

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

Question No: 94
Hearing: Additional Estimates
Outcome: Outcome 2
Programme: Climate Change and Renewable Energy (CCARE)
Topic: Coal Seam Gas emissions
Hansard Page: N/A
Question Date: 24 February 2016
Question Type: Written

Senator Waters asked:

1. I notice on your outcomes structure a section called “Coal Seam Gas – Emissions” – what does that section do?
2. How many FTE does it have?
3. When was it established?
4. What is its objective? Are you doing a review of the emissions factors for fugitives in CSG production?
5. Does that section liaise with the CSIRO team working on the fugitives project for DoE prog 4.1/Office for Water Science?

Answer:

1. The Department of the Environment’s National Inventory Team advances deliverables under Outcome 2 including in relation to measurement, reporting and verification issues associated with coal seam gas emissions.
2. 0.1 FTE is allocated to this work.
3. The Department initiated a program of methodology review for fugitive emissions from unconventional gas in April 2012.
4. The objective of this work is to improve the understanding of the greenhouse gas emission profile for Australia’s unconventional gas production. The Department is collaborating with CSIRO to undertake a field measurement program in order to improve emission measurement methods associated with unconventional gas operations in Australia.
 - In the first phase of work, CSIRO collected equipment leakage measurements from coal seam gas wells in Queensland and New South Wales. The final report is published on the Department’s website at www.environment.gov.au/system/files/resources/57e4a9fd-56ea-428b-b995-f27c25822643/files/csg-fugitive-emissions-2014.pdf
 - A second phase of collaborative work with CSIRO is underway to collect field data measurements from well completions.

The Department will use the outcome of the measurement program to test and improve emission estimation methods.

5. The National Inventory Team is responsible for the fugitives project under Outcome 2, so works closely with CSIRO on this project. The Team also liaises with the DoE Office for Water Science which is leading the Australian Government's efforts to improve understanding of the water-related impacts of coal seam gas and large coal mining development under Outcome 4.1.