

SELECTION OF BILLS COMMITTEE

REPORT NO. 12 of 2007

9 August 2007

MEMBERS OF THE COMMITTEE

Senator Stephen Parry (Government Whip, Chair)

Senator George Campbell (Opposition Whip)

Senator Andrew Bartlett (Australian Democrats Whip)

Senator Fiona Nash (The Nationals Whip)

Senator Rachel Siewert (The Australian Greens Whip)

Senator Steve Fielding (The Family First Whip)

Senator the Hon. Eric Abetz

Senator Joe Ludwig

Senator Julian McGauran

Senator Ruth Webber

Secretary: Richard Pye
 6277 3020

SELECTION OF BILLS COMMITTEE

REPORT NO. 12 OF 2007

1. The committee met in private session on Wednesday, 8 August 2007 at 4.17 pm.
2. The committee resolved to recommend—That the *provisions* of the Water Bill 2007 and Water (Consequential Amendments) Bill 2007 be *referred immediately* to the Environment, Communications, Information Technology and the Arts Committee for inquiry and report, **but was unable to reach agreement on a reporting date**. (see appendix 1 for statements of reasons for referral).
3. The committee resolved to recommend—That the following bills *not* be referred to committees:
 - Independent Contractors Amendment Bill 2007
 - Migration (Climate Refugees) Amendment Bill 2007
 - Peace and Non-Violence Commission Bill 2007
 - Public Interest Disclosures Bill 2007.

The committee recommends accordingly.

4. The committee considered a proposal to refer the Lobbying and Ministerial Accountability Bill 2007 to the Finance and Public Administration Committee, but **was unable to reach agreement on whether the bill should be referred**.
5. The committee deferred consideration of the following bills to its next meeting:
 - Australian Securities and Investments Commission (Fair Bank and Credit Card Fees) Amendment Bill 2007
 - Migration Legislation Amendment (Restoration of Rights and Procedural Fairness) Bill 2007.

(Stephen Parry)
Chair
9 August 2007



THE SENATE
CANBERRA ACT 2600

SELECTION OF BILLS COMMITTEE

Proposal to refer a bill to a committee

Name of bill: Water Bill 2007
Water (Consequential Amendments) Bill 2007

Reasons for referral/principal issues for consideration: See attached

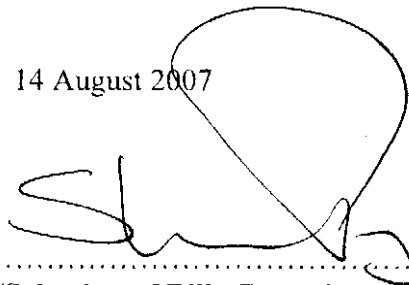
Possible submissions or evidence from:

Committee to which bill is to be referred: Environment, Communications, IT and the Arts

Possible hearing date (s): 10 August 2007

Possible reporting date: 14 August 2007

(signed)


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Whip/Selection of Bills Committee member

**STATEMENT OF REASONS FOR INTRODUCTION AND PASSAGE
IN THE 2007 SPRING SITTINGS**

**WATER BILL
WATER (CONSEQUENTIAL AMENDMENTS) BILL**

Purpose of the Bills

The Water Bill establishes an overriding Commonwealth water resource management function across the Murray-Darling Basin and a national water data collection, analysis and information service within the Bureau of Meteorology.

The Water (Consequential Amendments) Bill makes amendments to the *Meteorology Act 1955*, the *National Water Commission Act 2004*, and the *Trade Practices Act 1974* in order to give effect to the Water Bill.

Reasons for Urgency

The Water Bill and the Water (Consequential Amendments) Bill are necessary to implement the measures contained within the National Plan for Water Security.

These bills are necessary to implement the measures contained within the National Plan for Water Security.

The current arrangements for the management of the Murray-Darling Basin by consensus of the relevant states, the Australian Capital Territory, and the Commonwealth have failed to deliver timely and adequate responses to the accelerating over use and degradation of the water resources of the Basin. The National Plan for Water Security provides for these measures to be addressed subject to placing the Basin under overriding Commonwealth authority.

These bills, together as a package, provide for Commonwealth management of the Murray-Darling Basin and are a prerequisite for the implementation of the assistance and reform measures set out in the National Plan for Water Security. Failure to implement the measures quickly will delay the reforms and allow the degradation and over use of the waters of the Murray-Darling Basin to compound.



AUSTRALIAN SENATE

SELECTION OF BILLS COMMITTEE

Proposal to refer a bill to a committee

Name of Bill: Water Bill 2007

Reasons for referral/principal issues for consideration:

Very significant change to land & water management in the Murray Darling system.

Possible submission or evidence from:

Farmers
Farmer organisations
environment groups
local government
state government

Committee to which bill is to be referred:

Rural & Regional Affairs
& Transport

Possible hearing date(s):

Possible reporting date:

10 Sept 2007

Whip/Selection of Bills Committee member