

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

**Question No:** 143  
**Hearing:** Supplementary Budget Estimates  
**Outcome:** Outcome 1  
**Program:** Environment Standards Division (ESD)  
**Topic:** Assessment Processes and Resources  
**Hansard Page:** n/a  
**Question Date:** 01 November 2016  
**Question Type:** Written

**Senator Urquhart, Anne asked:**

The Commonwealth focusses on specific things in the EPBC Act. How do you know the States have the correct level of knowledge and experience in these areas? Has this information been gathered? Audited?

**Answer:**

To ensure State and Territory governments are familiar with EPBC Act requirements, the Department has a range of measures in place:

- Assessment bilateral agreements have been established between the Commonwealth and each jurisdiction. These stipulate the legal obligations of State and Territory governments under the EPBC assessment process.
- Out-posted Departmental officers have been embedded on a temporary basis with the Queensland, Western Australia, NSW and ACT Governments.
- Senior Officers Committee meetings are held regularly between the Commonwealth and other jurisdictions.
- The Department regularly develops and updates various statutory plans, policies, guidelines and spatial datasets to provide information and guidance on matters of national environmental significance.