

EDUCATION, SCIENCE AND TRAINING

SENATE LEGISLATION COMMITTEE - QUESTIONS ON NOTICE 2007-2008 BUDGET ESTIMATES HEARING

Outcome

DEST Question No. E087_08

Senator Carr asked on 31 May 2007, EWRE Hansard page 42.

Question:

Senator CARR—Given that you have provided me with a table for the forward commitments, I take it that the funding is not committed beyond the current quadrennium?

Mr Burmester—I think we canvassed this in part yesterday. The projection that you were provided with from the chief finance officer was a combination of appropriations that have been passed by the parliament and then the instrument that would allow those appropriations to be drawn down. In the case of schooling, we have a four-year quadrennium legislation and agreement signed with all schools authorities for that same four years. At the moment, the commitment would be to the end of 2008.

Senator CARR—The \$42 billion figure that is used, in effect, is just the normal indexation arrangements. That is what you are saying to me, isn't it?

Mr Burmester—Yes. It is the best estimate we could provide based on the current school population projections. A series of those is shared amongst state and Commonwealth AESOC officials and our assumed AGSRC rate. There are, obviously, other assumptions that we would have had to have built in—for example, the share between government schools and non-government schools was assumed to be, as I recall it, the current proportion. We did not try to guess whether there was going to be any further shift to the non-government sector, which comes with a cost to the Commonwealth, as opposed to the states. So there is a range of assumptions. If you would like us to take that on notice we could provide it for you.

Senator CARR—I would be interested know.

Answer:

2009-2012 Quadrennium Funding

The \$42 billion figure is a reflection of current funding arrangements for programmes appropriated under the *Schools Assistance (Learning Together – Achievement Through Choice and Opportunity) Act 2004* and is based upon current indexation rates and student enrolment statistics and projections.

Enrolment projections are based on grade progression ratios, and make no assumptions about changes to retention rates. Transfers from government to non-government schools do not form part of the methodology.