



**THE SENATE  
SELECT COMMITTEE ON COVID-19**

22 May 2020

Dr Steven Kennedy PSM  
Secretary  
The Treasury

*Via email:*

Dear Dr Kennedy

I write on behalf of the committee in response to your correspondence of 6 May and 19 May 2020 regarding the committee's request for the economic modelling and any scenario work undertaken in relation to the measures comprising the government's response to COVID-19.

In your correspondence of 19 May, you indicate that any request for the Treasury advice should be directed to the Department of Prime Minister and Cabinet (PM&C).

The committee has considered your correspondence and rejects the assertion that the provision of the modelling to the committee is a matter for PM&C to determine. The committee affirms the point that Treasury prepared the advice and is accountable for it. Therefore, any decision to provide the modelling to the committee is a decision for Treasury and ultimately the responsible minister.

I draw your attention to the Senate Order of 13 May 2009 which sets out the process to be followed by public officials and ultimately ministers to ensure that public interest immunity claims are properly made out and determined. In particular I note that paragraph 7 of the order makes it clear that a statement that a document is not published, or is confidential, or consists of advice to, or internal deliberations of, government, in the absence of specification of the harm to the public interest that could result from the disclosure of the document, is not a statement that meets the requirements of the order.

The committee considers the economic modelling and scenario work undertaken by Treasury to inform the government's economic response to COVID-19 to be central to its inquiry. For this reason, the committee reaffirms its request for the material and requires that you provide it as soon as practicable.

Yours sincerely

Senator Katy Gallagher  
**Chair**

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