

**Senate Standing Committee on Economics**

**ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON NOTICE**

**Treasury Portfolio**

Supplementary Budget Estimates

21 – 22 October 2009

**Question: sbt 71**

**Topic: List of Commissioned Studies**

**Hansard Page: E121 (22/10/09)**

**Senator CAMERON asked:**

**Senator CAMERON**—Since the establishment of the Productivity Commission how many formal referrals have gone to the private sector instead of the Productivity Commission?

**Mr Banks**—The commission is probably different from a range of those other ones in that we are established as an independent statutory authority to provide independent advice.

**Senator CAMERON**—That does not mean to say you should be the only one.

**Mr Banks**—I agree, and we would not make that claim, but we hold that position.

**Senator CAMERON**—You are basically holding a monopoly position?

**Mr Banks**—No. A monopoly would mean that there was no-one else who could provide advice to government. While the advice that we provide is generally commissioned, where the government asks us to do specific things, government can equally seek advice from others. It would not come under the provisions of our act, but it would typically have terms of reference that would be specified, and consulting firms, academics or others would provide reports. Increasingly, in recent times, there have been eminent person-type taskforces who have been tasked with doing things under terms of reference and so on. We could come back to you, if you like, with a list of those sorts of commissioned studies.

**Senator CAMERON**—That would be fine if you want to do that.

**Answer:**

Over the years, Governments have commissioned many studies on topics related to structural reform and productivity from bodies other than the Productivity Commission. These include reviews by specially constituted taskforces and review groups within and outside government, as well as from consultants and academics.

Some of the more recent examples include:

- the Taskforce on Industry Self-Regulation, chaired by Professor Berna Collier, which reported in August 2000 (<http://www.treasury.gov.au/contentitem.asp?ContentID=1123&NavID=>);
- the Ergas Committee's Review of intellectual property legislation under the Competition Principles Agreement, which reported in September 2000 ([http://www.ag.gov.au/www/agd/agd.nsf/Page/Publications\\_ErgasCommitteereport-September2000](http://www.ag.gov.au/www/agd/agd.nsf/Page/Publications_ErgasCommitteereport-September2000));

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- the Hogan Review of Pricing Arrangements in Residential Aged Care, which reported in April 2004  
([http://www.health.gov.au/internet/main/publishing.nsf/Content/A8F308F0C773C502CA256F18005083CC/\\$File/full\\_report.pdf](http://www.health.gov.au/internet/main/publishing.nsf/Content/A8F308F0C773C502CA256F18005083CC/$File/full_report.pdf));
- the Exports and Infrastructure Taskforce, chaired by Dr Brian Fisher, which reported in May 2005  
(<http://www.abareconomics.com/infrastructure/pdf/Report.pdf>);
- the Taskforce on Reducing the Regulatory Burden on Business, chaired by Gary Banks, which reported in January 2006  
([http://www.regulationtaskforce.gov.au/\\_data/assets/pdf\\_file/0007/69721/regulationtaskforce.pdf](http://www.regulationtaskforce.gov.au/_data/assets/pdf_file/0007/69721/regulationtaskforce.pdf));
- a Review of International Comparisons with Australia's Tax System conducted by Mr Dick Warburton and Mr Peter Hendy, which reported in April 2006  
(<http://comparativetaxation.treasury.gov.au/content/default.asp>);
- the Strategic Review of Australian Government Climate Change Programs conducted by Mr Roger Wilkins AO, which reported in July 2008  
(<http://www.finance.gov.au/publications/strategic-reviews/docs/Climate-Report.pdf>);
- the Cutler Review of the National Innovation System, which reported to Government in August 2008  
(<http://www.innovation.gov.au/innovationreview/Pages/home.aspx>);
- the Review of Export Policies and Programs undertaken by Mr David Mortimer AO and Dr John Edwards, which reported in September 2008  
([http://www.dfat.gov.au/trade/export\\_review/index.html](http://www.dfat.gov.au/trade/export_review/index.html));
- the Bradley Review of Australian Higher Education, which was released in December 2008  
([http://www.deewr.gov.au/HigherEducation/Review/Documents/PDF/Higher%20Education%20Review\\_one%20document\\_02.pdf](http://www.deewr.gov.au/HigherEducation/Review/Documents/PDF/Higher%20Education%20Review_one%20document_02.pdf)).
- Allen Consulting Group's 2007 Review of the Disability Standards for Accessible Public Transport, which provided a Draft Report to Government in January 2008  
(<http://www.ddatransportreview.com.au/downloads/ACGTransportReviewDraftReport.pdf>); and
- the Garnaut Climate Change Review, which reported to Government in September 2008  
([http://www.garnautreview.org.au/domino/Web\\_Notes/Garnaut/garnautweb.nsf](http://www.garnautreview.org.au/domino/Web_Notes/Garnaut/garnautweb.nsf)).

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There have also been two recent reviews that the Commission did not conduct but for which it provided independent modelling on request, published separately:

- the Review of Australia's Automotive Industry, conducted by the Hon Steve Bracks, which reported in July 2008 ([http://www.innovation.gov.au/automotivereview/Documents/aug08%20final%20report\\_secure.pdf](http://www.innovation.gov.au/automotivereview/Documents/aug08%20final%20report_secure.pdf)); and
- the Review of the Australian Textile, Clothing and Footwear Industries, conducted by Professor Roy Green, which reported in August 2008 ([http://www.innovation.gov.au/tcfreview/Documents/401\\_TCFreviewvol1.pdf](http://www.innovation.gov.au/tcfreview/Documents/401_TCFreviewvol1.pdf)).