

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

**Question No:** 207  
**Hearing:** Budget Estimates  
**Outcome:** Agency  
**Program:** ARENA  
**Topic:** Advisory board  
**Hansard Page:** 37  
**Question Date:** 23 May 2017  
**Question Type:** Spoken

**Senator Carr asked:**

Senator KIM CARR: I would like to know what paperwork was presented to you on 24 February, and between that time and when the advisory board met—what date did the advisory board meet?

Mr Frischknecht: Again, we would have to take that on notice.

Senator KIM CARR: Thank you. And what was shown to the advisory board to warrant their recommendation to support the initial grant?

Mr Frischknecht: Yes.

**Answer:**

ARENA met with Snowy Hydro representatives on 24 February 2017 and 2 March 2017. At these two meetings, Snowy Hydro presented to ARENA various drawings and figures related to expansion opportunities that have been developed over time with regards to the Snowy Hydro Scheme. It was requested that ARENA not retain a copy of these documents.

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. There was regular dialogue between Snowy Hydro and ARENA during this period.

The documents submitted to ARENA during the period to 13 March 2017 included:

- Project Application: a 10 page submission as completed via the ARENA submission portal (ARENAnet)
- Project plan document: a 41 page pdf document outlining the proposed feasibility and proposed project.
- Summary application: a one page document with Applicant details

ARENA finalised its assessment documents (merit assessment report) for the \$500,000 funding application on 14 March 2017.

Snowy Hydro submitted its Application under ARENA's Advancing Renewables Program. The Application consisted of a series of documents that were assessed by ARENA in accordance with the guidelines for this program.

ARENA's Knowledge Sharing Framework for all pumped hydro energy storage project applications was developed by an expert member of the ARENA Advisory Panel together with ARENA staff. The Snowy Hydro Limited Application was reviewed against this framework, but was not separately assessed by the ARENA Advisory Panel. For further detail please note the letter 'clarification of hansard record' at [Attachment A](#).



Australian Government

Australian Renewable  
Energy Agency

**ARENA**

GPO Box 643  
Canberra ACT 2601  
Tel: +61 2 6276 1000  
ABN: 35931927899  
[www.arena.gov.au](http://www.arena.gov.au)

31 May 2017

Ms Christine McDonald  
Committee Secretary  
Senate Standing Committees on Environment and Communications  
PO Box 6100  
Parliament House  
Canberra ACT 2600

Emailed to: [ec.sen@aph.gov.au](mailto:ec.sen@aph.gov.au)

Dear Ms McDonald,

**RE: Senate Estimates - correction of the record**

On 23 May 2017, the Australian Renewable Energy Agency (ARENA) appeared before the Senate Environment and Communications Legislation Committee's 2017-18 Budget Estimates hearings, under the Environment and Energy Portfolio.

I appeared before the Committee as an official witness in my capacity as Chief Executive Officer of ARENA. I would like to provide clarification regarding my response to questions from Senator Carr, regarding the funding application approval process for Snowy Hydro Limited's feasibility study into the potential expansion of the Snowy Scheme's pumped hydro storage capability. On page 37 of the Proof Committee Hansard it states:

*Senator Kim Carr: You went to the Snowy in Cooma, did you?*

*Mr Kay: No, the Snowy office in Sydney.*

*Senator Kim Carr: In Sydney. And they showed you what?*

*Mr Kay: We had discussions with them about what it was that we are proposing to do. We said yes in terms of the expansion. We said, 'Yes, that seems interesting; can you put a full application in,' and they put the full application in.*

*Senator Kim Carr: So, on the basis of that conversation, \$500,000 was granted, on your authority. Is that the basis?*

*Mr Frischknecht: Yes, but there was a formal application and assessment process, including our advisory panel. We had an expert adviser look at-*

*Senator Kim Carr: So, on their recommendation, you have signed off on that \$500,000, have you?*

*Mr Frischknecht: The advisory panel gets involved, yes.*

*Senator Kim Carr: You have signed off on that, on the basis of the recommendation of the advisory panel?*

*Mr Frischknecht: Yes.*

Clarification

Snowy Hydro Limited submitted its Application under ARENA's Advancing Renewables Program. The Application consisted of a series of documents that were assessed by ARENA in accordance with the guidelines for this program.

ARENA's Knowledge Sharing Framework for all pumped hydro energy storage project applications was developed by an expert member of the ARENA Advisory Panel together with ARENA staff. The Snowy Hydro Limited Application was reviewed against this framework, but was not separately assessed by the ARENA Advisory Panel.

If you have any questions regarding this clarification, please contact me at

Yours sincerely,

Ivor Frischknecht  
Chief Executive Officer