

Question on notice no. 165

Portfolio question number: 165

2017-18 Additional estimates

Rural and Regional Affairs and Transport Committee, Agriculture and Water Resources Portfolio

Senator Sarah Hanson-Young: asked the Murray-Darling Basin Authority on 2 March 2018—

1. The initial report of the Northern Basin Review: understanding the economic, social and environmental outcomes from water recovery in the Northern Basin suggested that the impact on flows into South Australia from the proposed 70 GL reduction in water recovery targets would be 20 GL. Was the embargoed report circulated to anybody outside the Murray-Darling Basin Authority?
2. If so, could you please provide a copy of any written correspondence regarding the embargoed report to persons not employed by the Murray-Darling Basin Authority, as well as any covering letters?
3. What date was the Scenario K model run taken to the Authority Board?
4. When was Scenario K first made publicly available?
5. What date was Scenario K first requested, and by whom?
6. What date was Scenario K first run?

Answer —

See attached

Rural and Regional Affairs and Transport Legislation Committee

ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

Agriculture and Water Resources Portfolio

Hearing: Additional Estimates, March 2018

Question Number: 165

Division/Agency: Murray–Darling Basin Authority

Topic: The Northern Basin Review

Proof Hansard Page: Written

Senator HANSON-YOUNG asked:

1. The initial report of the Northern Basin Review: understanding the economic, social and environmental outcomes from water recovery in the Northern Basin suggested that the impact on flows into South Australia from the proposed 70 GL reduction in water recovery targets would be 20 GL. Was the embargoed report circulated to anybody outside the Murray-Darling Basin Authority?
2. If so, could you please provide a copy of any written correspondence regarding the embargoed report to persons not employed by the Murray-Darling Basin Authority, as well as any covering letters?
3. What date was the Scenario K model run taken to the Authority Board?
4. When was Scenario K first made publicly available?
5. What date was Scenario K first requested, and by whom?
6. What date was Scenario K first run?

Answer:

1. Yes, the embargoed report was circulated to the members of a number of state and community advisory committees as part of the MDBA's consultation process to finalise the Northern Basin Review.
2. As identified in response to element 1 of this question, the embargoed report was circulated to the Northern Basin Intergovernmental Working Group, the Northern Basin Senior Officials Group, the Deputy Prime Minister's Office, a contractor engaged to assist with the Northern Basin Review and the Chair of the Basin Community Committee.

A copy of the correspondence from the MDBA to each of these entities providing the embargoed report is attached, namely:

- Attachment 1: Correspondence from the MDBA to the members of the Northern Basin Intergovernmental Working Group dated 8 November 2016.
- Attachment 2: Correspondence from the MDBA to the members of the Northern Basin Senior Officials Group dated 8 November 2016.

Question Number: 165 (continued)

- Attachment 3: Correspondence from the MDBA to the Deputy Prime Minister's Office dated 15 November 2016.
- Attachment 4: Correspondence from the MDBA to a contractor engaged to assist with the Northern Basin Review dated 15 November 2016.
- Attachment 5: Correspondence from the MDBA to the Chair of the Basin Community Committee dated 16 November 2016.

The Northern Basin Intergovernmental Working Group included members from the following organisations: New South Wales Department of Primary Industry – Water, New South Wales Office of Environment and Heritage, the Queensland Department of Natural Resources and Mines, the Queensland Department of Science, Information Technology and Innovation, the Commonwealth Environmental Water Office and the Commonwealth Department of Agriculture and Water Resources.

The Northern Basin Senior Officials Group included members from the following organisations: New South Wales Department of Primary Industries Water, the Queensland Department of Natural Resources and Mines, the Commonwealth Environmental Water Office and the Commonwealth Department of Agriculture and Water Resources.

3. At their meeting on the 8th of November the Authority was given a verbal update that Scenario K was underway and was providing the expected results (i.e. based on learnings from previous scenarios), but that detailed quality assurance was still required before the run could be finalised and the results released.
4. The Northern Basin Review Interim Decision Scenario Addendum to the Hydrologic Modelling Report detailing scenario K was published on MDBA website on the 29th of November 2017.
5. At the meeting on the 13th of October 2016, the Authority examined all available material gathered during the review period and selected the 320 GL + toolkit configuration for the proposed amendment. At this same meeting, the Authority requested that this configuration to be modelled, and was given the label 'Scenario K'.
6. Northern Basin Review hydrologic model scenario K was run between the 25th of October and the 9th of November 2016. Detailed quality assurance was not complete until January 2017.

