

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

Question No: 280
Hearing: Supplementary Budget Estimates
Outcome: Corporate
Programme: Corporate Strategies Division
Topic: PORTFOLIO WIDE - GRANTS ADMINISTRATION
Hansard Page: N/A
Question Date: 29 October 2014
Question Type: Written

Senator Ludwig asked:

1. Since Budget Estimates in June, 2014, what guidelines are in place to administer grants?
 - a. How are grants applied for?
 - b. Are there any restrictions on who can apply for a grant? If yes, please detail.
 - c. Can these restrictions be waved? If yes, please detail the process for waving them and list any grants where the restrictions were waved.
2. What is the procedure for selecting who will be awarded a grant?
 - a. Who is involved in this selection process?
 - b. Does the minister or the minister's office play any role in awarding grants? If yes, please detail.
 - c. Has the minister or the minister's office exercised or attempted to exercise any influence over the awarding of any grants? If yes, please detail.

Answer:

1. All grants or grant programmes are governed by guidelines, specific to that grant or grant programme. The Department of the Environment (the department) publishes on its website (and Portfolio agency websites) information on grants and grant programmes in compliance with the reporting requirements outlined in the *Commonwealth Grant Rules and Guidelines (CGRGs)*.

The Department of the Environment

<http://www.environment.gov.au/about-us/grants-funding>

Murray-Darling Basin Authority

<http://www.mdba.gov.au/about-mdba/tenders-grants>

Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority

<http://www.gbrmpa.gov.au/about-us/corporate-information/grants>

- 1a. Refer above.
- 1b. Most grant programmes are released on a competitive basis (see above), however a small proportion of one-off grants or targeted grants are not required to be published under the *Commonwealth Grant Rules and Guidelines (CGRGs)*.
- 1c. Refer to answer 1.
2. Refer to answer 1.
- 2a. Refer to answer 1.

2b. Yes, the Department seeks approval from the Minister for the Environment for all administered grants over \$5,000.

The Portfolio agencies listed below use a discretionary model for the approval of grants which involves the referral of some grants to the Minister for the Environment based upon an assessment of the significance (scope and value), sensitivity, relevance of grants to other matters of relevance at the time.

Murray-Darling Basin Authority

<http://www.mdba.gov.au/about-mdba/tenders-grants>

Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority

<http://www.gbrmpa.gov.au/about-us/corporate-information/grants>

The Portfolio agencies listed below do not administer grants or grant programmes:

Bureau of Meteorology

<http://www.bom.gov.au/water/regulations/fundingProgram/index.shtml>

Clean Energy Regulator

<http://ret.cleanenergyregulator.gov.au/>

National Water Commission

<http://www.nwc.gov.au/>

Sydney Harbour Federation Trust

<http://www.harbourtrust.gov.au/>

2c. Refer to answer 2b.