



Senate Rural and Regional Affairs and Transport Legislation Committee
Budget Estimates 2018-19
Monday, 21 May 2018
Daily summary

Here is the summary of today's proceedings in the Rural and Regional Affairs and Transport Legislation Committee estimates hearing.

The committee met from 9.09am until 11.01pm

The committee called:

- the Department of Infrastructure, Regional Development and Cities, including the Inland Rail and Rail Policy Division, Surface Transport Policy Division, Cities Division, Regional Development and Local Government Division, Infrastructure Investment Division and Corporate Services Division; and
- agencies of the Infrastructure, Regional Development and Cities portfolio, including Australian Rail Track Corporation, Infrastructure Australia and Infrastructure and Project Financing Agency.

Due to the committee running behind schedule, the committee released the Corporate Services Division without giving evidence.

Topics discussed by the committee included:

- allocation of funding to support the development of faster rail business cases, including details of due diligence conducted by the department in assessing proposals;
- Australian Rail Track Corporation's estimates of delays on rail lines as a result of temporary speed restrictions and theft of copper wire;
- action the department is taking to improve truck safety, including funding driver fatigue research and the Austroads review of the National Heavy Vehicle Driver Competency Framework;
- update on progress towards various City Deals, including Perth, Launceston, Townsville, Darwin, Geelong and Hobart;
- update on the government's decentralisation agenda, including the movement of 98 positions across various agencies including the Office of the Registrar of Indigenous Corporations and the National Rural Health Commissioner;
- progress of the Building Better Regions Fund round two applications, including an overview of the timeline of the round and the number of applications received;
- update on the Regional Jobs and Investment Package, including the number of applications and number of projects contracted; and
- progress of business cases for a range of infrastructure projects, including Bruce Highway upgrades, Coffs Harbour Bypass, Nowra Bridge and Bridgewater Bridge.

The Committee will next meet at 9.00am on Tuesday, 22 May in Committee Room 2R1.