

Senate Standing Committee on Economics

ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

Treasury Portfolio

Budget Estimates

1 June – 3 June 2010

Question: BET 57

Topic: Building the Education Revolution#2

Hansard Page: E65-66 (02/06/2010)

Senator EGGLESTON asked:

Senator EGGLESTON—Was the department aware of the need for the extra \$1.7 billion that was subsequently required.

Mr Ray—When, Senator?

Senator EGGLESTON—A question of timing? Were you monitoring the expenditure?

Mr Ray—We do not monitor expenditure. We became aware at some point that there would be a need. There were further processes involving cabinet around that, and a package was announced where changes were made to some elements of the UEFO package that offset the need to vary the estimates for Building the Education Revolution. In the process of the development of that package, you could expect that we provided advice.

Senator EGGLESTON—I would expect that. I am trying to tie it down to a point where you might have become aware that there would be a need for extra funding presumably prior to you working out some sort of submission to present to cabinet. Is it possible for you to give some sort of indication of when it was you first became aware that there was a problem that needed to be addressed.

Mr Ray—I do not want to mislead you. I do not know that we did make a submission to cabinet.

Senator EGGLESTON—You did not say that; I said that, I agree. I was trying to be helpful!

Mr Ray—I can take it on notice and see if we can provide any particular dates. I think the general answer is that quite clearly you would expect, given that we are likely to provide advice to the Treasurer ahead of cabinet discussions, that at some point we became aware.

Senator EGGLESTON—We are interested in what some point is. If you could assist the committee with an answer on notice, that would be very helpful.

Mr Ray—I know you are interested in what that some point is and I will take it on notice.

Answer:

The Treasury became aware of funding pressures related to the program in late April 2009.