

**Senate Standing Committee on Environment and Communications
Legislation Committee**

Answers to questions on notice
Environment and Energy portfolio

Question No: 126
Hearing: Budget Estimates
Outcome: Outcome 1
Program: Environment Standards Division (ESD)
Topic: National Environment Protection Council arrangements
Hansard Page: 74
Question Date: 23 May 2017
Question Type: Spoken

Senator Waters asked:

Senator WATERS: I have just two final small questions. These ones will hopefully be quick. Is it your view or the view of the department that the current National Environment Protection Council arrangements can deliver a robust national toxic pollutant inventory, or is it necessary to create a stronger national arrangement with capacity and authority to audit data, investigate anomalies and misleading reports, and prosecute polluters who report in a false or misleading way?

Mr McNee: Certainly I can say that there is an ongoing interest from all jurisdictions in ensuring that the National Pollutant Inventory is capable of delivering what it set out to do. I am not sure whether you are aware or not that the ministers agreed and announced quite a comprehensive review of the National Pollutant Inventory, as required under the legislation. In fact, the review canvasses many of the points that you have just made there about whether we have a thing. I am in a position to table the terms of reference for that.

Senator WATERS: Yes, could you. What was the date of that announcement?

Mr McNee: I think it was 10 March. Sorry, actually I will have to come back to you on that.

Answer:

The independent review of the National Pollutant Inventory was announced by the National Environment Protection Council on 25 November 2016. The terms of reference for the review are on the National Pollutant Inventory website at:

<http://www.npi.gov.au/resource/national-pollutant-inventory-review-2017-terms-reference>