

**Senate Standing Committee on Environment and Communications
Legislation Committee**

Answers to questions on notice
Environment and Energy portfolio

Question No: 160
Hearing: Additional Estimates
Outcome: Outcome 2
Program: International Climate Change and Energy Innovation Division (ICCEID)
Topic: Wind and solar
Hansard Page: -
Question Date: 8 March 2017
Question Type: Written

Senator Roberts asked:

Please provide evidence that wind and solar can provide base load power while still allowing any needed reliable generators to be profitable?

Answer:

While the contribution of wind and solar power to the National Electricity Market (NEM) has increased in recent years, this makes up a relatively small component of current generation. According to the Australian Energy Regulator and Australian Energy Market Operator, wind and large scale solar power contribute 7.5% and 0.5% of the NEM's generation capacity. Thermal generation through black coal, brown coal and gas supplies 71% of the NEM's generation capacity. The relatively small capacity of wind and solar generation in the NEM means there is still significant demand for existing coal and gas generation to supply profitable forms of generation.