

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

Question No: 195
Hearing: Supplementary Budget Estimates
Outcome: Outcome 2
Program: International Climate Change and Energy Innovation Division (ICCEID)
Topic: Phase 2 CSG Fugitive Emissions Draft Report
Hansard Page: 24
Question Date: 21 October 2016
Question Type: Spoken

Senator Waters, Larissa asked:

Senator WATERS: Have you provided suggestions on—

Mr Archer: We have provided some comments, yes.

Senator WATERS: What is the nature of those comments?

Mr Archer: I do not have those with me.

Senator WATERS: Could you provide those on notice?

Mr Archer: We will see what we can provide on notice.

Senator WATERS: This has been about a year delay. What is the cause of that delay?

Mr Archer: I am not sure that there is any specific reason or explanation for the delay. But I can take that on notice to see if there is anything in particular.

Answer:

Delay

For the Phase 2 CSIRO project on CSG fugitive emissions, field campaigns were made at two gas fields in the Surat Basin in Queensland during September/October 2015 and March 2016.

The initial timeframe of the project was 12 months; however, participation for the project was not secured within this period. As a result, the project was extended to allow sufficient time for negotiations to continue to enlist the support of CSG operators.

The first offer of site access was received in June 2015 and a preliminary site visit was made to two completion rigs on 31st July 2015. The actual field measurements were subsequently conducted over two weeks in September and October 2015.

During October 2015, an offer of well access was received from a second company to measure emissions from a series of hydraulic fracturing and well completion operations scheduled for early 2016. However, this project was later cancelled and some of the key staff involved with the project left the company. A subsequent offer was received from the same company and measurements were made for well completions conducted during March 2016.

The report is expected to be finalised before the end of the year.

Comments

The Department has made comments on the draft project design and report of several types – comments that relate to:

1. maximising the sample of wells where measurements were to be taken given the resources available;

2. enhancing transparency in relation to the descriptions of measurement processes undertaken; and
3. clarifications of the relationship between inventory methods and the empirical results to ensure like-with-like comparisons were made in the report.

The report is expected to be finalised before the end of the year.