

Senate Standing Committee on Environment and Communications
Legislation Committee
Answers to questions on notice
Environment portfolio

Question No: 349
Hearing: Supplementary Budget Estimates
Outcome: Corporate
Programme: Policy Analysis and Implementation
Topic: "ONE IN, ONE OUT" REGULATORY BURDEN POLICY
Hansard Page: N/A
Question Date: 29 October 2014
Question Type: Written

Senator Waters asked:

In May estimates 2014 the Department provided initial responses on the Government's "regulatory offsets" policy, the idea that if the Department or Government wishes to propose a new regulatory burden, you need to offset this by removing regulatory burden.

1. Please describe any "offset processes" that you've used to date.
2. Who checks compliance with is policy, is it the Dept of Finance or Treasury?
3. Is it correct to say that, even where the case for increased regulation (say to protect a highly endangered species) is clear, the Department could not propose this unless you were able to also identify regulations or compliance obligations you can cut?
4. Is there that much regulatory "fat" in the system, or does this risk tying the Govt's hands in responding to new environmental pressures/ disasters?
5. Are we at the high water mark of environmental regulation in Australia?

Answer:

- 1 - 5 The Regulatory Burden Measurement Framework sets out that all Commonwealth departments and agencies need to identify measures that offset (in dollar terms) the cost impost of any new regulations on business, not-for-profits or individuals.

The Office of Best Practice Regulation in the Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet are responsible for ensuring offset compliance.

The Department, like all Commonwealth agencies, is required to identify deregulatory opportunities on an ongoing basis and ensure appropriate offsetting mechanisms to continue to reduce regulatory burden across the community. Offsets and the broader deregulation agenda will not reduce the effectiveness of environmental regulation.