

Senate Economics Legislation Committee
ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON NOTICE
Treasury Portfolio
Budget Estimates 30 May – 1 June 2006

Question: bet 61

Topic: Analysis on cutting the fuel excise

Hansard Page: E16-17

Senator SHERRY asked:

You are required to answer the question put to you.

Mr Callaghan—I believe that is the case, Senator.

Senator SHERRY—And if we get to that point, you may not be—

ACTING CHAIR—Order!

Mr Callaghan—May I take that on notice. I believe that that is what it is. May I take it on notice, Senator?

Senator FIELDING—I do not understand why you need to take it on notice; you either know what your department is doing and has done, or you do not. It is a fact. It is a matter of fact question: has the department done any work in this area? I will ask it again: has the department done any work or analysis on cutting the fuel excise tax?

Mr Callaghan—Again, Senator, we are going over the same thing. I believe that the government has stated a policy on this. To ask has the department done any work on this can be interpreted as going to the nature of what work we do in our policy advising capacity to the government, and because I believe that it is going to elements of policy, it is on that basis that I will take it on notice.

Answer:

On 30 May 2006 at the Estimates hearing, Senator Minchin commented that the Australian Government “believed that the current policy setting in regard to fuel excise was appropriate and we, the Government, have given no indication of any intention to change that, nor speculated on that” (Hansard, page E17). These comments address elements of policy in relation to fuel excise, and accordingly Treasury has nothing further to add.