

**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: Water infrastructure projects**

**Senator: Birmingham**

**Question reference number: 17**

**Type of question: Hansard, p 88, 23 May**

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

**Number of pages: 1**

**Question:**

**Senator BIRMINGHAM: That is okay, thank you. In terms of your relationships established with the department, what relationship do you have with the Murray-Darling Basin Authority?**

**Dr Schreier: We do not really have any relationship with the authority per se. The MDBA is an independent statutory authority. In terms of governmental dealings with it, SEWPaC is the lead agency, if you like, for making that connection with them.**

**Senator BIRMINGHAM: Has the department dealt with issues regarding water infrastructure projects and arrangements between the Commonwealth and the states in that matter?**

**Dr Schreier: Not in particular in my time. I would have to take on notice whether it has occurred earlier. The only sort of involvement we have had in this space is just providing the normal briefing, that we do as PM&C, around matters as they arise. We have not been responsible for water programs or environmental infrastructure programs. Again, that is a matter for SEWPaC.**

**Answer:**

The Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet provides advice to the Prime Minister on the implementation of the Commonwealth's water policies, including progress of infrastructure investments and arrangements with the Commonwealth and the states and territories as required. The Department of Sustainability, Environment, Water, Population and Communities, is the agency responsible for implementing the Commonwealth's water policies.