

**Senate Standing Committee on Rural and Regional Affairs and Transport Legislation
Committee**

Answers to questions on notice
Environment and Energy portfolio

Question No: 2
Hearing: Budget Estimates
Outcome: Outcome 1
Program: Commonwealth Environmental Water Office (CEWO)
Topic: Government water interventions
Hansard Page:
Question Date: 22 June 2017
Question Type: Written

Senator Roberts asked:

Given the continuing ineffectiveness, inefficiency & inequity of government water interventions, is it time to subject such interventions to proper & independent CBA ... especially genuinely analysing greater freedom over control?

Answer:

In regard to the delivery of Commonwealth environmental water within the Murray-Darling Basin, the Water Act 2007 (Cth) requires the Commonwealth Environmental Water Holder to perform its functions and exercise its power consistently with and in a manner that gives effect to the Water Act 2007 – Basin Plan 2012, and specifically, that Commonwealth environmental water is managed in accordance with the Basin Plan's environmental watering plan. As part of this requirement, the Basin Plan places a number of obligations on the Commonwealth Environmental Water Holder, including principles of monitoring and evaluation and reporting requirements.

Assessment of the effectiveness, efficiency and equity of the Commonwealth government's interventions through the water reform process is not a responsibility that sits with the Commonwealth Environmental Water Holder. Any future evaluation of government water interventions through a Cost-Benefit Analysis is a matter for Parliament and the government of the day, including which agency would be responsible for this work.