

Senate Finance and Public Administration Legislation Committee
ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON NOTICE
BUDGET ESTIMATES 2011-2012

Prime Minister and Cabinet Portfolio

Department/Agency: Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet
Outcome/Program: 1.1.1 – Domestic Policy
Topic: Seamless National Economy – electronic development assessment

Senator: Payne

Question reference number: 3

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Date set by the committee for the return of answer: 8 July 2011

Number of pages: 2

Question:

Senator PAYNE: Thank you. I wanted to ask a question around some of the observations in that report on the electronic development assessment initiative. You mentioned resourcing issues and technical issues. Do you mean in that context resourcing from the jurisdictions or from councils? What is the context in which you make that observation?

Mr Elton: Those observations were largely drawn from the advice that governments themselves have given to us. The way this process works is that the governments give us progress reports by the end of September each year. In those reports in relation to that reform stream some of the governments identified resourcing issues.

Senator PAYNE: By that do they mean they are not resourcing it enough or is it a different issue?

Mr Elton: I am not sure that we always know the answer to those questions. If you wanted me to elaborate on what those technical resourcing issues were I would need to go back and probably take that question on notice.

Senator PAYNE: If you would, I would be grateful. Thank you very much. Then if that leads you to being able to provide the committee with information on how that resourcing should be derived because of what they have said to you, I would be interested in that as well.

Answer:

In its National Partnership Agreement to Deliver a Seamless National Economy: Performance Report for 2009-10, the COAG Reform Council (CRC) identified ‘major resourcing and technical issues associated with electronic development assessment (eDA).’

The CRC made this assessment on the basis of information provided to it by the Commonwealth, states and territories.

Jurisdictions identified issues with resourcing eDA in their progress reports. The Commonwealth noted that ‘progress has been constrained due to delays in preparing the project brief and securing project funding ... This remains a significant project requiring resolution of major technical and resourcing issues.’ Similar comments were made by the Queensland and Northern Territory Governments. The Victorian Government, in its response stated that ‘the only funding related to eDA, apart from what jurisdictions are investing themselves, is via the Housing Affordability Fund /eDA program’.