

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

Question No: 137
Hearing: Supplementary Budget Estimates
Outcome: Outcome 1
Program: Environment Standards Division (ESD)
Topic: One Stop Shop
Hansard Page: n/a
Question Date: 01 November 2016
Question Type: Written

Senator Urquhart, Anne asked:

The “one stop shop” was intended to increase efficiency? Has this occurred? Are more projects being assessed? Is the time taken to assess projects increasing or decreasing?

Answer:

The “one stop shop” was intended to increase efficiency? Has this occurred?

Over the last term of government, most components of the One-Stop Shop reforms under the EPBC Act were delivered.

- New assessment bilateral agreements are in place with all jurisdictions and the Department is working to make joint assessments as seamless as possible.
- Complementary policy innovations include increased reliance on state conditions of approval, the promotion of outcomes-based conditioning of all proposals, and streamlined post-approval requirements for proponents.
- The National Offshore Petroleum Safety and Environmental Management Authority strategic assessment has created a single federal regulator for offshore oil and gas approvals.

Are more projects being assessed?

The number of projects referred and assessed under the EPBC Act each year is dependent on a range of factors, including economic trends and the geographic distribution of development activity across the country. Over the past three financial years the number of projects referred and assessed under the EPBC Act has declined.

	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16
Projects referred under the EPBC Act	304	225	209
Projects requiring assessment and approval (‘controlled action decisions’)	105	82	72

Is the time taken to assess projects increasing or decreasing?

On current figures, between the 2010/11 and 2013/14 financial years the average number of days to approval for projects referred under the EPBC Act decreased by 33 per cent.

The last two financial years (2014/15 and 2015/16) were not used for this analysis as more than half of the controlled actions referred in those years are yet to be completed.