

**Senate Community Affairs Committee**  
**ANSWERS TO ESTIMATES QUESTIONS ON NOTICE**  
**FAMILIES, HOUSING, COMMUNITY SERVICES AND**  
**INDIGENOUS AFFAIRS PORTFOLIO**  
**2013-14 Budget Estimates Hearings**

**Outcome Number:** 2

**Question No:** 255

**Topic:** NRAS

**Hansard Page:** Written

**Senator Payne** asked:

Given the extended delays between the close of application rounds and the announcement of recipients, what has been done to improve departmental management of this program?

**Answer:**

The department has made a number of changes to improve the application process for this program, these include:

- Electronic submission of applications for both the Shovel Ready and Round Five rounds;
- Automated confirmation of receipt provided immediately after lodgement of applications under Round Five;
- Automated application form to improve its useability, ie only if you indicate you have consortium members will the spaces open up for their entry;
- Automated checks to ensure applicants complete all required items;
- Streamlining of dwelling schedule, i.e. requests for information not considered essential to the assessment process have been removed and a number of automated checks have been included to assist applicants in consistently reporting things such as dwelling numbers;

The department has also developed an online assessment capacity which will increase operational efficiencies and provide an electronic audit trail of application and decision outcomes.