

Economics Legislation Committee
ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON NOTICE
Industry, Innovation and Science Portfolio
2017 - 2018 Budget Estimates
31 May – 1 June 2017

AGENCY/DEPARTMENT: DEPARTMENT OF INDUSTRY, INNOVATION AND SCIENCE

TOPIC: Expert technical panel

REFERENCE: Written Question – Senator Ketter

QUESTION No.: BI-212

In a joint press release with the Deputy Prime Minister & Minister for Water Resources on 26th May 2016, the Minister identified an expert technical panel

- a. Who did the expert panel include?
- b. What was the advice given by the technical expert panel?
- c. Can the advice of the technical panel be produced?
- d. Did the panel recommend any hydro power component?
- e. Did the panel recommend any gravity fed pump component?

In the same press release:

- a. What are the previous studies the Deputy Prime Minister refers to in this statement?

ANSWER

These answers were prepared by the Department of Agriculture and Water Resources which has responsibility for this area of work.

- a. Who did the expert panel include?

The membership of the independent technical expert panel (panel) is published on the Department of Agriculture and Water Resources website and is at <http://www.agriculture.gov.au/water/national/national-water-infrastructure-development-fund/nwidf-technical-expert-panel>

- b. What was the advice given by the technical expert panel?

The panel provided advice to the department on the technical merit of the 60 Expressions of Interest (EOI) submitted by state and territory governments for funding under the feasibility component of the National Water Infrastructure Development Fund.

The EOI submitted were assessed against the assessment criteria set out in the fund – feasibility study expression of interest guidelines.

Advice to the department is commercial-in-confidence and forms part of the government's policy deliberations.

- c. Can the advice of the technical panel be produced?

No - advice to the department is commercial-in-confidence and forms part of the government's policy deliberations.

- d. Did the panel recommend any hydro power component?

The role of the panel was to assess the merit of the EOI submitted by the state and territory governments against the assessment criteria set out in the guidelines for feasibility funding. As such the panel's recommendation covered the suitability of an EOI in its entirety rather than any single component of a study.

- e. Did the panel recommend any gravity fed pump component?

See above.

In the same press release:

- a. What are the previous studies the Deputy Prime Minister refers to in this statement?

The Department of Agriculture and Water Resources is unable to comment on the media statement released on 26 May 2016.