

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

Question No: 124
Hearing: Supplementary Budget Estimates
Outcome: Outcome 1
Programme: Environment Assessment and Compliance Division
Topic: MAULES CREEK COAL MINE - INVESTIGATION
Hansard Page: N/A
Question Date: 29 October 2014
Question Type: Written

Senator Waters asked:

In cases of this nature where there is intense contention is it the Department's usual practice to refrain from conducting a site visit?

Please advise of a comparable case in which the Department refrained from conducting a site visit.

Answer:

The Department did visit the site during the assessment of the project.

The level of public interest alone does not determine when the Department conducts site inspections. The Department uses a risk based approach to monitor compliance with the conditions of approvals.

The National Environmental Significance Threat and Risk Assessment (NESTRA) tool informs the Department's EPBC Compliance Monitoring Plan 2014-15. NESTRA allows the Department to focus its compliance monitoring activities on those projects which provide the greatest risk to matters on national environmental significance.