

**Senate Standing Committee on Environment and Communications**

**Answers to Senate Estimates Questions on Notice**

**Budget Estimates May 2017**

**Communications Portfolio**

**Department of Communications and the Arts**

**Question No: 25**

**Program 1.1**

**Hansard Ref: Page 73, 24/05/2017**

**Topic: Broadband Monitoring Scheme**

**Senator O'Neill, Deborah asked:**

**Senator O'NEILL:** I have some questions around the broadband monitoring scheme. Is the broadband speed monitoring scheme a decision of government which the ACCC will implement or is it a decision by the ACCC which the government has agreed to fund?

**Mr Robinson:** It is a decision of government that the ACCC will implement.

**Senator O'NEILL:** On 7 April 2017, Minister, you put out a media release which indicated that the ACCC would receive, if I am correct, \$7 million to undertake the trial over four years—is that correct?

**Senator Fifield:** That is correct. That was in the release.

**Senator O'NEILL:** Budget Paper No. 2 shows \$5.3 million of funding over the forward estimates. There is a bit of a gap there. Can you confirm the missing \$1.7 million has been allocated over 2021-22?

**Senator Fifield:** I will ask officers to talk through the working of the levy arrangements.

**Ms Spaseski:** I will have to double check that for you. I was not aware. The \$1.7 million represents year 1 of funding, which is the 2017-18 year.

**Senator O'NEILL:** I have line 72, an extract from Budget Paper No. 1, which says \$2 million, then \$1.7 million and then \$1.6 million.

**Ms Spaseski:** That is the appropriation to the ACCC?

**Senator O'NEILL:** Yes, but the announcement was \$7 million, and that only adds up to \$5.3 million.

**Ms Spaseski:** I will take that on notice. I will double check that for you.

**Mr Robinson:** We will have to take it on notice. We think there will be an explanation for that. There might possibly be a year, either in the outer year or earlier, but the number is \$7 million.

**Ms Spaseski:** That is right.

**Mr Robinson:** We will have to check why that reads as it does.

**Answer:**

Funding of \$7 million over four years (to 2020-21) will be provided to the Australian Competition Consumer Commission ACCC to implement the Broadband Performance Monitoring and Reporting program (BPMR).

The BPMR program is cost recovered from industry. There is a well-established practice, enabled by the *Telecommunications (Carrier Licence Charges) Act 1997*, that the ACCC's costs in relation to its telecommunications functions being recovered from the industry via the Annual Carrier Licence Charge which is administered by the Australian Communications and Media Authority. Cost recovery is in arrears.

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Budget Paper 2 contains the following information:

**Table 1: revenue measures pp 72- Australian Communications and Media Authority**  
(Communications and the Arts)

\$2.0m in 2018-19, \$1.7m in 2019-20 and \$1.6m in 2020-21

**Table 2 expense measures pp 72- Treasury**

\$2.0m in 2017-18, \$1.7m in 2018-19, \$1.6m in 2019-20 and \$1.7m in 2020-21.