

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

Question No: 47
Hearing: Additional Estimates
Outcome: Outcome 5
Programme: Environment Assessment and Compliance Division
Topic: Audits of compliance
Hansard Page: N/A
Question Date: 07 March 2014
Question Type: Written

Senator Waters asked:

Are there any provisions for audits of compliance with EPBC approval conditions without the project proponents being given prior notice of the audit? If so please outline how these take place, and advise how many such 'spot audits' were undertaken in 2010-11, 2011-12, 2012-13?

Answer:

The majority of compliance audits of Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act approval conditions are formally announced to project proponents prior to the audits being undertaken. However, other projects may also be reviewed and designated as audits without the proponent being formally notified. These include:

- Instances where preliminary research and review of a project identifies potential non-compliance with the conditions of an approval or the particular manner requirements attached to a project which requires direct referral to compliance officers.
- Where an internal review of certain projects based on a particular industry category or theme is undertaken to identify recurring themes or issues that need to be addressed from an internal business improvement perspective.

Projects that fall into either of the categories above generally do not require notification to the proponent in order to meet the audits objectives. Projects in this regard designated as audits in 2010-11, 2011-12 and 2012-13 are as follows:

2010-11	2011-12	2012-13
7	10	6