

Senate Finance and Public Administration Legislation Committee
ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON NOTICE
Budget Estimates 2017 - 2018

Prime Minister and Cabinet Portfolio

Department/Agency: Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet
Outcome/Program: Outcome 1: Prime Minister and Cabinet
Topic: Snowy Hydro Project

Senator: Wong

Question reference number: 63

Type of question: FPA Tuesday 23 May 2017, pages 88 & 89 & 90

Date set by the committee for the return of answer: 7 July 2017

Number of pages: 1

Question:

Senator WONG: So, the Prime Minister's department became aware of an announcement which was subsequently indicated to be \$2 billion and has now been increased, nine days before the announcement was made by the Prime Minister.

Mr Yeaman: In terms of that specific proposal, yes. I think what I would add is that there had been and has been a series of advice provided to cabinet and the government around the energy market generally, including gas, electricity and the security needs of the electricity market. So, there have been a series of discussions and advice provided to government over a period of time around the overall needs of the electricity sector.

Senator WONG: Did any of that advice contemplate a \$2 billion project?

Mr Yeaman: Certainly that advice incorporated and covered the need for ancillary services within the National Electricity Market.

Senator WONG: Did any of that advice contemplate a Snowy Hydro project of the scale and ilk that was then announced?

Mr Yeaman: I would have to go back and check the precise detail. There had been a number of discussions around potential projects that could support the security of the National Electricity Market. But that proposal itself, Snowy 2.0, was 7 March. Our first visibility of that was 7 March.

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Senator WONG: Were there any costings associated with the submission that went to cabinet on the Snowy 2.0 project?

Mr Yeaman: I do not recall; I would have to check it.

Answer:

It is a longstanding practice not to disclose information about the operation and business of the Cabinet, as to do so could potentially reveal the deliberations of the Cabinet, which are confidential. As such, further details of this approval process and the associated briefing cannot be disclosed.