

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

Question No: 46
Hearing: Additional Estimates
Outcome: Outcome 1
Programme: Wildlife Heritage and Marine Division (WHM)
Topic: Necropsies of stranded whales in South Australia
Hansard Page: N/A
Question Date: 23 February 2015
Question Type: Written

Senator Wright asked:

There is some concern that the recent strandings may have been caused by acoustic trauma which could be related to seismic surveys taking place in South Australian waters.

Has the Department considered approaching the companies conducting those surveys to see if they will cover the costs of necropsying?

Answer:

No, the Department has not considered approaching companies to cover the costs of necropsies.

In state and territory waters (within 3 nautical miles of the coastline), it is the responsibility of the state and territory governments to protect and manage whales and dolphins. This includes responding to cetacean incidents such as entanglement and stranding events.

In Commonwealth waters, the National Offshore Petroleum Safety and Environmental Management Authority (NOPSEMA), which is a part of the Industry and Science portfolio, is responsible for investigating incidents that relate to offshore petroleum activities. This includes incidents related to seismic surveys.