notification period and this would then be considered in the assessment. Conditions may be placed on the approval to address this. The Authority must be satisfied assessment outcomes are met, in this case relating to outcome 6 in the Residential Zones Policy: '*Adverse impacts of the development on surrounding uses is minimised and residential amenity is protected*'. If a shipping container is determined to be exempt, there are no grounds for objection and no conditions can be applied.

8. Setbacks for shipping containers, and buildings or structures generally, vary depending on the zone, block size (compact, medium or large), and applicable boundary. A large (>500m²) single dwelling residential block would have a 1.5m side setback, 3m rear setback, and 4-6m front setback as per the Residential Zones Technical Specification. If a shipping container is exempt, there is still a requirement that it not be within the *boundary clearance zone* which is a 1.5m setback from all side and rear boundaries.

9. None. Under planning legislation, the onus is on the lessee to ensure that structures on the block are compliant.

10. No.

Approved for circulation to the Member and incorporation into Hansard.



Chris Steel MLA
Minister for Planning and Sustainable Development

Date: 11/6/25