

**Senate Standing Committee on Economics**

**ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON NOTICE**

**Treasury Portfolio**

Budget Estimates

29 May – 31 May 2012

**Question: BET 93**

**Topic: Provisions for Marine Reserve Networks**

**Hansard Page: Wednesday 30 May 2012, page 41**

**Senator WATERS asked:**

Senator BUSHBY: I understand the government intends to announce new marine reserve networks later this year. Are there any provisions in the budget for adjustment assistance to the fishing industry as a consequence of those reserves?

Mr Ray: Well, it is not really a question for us. In the interests of being helpful, I will have a look.

Senator BUSHBY: Spending, if there are provisions there for it. There might be some provision for it as a contingent liability.

Senator Wong: We would not be disclosing that at this point.

Ms McCulloch: In part, we need to take on notice whether any provision has been made. The actual policy on marine reserves predates this budget. It was an election commitment and it has been around for quite some time. The department of environment is in the process of negotiating gradually with stakeholders. So it is an evolving process. It has been going over a number of years.

Senator BUSHBY: It is government policy and it may well have a fiscal impact.

Ms McCulloch: That is right.

Senator BUSHBY: What provision is being made in the budget papers?

Ms McCulloch: I need to check exactly what is in the budget.

Senator Wong: I am not responsible for the policy in this area. It is Minister Burke. I was not aware that we had made any final announcements on these issues.

Senator BUSHBY: I am happy for you to take that on notice to the degree to which the announcements have been made. My understanding is that there is an intention—

Senator Wong: That would be a matter for Minister Burke. You are asking us about the impact of decisions which the government may not have made, and certainly has not made public.

Ms McCulloch: I think that is right. As I said, the government had an election commitment to negotiate for marine reserves. That process is still ongoing.

Senator BUSHBY: It has been raised by people in the industry.

**Answer:**

Please refer to the response to BET 157.