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

Question No: 222

Hearing: Supplementary Budget Estimates

Outcome: Outcome 2

Program: International Climate Change and Energy Innovation Division (ICCEID)

Topic: Renewable Energy Produced by the Hydro and Snowy Mountain Hydro

Hansard Page: n/a

Question Date: 24 October 2016

Question Type: Written

Senator Lambie, Jacqui asked:

Isn't it the case that not all renewable energy produced by Hydro and the Snowy Mountain hydro is counted in the national RET.

Answer:

This question was answered by Ms Munro in her opening statement on page 106 of the Hansard from 17 October 2016 and here quoted.

"To turn to Senator Lambie's questions about the baselines, I just want to comment that the purpose of the renewable energy target—that is, the legislated scheme—is to provide incentives for additional renewable energy generation above the generation that was already in place when the target was first legislated in 2001. In fact, in addition to the hydropower stations, there are 49 others which have baselines, and they are mostly biomass of various sorts: landfill gas, sewage gas, bagasse, which is waste by-product from sugar processing and so forth. Just to give an impression of the orders of magnitude there as well, those 49 power stations, when you add them up, have a baseline of around just below 1,000 gigawatt hours. Any generation above that they would be able to claim credits for. Similarly for all the hydro, we estimate that the average below baseline generation is just under 13,000 gigawatts per year. It does vary, depending on conditions. But also, because they have improved the efficiency of their operations, they do access renewable energy certificates. In 2013, for example, the above baseline generation, which would have provided revenue to the hydro generators, was some 3,800 gigawatt hours, but in 2015 it was around 700. So there is a lot of variation, depending on conditions."