

**Senate Standing Committee on Education Employment and Workplace  
Relations**

**QUESTIONS ON NOTICE  
Supplementary Budget Estimates 2010-2011**

**Outcome 2 - Schools**

**DEEWR Question No.EW0653\_11**

**Senator Mason asked on 21/10/2010, Hansard page 55.**

**Question**

***BER PROJECTS THAT HAVE NOT MADE THE DEADLINE***

Senator MASON—What action are you taking in relation to those projects that have not made the deadline? Mr Manthorpe—We are monitoring progress and we are encouraging the education authorities to continue with the construction work. We know, of course, that construction has started in the overwhelming majority of these cases. Once construction is underway there is only so much we can do to make it go faster but we are continuing to work with the education authorities to encourage them to continue in as timely a fashion as they reasonably can. Senator MASON—If you give me that information on notice I would be grateful.

**Answer**

As was noted in the hearing of 21 October 2010, the department is monitoring progress and continually works with education authorities to meet program timeframes. The department acknowledges that the completion of a project may be delayed for a variety of valid reasons such as unexpected site conditions (such as asbestos), extended periods of wet weather and re-tendering in order to achieve better value for money.

If Education Authorities submit insufficient justification when proposing project extensions, for example citing a loss of 5 weeks construction time because of wet weather when requesting a 3 month extension, those requests are denied.

The department notes however, that 99% of BER projects have commenced, and that the first of the three P21 large school deadlines does not occur until December 2010. Subsequent deadlines for P21 do not occur until 31 January 2011 and 31 March 2011. Note also that \$500m worth of projects have been rephased into the 2011-12 financial year with commensurate adjustment of deadlines.

With regards to the number of project variations to extend time that have or have not been granted, this has been answered in SQ10-001773.