

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

Answers to questions on notice
Environment and Energy portfolio

Question No: 196
Hearing: Budget Estimates
Outcome: Agency
Program: ARENA
Topic: Joint feasibility study with Snowy Hydro
Hansard Page: 20
Question Date: 23 May 2017
Question Type: Spoken

Senator Chisholm asked:

Senator CHISHOLM: ARENA has been tasked with conducting a joint feasibility study with Snowy Hydro into the Snowy Hydro expansion. When did you first become aware of ARENA's role in the feasibility study?

Mr Frischknecht: ARENA makes its own investment decisions. The way this works, as with every other project, is that there is an approach from a proponents—in this case, Snowy Hydro—and then we make an assessment. We have an assessment process, we have an independent advisory panel and then we make a decision, which sometimes is within my delegation and sometimes goes up to the board. In this case, the Snowy Hydro proposal did go through our normal processes.

Senator CHISHOLM: Did the proposal come from Snowy Hydro to do the feasibility study?

Mr Frischknecht: Yes, it did.

Senator CHISHOLM: When did that proposal come from Snowy Hydro?

Mr Frischknecht: I will have to take it on notice as to the exact dates, but what I can tell you is that there were discussions going on for quite some time before March in our processes. That is the pertinent fact—how long we were in discussions—because the formal application date can sometimes happen either very early on in that process or quite late in that process. But we can provide you with all the dates.

Answer:

ARENA received a draft of the application to ARENA for funding on 8 March 2017. The draft was revised and reviewed over the period to 13 March 2017.

ARENA met with Snowy Hydro representatives on 24 February 2017 and 2 March 2017 (both at Snowy Hydro Sydney offices) in relation to the proposed project as well as to outline the ARENA funding process.