

AUSTRALIAN RENEWABLE ENERGY AGENCY

Senate, Economics Legislation Committee - Thursday 29 August 2024

(Future Made in Australia Bill 2024; Future Made in Australia (Omnibus Amendments No. 1) Bill 2024)

Senator Nick McKim asked:

ARENA can currently only engage staff that are employed by the Department and made available to them by the Secretary. Is additional money being transferred from the Department's budget to ARENA to cover staff costs?

What is the total amount that will be spent out of ARENA's budget rather than the Department on staff?

Answer:

ARENA's current workforce is made up of two employees (the Chief Executive Officer and the Chief Finance Officer), 38 staff seconded from the Department under section 62, consultants engaged to provide technical and specialist advisory services under section 63, and a cohort of labour hire contractors.

Under the proposed changes to the ARENA Act, ARENA would be granted the general right to employ. This change will ensure that ARENA can offer secure, direct employment to our workforce.

The Department allocates funding to ARENA to cover staffing costs. this allocation is separate to ARENA's statutory fund to be provided in the Bill.

ARENA has not finalised the details of its future engagement model, including the ongoing transfer of Departmental staff and associated costs.