

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

Question No: 48

Hearing: Supplementary Budget Estimates

Outcome: Outcome 5

Programme: Environment Assessment and Compliance Division

Topic: Approval Decision Undetermined Prior to the Election

Hansard Page: 24

Question Date: 18 November 2013

Question Type: Spoken

Senator Ruston asked:

Senator RUSTON: How many decisions, particularly in relation to the water trigger, have been made post the election to date?

Mr Knudson: As of now, there are 48 decisions which have been made.

Senator RUSTON: Do you have an idea of the value of those projects?

Mr Knudson: I do not at hand.

Senator RUSTON: If you would take that on notice, that would be great. Thank you

Answer:

Information required to be provided with *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act* referral and assessment documentation is intended to inform the Department about the environmental impacts of any given proposal. Financial information provided in these documents is often inconsistent and not formally validated by the Department. Further, commercial-in-confidence concerns are often raised around the incorporation of valuation of projects in referral and assessment documentation. As such, the Department is in possession of often limited information with regard to the financial value of proposals.

However, as the 48 projects in question are all either large coal mines or coal seam gas projects, their overall financial value is likely to be several \$100 billion on a “life of project” basis.