



Senator Karen Grogan
Chair
Senate Environment and Communications Legislation Committee
Parliament House
CANBERRA ACT 2600

Dear Senator Grogan

Having reviewed the transcripts of the Additional Estimates hearings conducted by the Senate Environment and Communications Legislation Committee on 24 and 28 February 2025, the Department of Climate Change, Energy, the Environment and Water would like to provide the following **five** factual corrections to the Committee.

Correction 1

During the hearing on 24 February 2025, the Chair, Senator Grogan said in relation to the Maugean skate:

"Thank you. During the last number of months, there have been a range of commitments made regarding the salmon industry. Can you talk us through what those government commitments have been."

In response Ms Parry said:

*"Obviously aside from the commitments around legislation that we've just been canvassing, the government has committed \$37.5 million for a range of different activities to protect the skate and to continue to support the salmon industry in Macquarie Harbour. Most recently, this past weekend, the Prime Minister announced an additional \$2.9 million for the maugean skate captive breeding program, but I will ask my colleagues to go through the **previous** commitments that make up that \$37.5 million"*

This answer should be corrected to:

"Obviously aside from the commitments around legislation that we've just been canvassing, the government has committed \$37.5 million for a range of different activities to protect the skate and to continue to support the salmon industry in Macquarie Harbour. Most recently, this past weekend, the Prime Minister announced an additional \$2.9 million for the maugean skate captive breeding program, but I will ask my colleagues to go through the commitments that make up that \$37.5 million"

Correction 2

During the hearing on 28 February 2025, Senator Perin Davey asked in relation to where the 100 gegalitres is going to come from:

"Is that modelling publicly available?"

In response Ms MacRae said:

*“That’s a valid approach to take in many respects because, if you look at annual trading volumes for different water right types, the ones where the trading volumes are quite large—so there’s a lot of private trade happening every year—tend to align with where the Commonwealth Environmental Water Holder historically has recovered more water, because that makes sense. **The 70 gigalitres only had 13 water right types in scope**—it wasn’t open slather, if that makes sense—so the water recovery that we can do through that tender is quite specific to those areas. In the ATM, the approach to market, that went out with the 70-gigalitre tender, **we also committed that, where possible, we would maintain a balance between basin states and between catchments as best we could—given that it is a pool of willing sellers, so we’re limited to people who are willing to sell—and balance that impact as best we could.** Equally, this is an ongoing process and, every time we move through the purchasing process, that will inform the design of the next purchasing program. Referring to EOI-1, which is currently under evaluation, as the outcomes emerge from the 70 gigalitres and anything potential out of EOI-2, that will inform the design of EOI-1.”*

This answer should be corrected to:

“...The 70 gigalitres only had 14 water right types in scope...In the Restoring Our Rivers Trading Strategy 2024–25 (February 2025), we stated that, where possible, we would maintain a balance between basin states and between catchments as best we could—given that it is a pool of willing sellers, so we’re limited to people who are willing to sell—and balance that impact as best we could...”

Correction 3

During the hearing on 28 February 2025, Senator Davey said in relation to the 70 gigalitre purchasing timelines:

“When are you expecting to have all the contracts signed?”

In response Ms MacRae said:

*“Because it does rely on third parties, we can’t speak for their time commitments. The trading strategy does speak to our **intent to try to have it done by July 2025.**”*

This answer should be corrected to:

*“Because it does rely on third parties, we can’t speak for their time commitments. The trading strategy does speak to our **intent to continue purchasing from this tender into 2025.**”*

Correction 4

During the hearing on 28 February 2025, Senator Blyth said in relation to the Resilient Rivers Water Infrastructure Program:

“Just an overview of where it is up to”

In response Ms MacRae said:

“When the Resilient Rivers Water Infrastructure Program was announced it had \$495 million allocated to it. It’s designed to fund state-led projects that will deliver

infrastructure in irrigation areas in order to create water savings that can then be credited to the 450... **We also have a program that we have approved for funding. That's to \$20 million and that's for the South Australian government to work with their communities to find small-scale efficiency projects that they can then fund through the funding we provide them and work to deliver them.**"

This answer should be corrected to:

*"When the Resilient Rivers Water Infrastructure Program was announced it had \$495 million allocated to it. It's designed to fund state-led projects that will deliver infrastructure in irrigation areas in order to create water savings that can then be credited to the 450... **We also have a feasibility project for a program that we have approved for funding. That's to \$4.07 million and that's for the South-Australian government to work with their communities to find small-scale efficiency projects that they can then fund through the funding we provide them and work to deliver them.**"*

Correction 5

During the hearing on 28 February 2025, Senator Davey said in relation to the two Expressions of Interest for voluntary water purchase:

'you've got EOI 1 underway, and you've not yet progressed to making offers; you've got EOI 2 underway, where you've progressed to making offers; and you've also got the Aboriginal water entitlements program purchases underway. So you are in the water market under four different processes all at once. Is there any room for other water market players at the moment, or is it just the government that is purchasing water?'

In response Ms MacRae said:

*'With **EOI 1**, we have finished stage 1, and the update to the trading strategy on Monday indicates that we are progressing towards stage 2, with a notion of being able to recover, potentially, up to 100 gigalitres. So that's program approval. Individual procurements and the next steps underneath that program will occur over the coming months, as the trading strategy sets out.'*

This answer should be corrected to:

*"With **EOI 2**, we have finished stage 1..."*

Yours sincerely



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11 April 2025

