

**Senate Standing Committee on Rural and Regional Affairs and Transport**  
ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON NOTICE  
Additional Budget Estimates February 2009  
**Infrastructure, Transport, Regional Development and Local Government**

**Question No.** IA 01

**Division/Agency:** Infrastructure Australia

**Topic:** Climate Change Taskforce

**Hansard Page:** 17 (24/02/09)

**Senator Milne asked:**

**Senator MILNE**—I was not talking about the Department of Climate Change. I am talking about the task force for climate change in this Department. There is a climate change task force in this agency. How many meetings have you heard with the task force in this agency?

**Mr Tongue**—We have a small unit that is working with the Department of Climate Change looking at transport impacts in the broad as part of the Carbon Pollution Reduction Scheme. I would not have expected that there would necessarily be meetings between that unit and Infrastructure Australia, because Infrastructure Australia is engaged in a different task. It is involved in providing advice to government on a prioritised list of major projects, whereas that unit is working on the existing transport system and how the CPRS might incorporate the transport networks. Mr Deegan has outlined where his focus has been; it has been with the Department of Climate Change.

**Mr Deegan**—Thanks, Mr Tongue, but I am sure that a lot of the issues would be raised in parallel.

**Senator MILNE**—It is just that in your key priorities for this year it says:

- using the newly established BITRE Climate Change Taskforce to:
- forge linkages between climate change policy and sectoral regulatory frameworks;
- coordinate the Department's policy input; and
- analyse the implications of carbon emissions trading for transport systems ...

I would have thought that if that is seriously what the task force is doing then there would be a fair amount of cross-over with Infrastructure Australia.

**Mr Deegan**—My office may well have met with them. I will need to confirm that.

**Senator MILNE**—Yes, and just confirm that it is not really a high priority—

**Mr Deegan**—Not at all.

**Senator MILNE**—in the agency, I mean.

**Mr Deegan**—I will need to confirm that one way or another. We have taken it very seriously.

**Answer:**

The Major Cities Unit associated with the Office of the Infrastructure Coordinator has met with the Executive Director of the Bureau of Infrastructure, Transport and Regional Economics (BITRE) on a number of occasions, and the Taskforce sits within BITRE. The Major Cities Unit has also met with the General Manager of the Climate Change Taskforce, within BITRE.

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**Question No.** IA 02

**Division/Agency:** Infrastructure Australia

**Topic:** Building Australia Fund

**Hansard Pages:** 20-21 (24/02/09)

**Senator McGauran asked:**

**Senator McGAURAN**—I would like to know what the \$7.9 million was spent on.

**Senator Conroy**—Mr Deegan, would you like to take him through the \$7.5 million?

**Mr Deegan**—I would be happy to do that if you like. I will take that on notice and give you a detailed response.

**Senator McGAURAN**—If you do not mind, because what was originally in the Building Australia Fund is being whittled away before your very eyes. The recommendations are just going to be a useless exercise it seems.

**Answer:**

The question was answered at the hearing refer to page 20 of the Hansard of 24 February 2009.

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**Question No.** IA 03

**Division/Agency:** Infrastructure Australia

**Topic:** Cooroy to Curra Upgrade

**Hansard Page:** 36 (24/02/09)

**Senator MacDonald asked:**

**Senator IAN MACDONALD**—You heard me ask some questions about this very important Cooroy to Curra upgrade. Has that project attracted the attention of Infrastructure Australia?

**Mr Deegan**—Again, there are two parts to that. We are continuing to look at both the Pacific Highway and the Bruce Highway about road funding. The Department is dealing with, as I understand, that particular project as part of AusLink, but we have been asked for a general view of alternative approaches to funding of these two major highways. I will check whether that particular section is part of the Queensland submission and come back to you.

**Answer:**

The question was answered at the hearing refer to page 36 of the Hansard of 24 February 2009.

