

## Senate Select Committee on the Scrutiny of New Taxes

### ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

#### Treasury Portfolio

Inquiry into a carbon tax

23 September 2011

### QUESTION ON NOTICE TWO

**CHAIR:** It says:

For this study, MMRF was updated by the model developers at the Centre of Policy Studies at Monash University to include a more detailed treatment of government finances and the fiscal effects of the Goods and Services Tax ... and a revised treatment of transport services.

... ..

The updated model will be made publicly available to enable further examination and validation of data and modelling methods, and applications of the kind undertaken for this study.

Have Treasury made their modelling using the same MMRF as the Productivity Commission publicly available to the same extent as the commission did for its work on the national reform agenda?

**Ms Quinn:** Treasury has a contractual arrangement with the Centre of Policy Studies. Under our contractual arrangement we do not have that connection to publicly release the information.

**CHAIR:** So your contractual arrangements are different to those between the Productivity Commission and Monash University?

**Ms Quinn:** I am not sure exactly what the arrangements are with the Productivity Commission but I do know that our contractual arrangements do not have a mechanism for putting their intellectual property in the public domain.

**CHAIR:** Is that at the request of Monash University or at the request of Treasury?

**Ms Quinn:** I am not entirely sure where that was. I was not involved in the original contract negotiations. I would be happy to take that on notice.

**CHAIR:** The reason I am asking is that Monash University in the context of the CPRS had written to the Senate at the time to say they were quite happy for the information to be released. It was the government that made the decision not to release that information. I would be interested to know who insisted on that contractual requirement not to be able to release so-called intellectual property. If it is Treasury insisting on Monash intellectual property not being released, it would seem to be a bit odd.

**Ms Quinn:** I am certainly happy to take it on notice but I am not sure about the characterisation of insisting. There are standard contractual arrangements and then negotiations. I would be happy to take that question on notice.

Answer:

The Treasury engaged the Monash University's Centre of Policy Studies (CoPS) to undertake modifications of the MMRF model for the *Australia's Low Pollution Future: The Economics of Climate Change Mitigation* report and to provide expert technical advice for the *Strong Growth, Low Pollution: Modelling a Carbon Price* report. In neither of those contracts did the Treasury acquire the right to publish the MMRF model.

The Productivity Commission also engages CoPS from time to time to provide contract services relating to the development of the MMRF model and database to make them better suited to meeting particular Commission needs (usually an inquiry or commissioned study). Contract details vary between studies. The particular contract for the development of the benchmark model that was developed for, and released as part of, the study into the Potential Benefits of the National Reform Agenda required that the final model, database and model documentation be made publicly available on the CoPS web site after the completion of the project. This requirement was included in the contract at the Productivity Commission's request.