

Senate Standing Committee on Economics
ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON NOTICE
Innovation, Industry, Science and Research Portfolio
Additional Estimates Hearing
26 February 2009

AGENCY/DEPARTMENT: INNOVATION, INDUSTRY, SCIENCE AND RESEARCH

TOPIC: Green Car Innovation Fund

REFERENCE: Question on Notice (Hansard 26 February 2009, E91)

QUESTION No.: AI-40

Senator ABETZ—When did we have the Holden announcement?

Mr Payne—On 22 December.

Senator ABETZ—The approval process clearly, for such a large lump of money, did not take place between 19 and 22 December, so we would say that it was a process similar to that. Can you tell us in which ways it varied?

Mr Payne—No, I cannot, because the decision was made by ministers.

Senator ABETZ—Thank you. Minister, did you make the decision or did the cabinet or the Prime Minister?

Senator Carr—The processes were made in the proper arrangements of the government.

Senator ABETZ—We have just been told by the official that it was not by the processes of government, which clearly includes the Public Service, and that this was a decision made by—the record will say whether it was minister or ministers. Can you tell us if you were the one that signed off on it on your own?

Senator Carr—Personally, no.

Senator ABETZ—With the Prime Minister's approval? Did the Prime Minister approve this?

Senator Carr—No. It was a cabinet decision.

Senator ABETZ—Funny that. I asked about that quite some time ago as to whether it went to the Innovation Australia committee or whether it went to cabinet. We now know that it went to cabinet. Are we allowed to know what day it went to cabinet?

Mr Paterson—We are not supposed to report what went to cabinet and what did not go to cabinet. I cannot tell you what date it went.

Senator ABETZ—The minister has now told us publicly that it did go to cabinet, so that is no longer a state secret. Therefore, I am asking: what date did it go to cabinet? I would not have thought that would be a state secret.

Senator Carr—I would have to take that on notice.

ANSWER

Information on when matters are considered by Cabinet is not provided.