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**Question No.** IA 04

**Division/Agency:** Infrastructure Australia  
**Topic:** Intermodal Hubs for Rail Freight  
**Hansard Page:** 43 (24/02/09)

**Senator Milne asked:**

**Senator MILNE**—Okay. Does that also apply to the very fast train? Does that concern the rail corporation or you?

**Mr Tongue**—The very fast train in the context of Infrastructure Australia's—

**Senator MILNE**—In the context of: are you doing work on it? I have seen that it is in the list of 90 or so projects. Is any work being done on it, apart from that particular proposal? Is there anything being advanced?

**Ms O'Connell**—No. It is one of the 94 projects, as you pointed out, for Infrastructure Australia, and they are working on those proposals.

**Senator MILNE**—In terms of transport strategy, should I also them about the north-south rail freight corridor, in particular the intermodal approach to planning, which is one of the big issues they have, apart from upgrading the tracks and so on?

**Mr Williams**—It depends on what the question is. It could be a potential question to me or to David Marchant in the next section.

**Senator MILNE**—What they are saying is that it is not just about upgrading the tracks to get the freight onto the rail but also about getting better intermodal planning. Can you tell me whether any work is going on to supplement the submission in relation to a north-south rail corridor?

**Ms O'Connell**—Again, in terms of the Infrastructure Australia list, there are a number of intermodal hubs that are part of the consideration by Infrastructure Australia that clearly relate to freight as well.

**Senator MILNE**—Do they relate to the rail freight up the east coast?

**Ms O'Connell**—I will have to take that on notice for Michael Deegan.

**Senator MILNE**—That is fine.

**Answer:**

Freight intermodal hubs are under consideration by Infrastructure Australia.

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**Question No. IA 05**

**Division/Agency:** Infrastructure Australia

**Topic:** List of 28 Projects

**Hansard Page:** Written Question

**Senator Williams and Senator Heffernan asked:**

I note that Mr Rod Eddington wrote a letter to the Minister with this report by Infrastructure Australia. This letter was mysteriously removed from the Minister's website only a couple of hours later. This letter notes on page three that there are another two inner lists aside from the 94 projects listed in the report by Infrastructure Australia. The relevant paragraph from this letter reads:

*Within this list of projects, the evaluation to date, which is subject to further consideration by the Infrastructure Australia Council, has identified two classes of projects that may be suitable for funding from the Building Australia Fund. There are 28 projects in these two classes.*

1. What projects are in this mysterious list of 28?
2. The letter also notes that out of this list of 28 projects, there is a first class list and a second group of 'potential projects'. Does this mean most of the 94 projects listed in the report by Infrastructure Australia have already been discarded?
3. Why did the Government release a list of 94 projects if only 28 projects are being seriously considered by Infrastructure Australia for funding?
4. Is the Cooroy to Curra upgrade on the secret list of 28 projects?

**Answer:**

1. The question was answered at the hearing refer to page 34 of the Hansard of 24 February 2009.
2. The question was answered at the hearing refer to page 34 of the Hansard of 24 February 2009.
3. The question was answered at the hearing refer to page 34 of the Hansard of 24 February 2009.
4. Not applicable. There is no secret list of 28 projects.

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**Question No. IA 06**

**Division/Agency:** Infrastructure Australia

**Topic:** Reviews

**Hansard Page:** Written Question

**Senator McGauran asked:**

1. How many Reviews are currently being undertaken in the portfolio/agency or affecting the portfolio agency?
2. When will each of these reviews be concluded?
3. Which Reviews have been completed since Supplementary Budget Estimates 2008?
4. When will the Government be responding to the respective reviews that have been completed?
5. What is the total number of Reviews both completed and ongoing in the portfolio/agency or affecting the portfolio agency since November 2007?
6. What is the estimated cost of these Reviews?
7. What further reviews are planned for 2009?

**Answer:**

Infrastructure Australia has not conducted any reviews. No reviews are planned for 2009.

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**Question No. IA 07**

**Division/Agency:** Infrastructure Australia

**Topic:** Consultancies

**Hansard Page:** Written Question

**Senator McGauran asked:**

1. How many consultancies have been undertaken or are underway since November 2007?
2. Please identify the name of the consultant, the subject matter of the consultancy, the duration and cost of the consultancy, and the method of procurement (ie. open tender, direct source, etc).
3. Please also include total value for all consultancies.
4. Do you stand by Government Tenders website ([www.tenders.gov.au](http://www.tenders.gov.au)) and what changes or corrections have been made to it since 18 February 2009? Are you up to date with reporting requirements?
5. How many consultancies are planned/budgeted for this calendar year?
6. Have these been published in your Annual Procurement Plan (APP) on the AusTender website and if not why not?
7. In each case please identify the subject matter, duration, cost and method of procurement as above, and the name of the consultant if known.

