

Standing Committee on Finance and Public Administration

ANSWER TO QUESTION ON NOTICE

Budget Estimates Hearing – May 2010

Finance and Deregulation Portfolio

Outcome 1, Program 1.1

Topic: Building the Education Revolution

Question reference number: F4

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Senator Ryan asked:

Could you please characterise the sort of regularity and depth of your discussions with DEEWR following the approval of the [FMA Act] reg 10 order [for the BER] and prior to the announcement by the government of the extra funds being allocated?

Answer:

Between 17 March 2009, when the *Financial Management and Accountability Regulations 1997* Regulation 10 approval for the Building the Education Revolution (BER) program was signed by the Minister for Finance and Deregulation, and 27 August 2009, when the Government released the Commonwealth Coordinator General's *Progress Report on the Nation Building Economic Stimulus Plan*, the Department of Finance and Deregulation (Finance) was in regular contact with the Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations (DEEWR) in order to monitor spending.

When initial concerns were raised by DEEWR in March 2009, Finance considered it was not possible to determine if there would be a funding shortfall until applications for funding had been assessed and projects tendered. This information was not available until July 2009, at which time, communication became more frequent as information was assessed by Finance and the need for additional funding was considered by the Strategic Priorities and Budget Committee.