

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

Question No: 110
Hearing: Supplementary Budget Estimates
Outcome: Outcome 1
Programme: Environment Assessment and Compliance Division
Topic: HANDOVER OF COMMONWEALTH ENVIRONMENTAL APPROVAL POWERS
Hansard Page: N/A
Question Date: 29 October 2014
Question Type: Written

Senator Waters asked:

The MCA has assumed that delays will decrease by one or two years, which is far beyond anything even this government has ever claimed, but the Department's report describes the MCA's report as "comprehensive modelling." Please provide an explanation for why the Department believes that the MCA's report is comprehensive.

- a. Did the Minister's office instruct the Department to include the MCA figure? Did the Minister's office suggest including the figure?
- b. Did the Minister's office review the RIS before it was published?
- c. Did the Minister's office suggest any amendments to the RIS?
- d. What were those amendments?
- e. Were they adopted?

Answer:

The Department's method for estimating cost savings to business under the One-Stop Shop for environmental approvals was consistent with the Australian Government's Regulatory Burden Measurement Framework (RBMF). The RBMF considers only direct savings from reduced compliance costs and delay costs to business.

The modelling presented in the Minerals Council of Australia's report, *The economic gains from streamlining the process of resource projects approval*, undertaken by the independent economic consultants BAEconomics, can be considered comprehensive as it takes a broad scope and includes both direct and indirect costs to business and the Australian economy.

- a. The Department briefed the Minister for the Environment, the Hon Greg Hunt MP. The briefing included information about the Minerals Council of Australia's figures and a comparison with the Department's method.
- b. The Department briefed the Minister for the Environment, the Hon Greg Hunt MP. The briefing included information about the Minerals Council of Australia's figures and a comparison with the Department's method.
- c. The Minister's office did not suggest amendments to *Regulatory cost savings under the One-Stop Shop for environmental approvals*.
- d. Not applicable. Refer to c above.
- e. Not applicable. Refer to c above.