

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

Question No: 276
Hearing: Budget Estimates
Outcome: Agency
Programme: Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority
Topic: ABBOT POINT APPROVAL
Hansard Page: N/A
Question Date: 17 June 2014
Question Type: Written

Senator Waters asked:

I understand that GBRMPA did not directly brief the Minister until the final decision brief was sent in late 2013. Did GBRMPA ever convey to the Minister, by oral or written briefing, the concern that the proposed water quality offsets were “unachievable”?

Answer:

The Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority provides input and advice to the Department of the Environment for assessment and decisions under the *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999* (EPBC Act) where an action is in the Marine Park.

Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority provided advice (both oral and written) to the Department regarding offsets for the proposal. This culminated in written advice provided to the Department on 15 November 2013, which included a statement that a net improvement in water quality is achievable.

Since the approval of the dredging and disposal proposal pursuant to the EPBC Act, the proponent has been developing the various plans required relating to approval conditions, and has been liaising with the Department of the Environment and the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority. The Offsets Plan relating to condition 31 of the EPBC approval is yet to be completed and submitted.