From: Northern Basin
Sent: Tuesday, 8 November 2016 1:58 PM
To: Brent Williams; [REDACTED]
Cc: [REDACTED]
Subject: NBIWG - Northern Basin Review Report for feedback by 1pm Friday 11 November [SEC=UNCLASSIFIED]
Attachments: Northern Basin Review Report 8 NOV States.docx; Plain english summary 8 NOV States.docx

Dear Northern Basin Intergovernmental Working Group members,

Please find attached a draft of the Northern Basin Review Report.

Please be aware that this document contains sensitive water market information, including water announcements as defined in the Basin Plan 2012. You should be aware of your obligations associated with knowledge and distribution of this information, including restrictions on undertaking trading activities and procuring others to trade.

The scope of the report is to describe the Authority's decision at a high level. Most of the evidence base is referenced in other documents.

As was agreed at the Senior Officials meeting, we are seeking your feedback on the sections relating to Cap factors, the distribution of the shared reduction amount and toolkit measures. We've highlighted the relevant sections for your reference.

We would especially appreciate your feedback on the highlighted sections, although comments on other sections of the report are welcome.

Please be aware that we've yet to do full layout and editing, and some elements may appear differently in the final version.

Could you please provide your feedback via email to northernbasin@mdba.gov.au by 1pm Friday 11 November.

Also attached is the Plain English Summary for the proposed amendments. It covers all the proposed amendments, including those proposed as a result of the Northern Basin Review. We would appreciate any feedback on this document by 1pm Friday 11 November.

Kind regards,

[REDACTED]
Assistant Director
Northern Basin | Policy & Planning



Australian Government



Murray-Darling Basin Authority
GPO Box 1801 Canberra ACT 2601
p: (02) 6279 0723
f: (02) 6248 8424
e: [REDACTED]
w: www.mdba.gov.au

From: Northern Basin
Sent: Tuesday, 8 November 2016 3:44 PM
To: [REDACTED] Phillip Glyde
Cc: [REDACTED] Brent
Subject: Williams; Russell James; Carl Binning; Peta Derham; Northern Basin Senior Officials - Northern Basin Review Report for feedback by 1pm Friday 11 November [DLM=Sensitive]
Attachments: Northern Basin Review Report 8 NOV States.docx

Dear Senior Officials,

As discussed at the Senior Officials meeting on Friday 4 November, please find attached a draft of the Northern Basin Review Report for your feedback.

Please be aware that this document contains sensitive water market information, including water announcements as defined in the Basin Plan 2012. You should be aware of your obligations associated with knowledge and distribution of this information, including restrictions on undertaking trading activities and procuring others to trade.

The scope of the report is to describe the Authority's decision at a high level. Most of the evidence base is referenced in other documents. Please be aware that we've yet to do full layout and editing, and some elements may appear differently in the final version

As was agreed at the Senior Officials meeting, we are seeking your feedback on the sections relating to Cap factors, the distribution of the shared reduction amount and toolkit measures. We've highlighted the relevant sections for your reference.

We would especially appreciate your feedback on the highlighted sections, although comments on other sections of the report are welcome.

Could you please provide your feedback via email to northernbasin@mdba.gov.au by 1pm Friday 11 November.

For your information, an exposure draft of the Plain English Summary accompanying the proposed Basin Plan amendments will be circulated to BPIC members shortly.

Kind regards,

[REDACTED]
Assistant Director
Northern Basin | Policy & Planning



Australian Government



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From: Russell James
Sent: Tuesday, 15 November 2016 5:20 PM
To: [REDACTED]
Cc: [REDACTED] Brent Williams; Phillip Glyde; Amy Leung; [REDACTED]
Subject: HPE CM: FW: MDBA BRIEF ON NORTHERN BASIN REVIEW OUTCOMES
[DLM=Sensitive:Legal]
Attachments: Attachment E Valley by valley breakdown of Northern Basin Review outcomes.docx;
Attachment B Plain English summary of the proposed Basin Plan amendments.pdf;
Attachment C Basin Plan amendment proposed public consultation approach.pdf;
Attachment D Ministerial talking points.docx; Attachment A Draft Northern Basin Review
Report.pdf; MS16-002348 - Brief on Northern Basin Review Outcomes - Signed.pdf

Hi Matt

Given timing and travel, I thought I would email this straight to you. We will put through the paper system as well.

Thanks, Russell

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: Tuesday, 15 November 2016 4:28 PM
To: [REDACTED]
Subject: HPE CM: NBR report - rj comments [SEC=UNCLASSIFIED]
Attachments: NBR report - rj comments.docx

From: Russell James
Sent: Wednesday, 16 November 2016 4:10 PM
To: [REDACTED]
Subject: NBR report

Hi [REDACTED] – as discussed, latest draft report for info.
See you tomorrow

Thanks, Russell

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