**Answer:**

Refer to CORP 10.

**[IA 07 – Attachment A]**

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**Question No.:** IA 08

**Division/Agency:** Infrastructure Australia

**Topic:** Sir Rod Eddington Comments

**Hansard Page:** 37 (24/02/09)

**Senator Milne, Senator Bernardi, Senator MacDonald and Senator McGauran asked:**

**Senator BERNARDI**—I refer to Mr Eddington's comments and to his letter. There has been some concern raised by Mr Eddington that a lot of the 'projects submitted to us were close to pork-barrel initiatives'. This is quoted in an interview with Mr Eddington in *The Deal*, which is the *Australian* business magazine. Obviously, he has the same concerns about these things as Senator Macdonald.

**Senator MILNE**—Speaking of pork-barrel!

**Senator BERNARDI**—I wonder whether Mr Eddington's concerns are justified.

**Senator Conroy**—That is a question in which you are asking an opinion of Mr Deegan. That is outside the bounds of these estimates hearings. If you have—

**Senator IAN MACDONALD**—Senator Bernardi is asking you, Minister.

**Senator Conroy**—You have transferred it to me. I will take that on notice. You were asking me for an opinion, you are now asking me about a fact, so I will take it on notice and see how the Minister would like to respond to you.

**Senator McGAURAN**—You would not have made those comments in isolation. It would have been talked about in your office.

**Senator Conroy**—It was actually an interview in a newspaper article, which I am not quite sure pertains to Senate estimates. But if there is any information that the Minister's Office or that the Minister would like to respond to, I will as I said, take it on notice, Senator McGauran, and pass it on to the Committee.

**Answer:**

Infrastructure Australia's advice to government is based on a rigorous evaluation of projects.

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**Question No.:** IA 09

**Division/Agency:** Infrastructure Australia

**Topic:** Sir Rod Eddington Comments

**Hansard Page:** 38 (24/02/09)

**Senator MacDonald asked:**

**Senator IAN MACDONALD**—What we could get Mr Deegan to do is to just ask Mr Eddington on notice what he meant by his comment that the brutal fact is that some of these projects presented to us were close to pork-barrel initiatives. Could you perhaps take on notice to Mr Eddington to let us know what he was meaning by that? I think you have got the reference.

**Senator Conroy**—We will take it on notice and if there is any information that the Minister would like to share with the Committee on that we will get back to you.

**Answer:**

Infrastructure Australia's advice to government is based on a rigorous evaluation of projects.

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**Question No.:** IA 10

**Division/Agency:** Infrastructure Australia

**Topic:** People Moving Strategy

**Hansard Page:** 37 (24/02/09)

**Senator Milne asked:**

**Senator MILNE**—Given what Mr Deegan said about a lot of work being done on Australia's public transport, when can we expect a publicly-available document which the community could comment on or which gives some sort of progress report on how we are going in having a people-moving strategy for the country that pertains to public transport?

**Mr Tongue**—Senator, in the terms you are describing, that is probably a question for the Minister. As Mr Deegan has outlined, we are actively engaged with the states in a whole range of areas. In terms of public availability, announcement strategies and all of those sorts of things, those are questions—

**Senator MILNE**—To follow up, Minister, and to take on notice for your colleague—given that it has been indicated here that there is work going on in relation to developing a public transport strategy for the country, whether it is called 'moving people' or whatever it is called—could you get me some feedback about when we can expect a draft of that strategy or a public comment strategy, or something which will give a sense of the coordination of public transport planning and guidance to Infrastructure Australia?

**Senator Conroy**—I am happy to take that on notice.

**Senator MILNE**—Thank you.

**Answer:**

Refer to NTS 01.

**[IA 10 – Attachment A]**