

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

Question No: 73
Hearing: Budget Estimates
Outcome: Outcome 1.5
Programme: Environment Assessment and Compliance Division (EACD)
Topic: Melville Island
Hansard Page: 30
Question Date: 26 May 2015
Question Type: Spoken

Senator Waters asked:

Senator WATERS: The Northern Territory government had not informed you that that was now a new activity being undertaken on the site?

Mr Gaddes: I would have to take that one on notice. It starts to get quite detailed.

Senator WATERS: Thank is why we are in estimates.

Senator Birmingham: The question is taken on notice.

Answer:

The Northern Territory Environment Protection Agency (NT EPA) advised the Department on 18 July 2013 of construction of a marine supply base and floating wharf on Melville Island.

The Department made subsequent enquiries and on 25 August 2013 the Tiwi Land Council advised that the works related to rehabilitation of a log export facility damaged by a cyclone, and not a marine supply base. The Department was further advised by Tiwi Land Council that approvals under the *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999* (EPBC Act) would be sought if and when the marine supply base was to be developed.

The Department's compliance officers spoke to NT EPA officers again in November and December 2014. The Department was advised that the NT EPA held information relevant to the Department's enquiries, and that their preferred method of releasing the information was via a statutory notice under the EPBC Act. A Notice to Produce was issued to NT EPA in February 2015 and the information was provided in March 2015.