

**Senate Standing Committee on Environment and Communications**  
**Legislation Committee**  
Answers to questions on notice  
**Environment portfolio**

**Question No:** 44  
**Hearing:** Additional Estimates  
**Outcome:** Outcome 1  
**Programme:** Wildlife Heritage and Marine Division (WHM)  
**Topic:** National Whale Stranding Action Plan  
**Hansard Page:** N/A  
**Question Date:** 23 February 2015  
**Question Type:** Written

**Senator Wright asked:**

The government allocated \$750,000 to a National Whale Stranding Action Plan “to identify the most effective means of preventing and responding to whale strandings on our coastline” in the lead up to the 2013 Federal Election.

1. What proportion of this money has been spent thus far?
2. Please provide a breakdown of how this funding has been spent.
3. Please also provide a state-by-state breakdown of the funds that have been spent.
4. What are the strategic priorities of this plan and is it publicly available?
5. If not, will it be made available?

**Answer:**

1. Nil. The Australian Government is currently liaising with the states and Northern Territory to finalise a National Partnership Project Agreement for the distribution of the funds. An amount of \$584,304 is allocated over three years to assist states and the Northern Territory in responding to whale stranding and entanglement events.

The Department is finalising arrangements for the remaining funds (approximately \$166,000) to be spent on the research component of the National Whale Stranding Action Plan.

2. No funding has been spent to date, but Table 1 (below) outlines the allocated financial contribution to the states and Northern Territory, once agreement is reached.

**Table 1: Estimated financial contributions**

(\$ )	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	Total
<b>Estimated total budget</b>	<b>274,708</b>	<b>86,821</b>	<b>222,775</b>	<b>584,304</b>
Less estimated National Partnership Payments				
New South Wales	37,938	12,403	31,825	<b>82,166</b>
Victoria	33,075	12,403	31,825	<b>77,303</b>
Queensland	39,668	12,403	31,825	<b>83,896</b>
Western Australia	67,637	12,403	31,825	<b>111,865</b>
South Australia	27,998	12,403	31,825	<b>72,226</b>
Tasmania	34,659	12,403	31,825	<b>78,887</b>
Northern Territory	33,733	12,403	31,825	<b>77,961</b>
<b>Subtotal</b>				
Commonwealth Own-Purpose Expenses	0	0	0	0
Balance of non-Commonwealth contributions	0	0	0	0

3. See table 1 (above).

4. The Coalition announced the \$2 million Whale and Dolphin Protection Plan in a media release on 23 August 2013. The three elements of the Plan include:

- The *National Dolphin Conservation Plan* to fund targeted research into the status and ongoing management and understanding of dolphins in Australian waters.
- The *National Whale Trail* to fund the installation of whale viewing platforms and interpretive materials to support community education and whale tourism opportunities.
- The *National Whale Stranding Action Plan* to help state and territory Governments coordinate, understand and better respond to whale strandings in Australian waters.

\$750,000 was allocated to the National Whale Stranding Action Plan to identify the most effective means of preventing and responding to whale strandings on our coastline. The priorities of this initiative include further research in the area of whale strandings, and assistance for the states and the Northern Territory in responding to whale stranding and entanglement events.

5. Refer to Question 4 response.