

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

**Question No:** 178

**Hearing:** Supplementary Budget Estimates

**Outcome:** Corporate

**Programme:** Policy and Communications Division

**Topic:** Portfolio Wide – Commissioned Reports

**Hansard Page:** N/A

**Question Date:** 27 November 2013

**Question Type:** Written

**Senator Ludwig asked:**

Since 7 September 2013, how many Reports have been commissioned by the Government in your department/agency?

Please provide details of each report including date commissioned, date report handed to Government, date of public release, Terms of Reference and Committee members.

How much did each report cost/or is estimated to cost? How many departmental staff were involved in each report and at what level?

What is the current status of each report? When is the Government intending to respond to these reports?

**Answer:**

Three

**Implementation of the National Urban Water Planning Principles**

The report will comprise eight case studies on the implementation of the National Urban Water Planning Principles.

Commissioning date: 28 November 2013

Handed to Government: It will be provided to COAG ministers responsible for water.

Date of public release: To be determined

Terms of Reference: Examine the water plans and planning processes of a minimum of eight urban water utilities to analyse and report on: the extent of implementation of the National Urban Water Planning Principles (the Principles); and their role in advancing new approaches to planning, such as: risk or adaptive management planning, including real-option planning; water sensitive urban design; and integrated urban water management.

Committee members: None

Cost: \$29,931

Staff involved: One EL1 officer and one APS5 officer

Current status: The report has commenced

Government response: Not applicable

**Ensuring priority conservation values are protected if limited cattle grazing is conducted at Henbury Station.**

Commissioning date: 18 October 2013

Handed to Government: 29 November 2013

Date of public release: 3 December 2013

Terms of Reference: To document Henbury Station's high conservation value areas and identify the sustainable cattle carrying capacity.

Committee members: None

Cost: \$7,990

Staff involved: One SES officer

Current status: Accepted by the Department

Government response: No response required

**Great Artesian Basin Sustainability Initiative (GABSI) Value for Money Review.**

Commissioning date: October 2013

Handed to Government: Estimated early 2014

Date of public release: To be determined

Terms of Reference:

The Service Provider will:

- a) have regard to the objectives and outcomes of the GABSI, as specified in the GABSI National Partnership Agreement;
- b) develop objective metrics to:
  - i. measure the return on investment achieved by respective governments over the 3 phases of GABSI up to 30 June 2013; and
  - ii. assess whether the completion of GABSI 3 represents value for money, compared to the return on government investment over the 3 phases of GABSI, up to 30 June 2013.

In developing the metrics and making the assessment, the Service Provider will:

- a) present a clear rationale, based on the relevant literature, for the metrics;
- b) consider a 'total economic value' approach in assessing 'return on investment', recognising direct use values (for example, town water supplies), indirect use values (for example, tourism), and non-use values (for example, amenity and cultural values), where practicable; and in so doing, will
- c) have regard to (a number of specified) publications."

Committee Members: One officer from the Australian, NSW, Queensland and South Australian government agencies with responsibilities for water.

Cost: \$64,790

Staff involved: One SES officer, one EL2 officer and one APS6 officer

Current status: Not yet complete

Government response: Yet to be determined