

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

Question No: 296
Hearing: Supplementary Budget Estimates
Outcome: Outcome 2
Program: ARENA
Topic: ARENA Breakdown of Projects
Hansard Page: 70
Question Date: 24 October 2016
Question Type: Spoken

Senator Lambie, Jacqui asked:

Mr Frischknecht: ARENA has had great success in terminating projects that it inherited that were not proceeding according to plan—they were not succeeding in some way. ARENA was started in 2012. At the beginning, we inherited more than \$1 billion worth of commitments from nine separate Commonwealth programs. Some of the projects within those programs had been around for a long time, and many were not performing or going anywhere at all. We stopped those and we have actually recouped more than \$800 million in the process, which we have then recommitted into new projects. More recently, we have had a number of projects that have, for one reason or another, completed early, so we have terminated them for that reason—successfully. Some of them are research initiatives looking at a particular avenue of research. If that is not panning out, we stop it before we spend all the money. Occasionally things do not go quite as planned and they stop midway for one reason or another.

Senator LAMBIE: Do you think I would be able to get a list or a break down of what you have just described there? A list of who has been successful, who has not finished the project—all of what you just mentioned there. Would I be able to get a list of the names of those companies?

Mr Frischknecht: Yes. It is not a very long list in terms of the ones that have started and not completed. The much longer list is of the ones that never really got going, but that, nevertheless, had a commitment of Commonwealth funding which has sat there for years, potentially.

Senator LAMBIE: Okay, could I have a list of that.

Answer:

As at 31 August 2016, the Australian Renewable Energy Agency (ARENA) has completed 111 projects, including 41 fellowships and scholarships, and has closed, prior to completion, 25 projects. Most closed projects were successful prior to the end of project or the project never started. A full list of completed and closed projects is attached.