

Budget Estimates May 2018

Cross Portfolio Murray Darling Basin Plan Matters

Environment and Energy Portfolio – Friday 25 May 2018

Question No	Program: Division or Agency	Senator	Title	Question	Proof Hansard Page & Hearing Date or In Writing	Comment
1	CEWO	Senator Patrick	Incoming brief	<p>Senator PATRICK: You received an incoming brief from the outgoing CEWH; is that correct?</p> <p>Ms Swirepik: No, from the staff; not from the CEWH. The chance that I had to meet with the outgoing CEWH was after the last estimates meeting.</p> <p>Senator PATRICK: Have you read that incoming briefing package?</p> <p>Ms Swirepik: It's actually three folders about this big, because it has every document that they thought might be of interest. I've read a lot of that incoming brief, but not every document in the attachments.</p> <p>Senator PATRICK: Was the unsigned letter in that brief?</p> <p>Ms Swirepik: No.</p> <p>Senator PATRICK: Were the concerns that are articulated in Dr Papps's letter included in that brief?</p> <p>Ms Swirepik: They would be included by way of an appraisal from the staff about issues that are important to us, which is progression of the prerequisite policy measures and looking at how environmental water is protected through water resource plans. I certainly would have had a briefing on the importance of getting some outcomes that we're interested in in water resource plans.</p> <p>Senator PATRICK: Noting it has three folders, could you</p>	Page 20	SQ18-000467

				<p>please table the elements of that brief that relate to the concerns that Dr Papps has raised in the draft letter?</p> <p>Ms Swirepik: Yes. I can't elucidate to you what they are specifically, but I can go back and look at that.</p>		
2	CEWO	Senator Patrick	Issues	<p>Senator PATRICK: That would be helpful. I presume it had a similar flavour to the brief advice in his letter. Noting your statements at the previous estimates that you didn't share that view, he'd been in that job for a long time and had collected a lot of experience along the way. How have you so quickly come to the view that you're not concerned about what Dr Papps was?</p> <p>Ms Swirepik: I'm not sure it's about tenure in the job but, rather, where we are at a point in time. Following the New South Wales compliance issues last year there has been a lot of change in this space. There have been the Matthews' reports and MDBA's own reports. As well as that, MDBA have formed a committee for us to be able to liaise within the Commonwealth on the water resource plans and other elements that relate to environmental watering. I guess it's my firsthand experience that we are getting now a very high level of cooperation, which I think David had not benefited from. I would actually describe it as a change of circumstance in terms of more cooperation between basin governments and the CEWH rather than—</p> <p>Senator PATRICK: On notice—just to clarify that—would you be able to prepare perhaps a small brief that shows how we get from Dr Papps's position to your position?</p> <p>Ms Swirepik: Yes.</p> <p>Senator PATRICK: And how you might have weighted some of the things that were available to you for consideration?</p>	Page 20	SQ18-000468
3	CEWO	Senator	Current value of	<p>Senator PATRICK: What is the current value of the</p>	Page 20	SQ18-000469

		Patrick	the Commonwealth Environmental Water Holder	Commonwealth Environmental Water Holder's portfolio? Ms Swirepik: That's a good question. It's over \$3 billion. I can look up the exact value for you, which I'm not sure that I have. I don't have the precise number, but my understanding is that it's just under \$3.2 billion. Senator PATRICK: 3.2 billion? Ms Swirepik: Yes.		
4	CEWO	Senator Burston	Calculation of delivery loss accounts	How are the delivery loss accounts calculated on Commonwealth owned water rights when delivered through both regulated and unregulated water systems? Does this calculation constitute the enhancement of Commonwealth owned assets at the expense of privately owned water assets?	Written	SQ18-000531
5	CEWO	Senator Burston	NSW Water Shepherding Implementation Plan	Has the NSW Water Shepherding Implementation Plan developed by NSW as a requirement of the 2010 IGA and NPA of the same name been adopted by the Commonwealth?	Written	SQ18-000532