

Senate Standing Committee on Economics

ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

Treasury Portfolio

Budget Estimates 3-5 June 2008

Question: bet 106

Topic: Fuel Watch – Information provided to the Government

Hansard Page: E23

Senator Coonan asked:

Senator COONAN—Thank you. I have one final question on this particular bracket. Can you tell the committee: apart from the report, what additional information was made available to the government prior to the announcement of Fuelwatch in April and when was it provided?

Mr Samuel—I would have to take that on notice to give you a full, detailed answer. What I can say to you is that each of the issues that I referred to before in that sentence that set out the areas that we thought needed to be further examined were examined further. Mr Cassidy has given some answers regarding the issue of independents. In particular, we worked with Finance on the administrative costs. We worked on some of the compliance costs. We worked through the process of setting up the scheme and how compliance could be done in a way that would have minimal impact, indeed negligible impact, on those that were required to be participants in the scheme—that is, retailers—so there are a range of issues that were dealt with.

Answer:

Apart from the 2007 petrol report, the additional information provided to the Government prior to the announcement of Fuelwatch in April 2008 was:

- Data files to Treasury which were used by the ACCC for its econometric modelling.
- Budgetary costs related to the new policy proposal, including different levels of coverage of a national Fuelwatch scheme. These were provided to Treasury and Department of Finance and Deregulation.
- There was general information provided to Treasury regarding the mechanics of the implementation of a national Fuelwatch scheme, including the coverage of unincorporated service stations.