

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

Question No: 279
Hearing: Additional Estimates
Outcome: Agency
Programme: Clean Energy Regulator
Topic: Expected renewable energy generation in 2017
Hansard Page:
Question Date: 14 March 2017
Question Type: Written

Senator Back asked:

Referring to the Renewable Energy scheme, it was stated that the level of generation for 2016 is 17,300 GWh. According to the legislation the target for 2016 was 21,431 GWh, leaving a shortfall of 4,131 GWh. It was stated that there was 494 MW of new capacity that has been accredited. This new generation would be expected to generate approximately 1,500 GWh. Therefore the expected generation for 2017 would be approximately 18,800 GWh, yet it was stated that the expected generation for 2017 will be around 20,000 GWh. Please explain the difference.

Answer:

In 2016 17,300 Large-scale Generation Certificates were validated. The 20,000 gigawatt hour (GWh) number is simply an estimate and, as stated by the Clean Energy Regulator's officials at the Additional Estimates hearing (see excerpt of Hansard below), the actual number may be higher or lower. The difference between the estimates of 18,800 GWh and 20,000 GWh is primarily due to two factors:

1. At the time of the hearing, the Clean Energy Regulator had an early indication of an increase in generation from hydro; and
2. The generation expected from power stations that will be accredited in 2017 and hence create Large-scale Generation Certificates for a part year.

As stated at the Additional Estimates hearing of 27 February 2017:

Senator BACK: What do you predict 2017 will be?

Mr Williamson: Firstly, I would like to wholly qualify this answer. There are a lot of things that can vary the pace at which new construction that has been announced might come on and start generating. Also, hydro can vary materially between a good and a bad year. So with those sorts of qualifications I would say that this year I would expect something around 20,000 gigawatt hours.