

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

**Question No:** 10  
**Hearing:** Budget Estimates  
**Outcome:** Outcome 4  
**Program:** Commonwealth Environmental Water Office (CEWO)  
**Topic:** Murray-Darling Basin environmental research  
**Hansard Page:** 76  
**Question Date:** 05 May 2016  
**Question Type:** Spoken

**Senator Singh, Lisa asked:**

**Mr Thompson:** That is this program area. The MDB environmental research that you just referred to, as the footnote says, remains with the department and is administered by the Commonwealth Environmental Water Holder, so it is one of David Papps's subprograms.

**Senator SINGH:** What about 'services for other entities and trust moneys'—that \$510,000?

**Mr Thompson:** What page are you on?

**Senator SINGH:** I am on program 4.1.

**Mr Thompson:** I would have to take it on notice. Sorry, I do not have an answer for that one.

**Answer:**

The \$510,000 of expenditure relates to intergovernmental agreements covering the administration of the Great Artesian Basin Sustainability initiative and the Lake Eyre Basin. These programs operate through a trust account as the contributions include monies held on behalf of State Governments.

At the time of the Administrative Arrangements Order dated 21 September 2015 and 30 September 2015, responsibility for these intergovernmental agreements transferred to Department of Agriculture and Water Resources. The Department of Agriculture and Water Resources is in the process of creating a new trust account to receive the relevant funds. Until this trust account is established the funding for the agreements remains with the Department of the Environment and Energy. The new trust account is expected to be available to receive funds through the 2016 Mid Year Economic Fiscal Outlook process.