

Senate Finance and Public Administration Standing Committee
ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON NOTICE
SUPPLEMENTARY ESTIMATES HEARINGS

PRIME MINISTER AND CABINET PORTFOLIO

Department/Agency: Department of Regional Australia, Regional Development and Local Government

Outcome: 1

Topic: Tree of Barcaldine Monitoring

Senator: MOORE

Question reference number: 19

Type of question: Hansard F&PA page 52-53, Tuesday 19 October 2010

Date set by the committee for the return of answer: 3 December 2010

Mr Carmichael—The quick answer to that, Senator, is that it is now known that there is an expectation that we will monitor these projects for five years. There is not an intensive monitoring of all of them because there are 5,000 projects, but there is some level of scrutiny of projects over the next five years just to ensure the continuity. Part of the condition of funding is the long-term viability, which is deemed to be at least five years, so we do some monitoring of all our projects into the future up to that five-year mark.

Senator MOORE—Can I get some information on notice about what that means when you say ‘monitoring’, because it has such a wide definition. I am very keen to see whether this particular project is different as opposed to the other 5,000, as well as what kind of form of monitoring takes place, and what you mean by viability? I know Senator McGauran and I will be able to read these papers together and see how it works but it would be useful to see what defines viability, and in these projects—there was such a wide range of them—how you determine viability in that aspect. Thank you.

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Answer:

Funding agreements between the Commonwealth and the funding recipient contain clauses which require the completed project to be operational for a period ranging from 1 to 5 years depending on the program and amount of funding received. The funding agreement defines the term operational as meaning the completed project is operating in a way that enables it to achieve its intended purpose as set out in the funding agreement.

In the case of the Tree of Knowledge project funded under the Better Regions program the memorial must be maintained for a minimum period of 5 years.

The Department will monitor compliance through ongoing contact with funding recipients, which may include site visits.