



Senate Environment and Communications Legislation Committee Budget Estimates 2018-19 Monday, 21 May 2018 Daily summary

Here is the summary of today's proceedings in the Environment and Communications Legislation Committee estimates hearing.

The committee met from 9.00am until 10.46pm.

The committee called:

- the department and agencies of the Environment and Energy portfolio, including the Department of the Environment and Energy, Director of National Parks, Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority, Bureau of Meteorology (BOM), Climate Change Authority and the Clean Energy Regulator.

Topics discussed by the committee included:

- implementation of the Government's *Guidelines on the Recognition of Sex and Gender* in the Department;
- Government's funding partnership with the Great Barrier Reef Foundation and additional funding for the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority and the Department of the Environment and Energy;
- reduction in full time equivalent staffing numbers for the Department of the Environment and Energy;
- operation of the Kakadu Buffalo Farm;
- oil and gas exploration within Australian Marine Parks;
- timeline around the Government's decision to grant funding to the Great Barrier Reef Foundation;
- approval for land clearing at Kingvale Station on Cape York Peninsula;
- monitoring of the impacts of coral bleaching on the Great Barrier Reef;
- changes to the radio frequency that BOM operates on the 5.6GHz band;
- BOM's statements in relation to recent exceptional heat events in Australia;
- investigation into allegations that BOM employees were mining cryptocurrencies using the organisation's computers;
- Climate Change Authority's funding for the coming financial year;
- recovery plan for the western ringtail possum;
- projections for renewable energy investment in Australia;
- Clean Energy Regulator's advice in relation to the design of the National Energy Guarantee (NEG);
- proposed changes to the operation of the Safeguard Mechanism;
- construction of a paved runway near Davis research station in Antarctica;
- environmental approval process for the new paved runway;
- replacement Antarctic icebreaking vessel;
- proposed reduction in the biomass limit from 16,000 tonnes to 9,000 tonnes for fish farming in Macquarie Harbour, Tasmania; and
- review of the interaction between the *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999* and agriculture and food production.

The committee will next meet at **9.00am** on Tuesday, 22 May 2018 in Senate Committee Room 2S3, calling:

- the department and agencies of the Environment and Energy portfolio, continuing with the Department of the Environment and Energy, Snowy Hydro Ltd, Australian Renewable Energy Agency, and the Clean Energy Finance Corporation.