

Senate Standing Committee on Education and Employment
QUESTIONS ON NOTICE
Supplementary Budget Estimates 2013-2014

Outcome 2 - Schools and Youth

Department of Education Question No. ED0205_14

Senator Ruston asked on 20 November 2013, Hansard page 84

Question

Building the Education Revolution (BER) project delays in completion

Senator RUSTON: Staying on the BER, I want to get a bit of an idea on the background. I wondered whether you had available, or you can put on the record, how many projects reported a delay in their completion in this whole program. Mr Hehir: I think the initial audit from the ANAO identified that about 18.6 per cent of projects were completed on time. Senator RUSTON: 18.6 per cent completed on time? Mr Hehir: I think that is correct, but I will check. Senator RUSTON: So 81.4 per cent did not complete on time. I would be interested to know the numbers: how many did not meet their full completion date. Mr Hehir: Yes. Pg 85- Senator RUSTON: How many projects would have commenced after 31 March 2011? Mr Hehir: I do not have those figures in front of me, but we can certainly take that on notice. Senator RUSTON: The final completion date was supposed to be 31 March 2011, wasn't it? Mr Hehir: Yes. Senator RUSTON: You do not even have an idea of whether it was two, 20, 200 or 2000? Mr Hehir: I do not have that figure in front of me. Senator RUSTON: What would have been the reasoning behind approving projects past this particular date, given that it was the date they were supposed to be completed by? Mr Hehir: Schools and authorities were allowed to use funding, say from other projects, for further projects. The most recent set of announcements were for the New South Wales government, where I think 19 special schools received funding from funds held by the New South Wales government, so they had additional projects provided for those schools. Senator RUSTON: It would be interesting to know some sort of quantum in terms of numbers and costings for those. Ms Paul: Yes, we will have those. Mr Hehir: We will have to take that on notice.

Answer

The ANAO Audit Report No.33, Building the Education Revolution – Primary Schools for the 21st Century, released 5 May 2010, states (pg15) 'Of the 10 700 approved BER P21 projects, 1995 projects (18.6 per cent) of BER P21 projects met the construction commencement milestones originally agreed by governments for each funding round'. The ANAO report refers to commencement milestone and not projects that have completed late.

As at 31 October 2013, 4947 or 21.0 per cent of Building the Education Revolution (BER) projects were completed beyond their expected completion date.

36 BER projects commenced after 31 March 2011 with the total approved funding of \$122 096 829.