

Senate Finance and Public Administration Legislation Committee

ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

Prime Minister and Cabinet Portfolio

Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet

Additional Estimates Hearings 2004-2005, 14 February 2005

Question: PM 29

Outcome 1, Output 1.1

Topic: National Water Commission

Direct on Notice

Senator Stephens asked:

- 1. Have the seven commissioners been appointed?**
- 2. Who are they? Please provide details of their skills and expertise**
- 3. What is the term of appointments?**
- 4. Which members were nominated by the States and which were appointed by the Commonwealth?**
- 5. Has the commission met yet?**

Answer:

1. The seven Commissioners were appointed on 10 March 2005.
2. As required under the *National Water Commission Act 2004* each Commissioner has a high level of expertise in an area relevant to the functions of the National Water Commission including, but not limited to, water resource management, freshwater ecology or hydrology, resource economics, public sector governance and the audit, evaluation and implementation of programs relating to natural resource management. Each Commissioner is appointed on an individual basis, and not as representative of either a state or federal body.

The Commissioners are:

- Mr Ken Matthews AO, who has been appointed as Chairman and Chief Executive Officer of the Commission. Mr Matthews is a former Secretary of the Commonwealth departments of Transport and Regional Services and Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry, and has extensive experience in public sector governance;
- Mr Peter Corish, a primary producer with expertise in water resource management and currently president of the National Farmers' Federation;
- Dr Walter Cox PSM, who is currently Chairman of the Western Australian Environmental Protection Authority and the Murray-Darling Basin Independent Audit Group and who has relevant public sector governance, water resource management and natural resource management programme audit, evaluation and implementation expertise;

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- Professor Peter Cullen AO, an eminent freshwater ecologist, Emeritus Professor of the University of Canberra and former Chief Executive, Cooperative Research Centre for Freshwater Ecology;
 - Ms Chloe Munro, former Secretary of the Victorian Government departments of Primary Industries and Natural Resources and Environment with expertise in water resource management, natural resources management programmes and public sector governance;
 - Dr John Radcliffe AM, Honorary Research Fellow, Commonwealth Scientific and Industrial Research Organisation, with water and natural resource management expertise; and
 - Mr David Trebeck, a company director and economist with expertise in resource policy, rural and regional policy, and microeconomic reform.
3. The term of the appointments is three years.
4. The Commonwealth Government nominated Mr Peter Corish, Professor Peter Cullen and Mr David Trebeck. The three Commissioners nominated by the states and territories are Dr Walter Cox, Ms Chloe Munro and Dr John Radcliffe. Mr Ken Matthews was nominated as Chairman by the Commonwealth in consultation with the states and territories.
5. The first meeting of the National Water Commission was held 22 March 2005.

Remainder of questions to be answered by the National Water Commission.

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Question: PM 29

Outcome: the Commission has a single Outcome – ‘Sustainable management and use of Australia’s water resources’.

Topic: Staffing of the National Water Commission

Hansard Page: written

Senator Ursula Stephens asked:

6. What is the recruitment process for these staff?

Answer: All positions were advertised in the Canberra Times of Saturday 13 November 2004 and in the Australian Public Service Gazette of Thursday 18 November 2004.

In addition, staff of the following Departments were alerted to the vacancies via email or intranet notices on Friday 5 November or Monday 8 November 2004:

- Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry;
- Transport and Regional Services;
- Industry, Tourism and Resources;
- Environment and Heritage;
- Prime Minister and Cabinet.

7. How many of these staff have been appointed to date?

8. Are these positions on-going? Fixed contract? Or temporary?

Answer: As at Wednesday 16 March 2005 the staffing of the National Water Commission was as follows:

Type of employment	Number of staff
Ongoing employees engaged	11
Temporary secondments from other Agencies	4
Fixed-term contractors / consultants	2
Total	17