

Senate Finance and Public Administration Legislation Committee

ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

Prime Minister and Cabinet Portfolio

Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet

Supplementary Budget Estimates 18-21 October 2010

Question: PM23

Asked By: Senator Payne

Topic: COAG - agenda items

Type of Question: FPA 65-66, 18 October

Date set by the committee for the return of answer: 3 December 2010

Number of pages: 2

Senator PAYNE-While we are discussing that reprioritisation, can you tell us how many agenda items from the last COAG meeting and from any previous meetings remain to be addressed?

Dr de Brouwer-I do not have that in front of me now. I will take that on notice.

Senator PAYNE-In both cases?

Dr de Brouwer-Sorry?

Senator PAYNE-For both agenda items from the previous meeting of 19 and 20 April and from previous meetings before that. For example, I think at the end of 2009, after the meeting in Copenhagen, the most pressing issue that needed to go on the COAG agenda for 2010 was climate change. I am not sure whether that has been discussed. Can you advise the committee whether that has been discussed by COAG in the manner in which it was suggested at the end of 2009?

Dr de Brouwer-The various elements of climate change that are before COAG generally cover adaptation and there is also COAG discussion through the Department of Climate Change and Energy Efficiency on the energy efficiency programs, but I would refer you to that department for more detail.

Senate Finance and Public Administration Legislation Committee

ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

Prime Minister and Cabinet Portfolio

Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet

Supplementary Budget Estimates 18-21 October 2010

Answer:

The Council of Australian Governments (COAG) considers a wide range of items at each of its meetings. These issues have included health and hospitals reform, vocational education and training, water reform, early childhood development, microeconomic reform, energy efficiency and the Renewable Energy Target (RET) scheme.

Time did not permit any discussion of climate change matters during the course of the 19-20 April 2010 COAG meeting but COAG did note the Commonwealth's 26 February 2010 announcement of changes to the RET scheme.

COAG places a high priority on the completion of work it has commissioned and the implementation and delivery of its decisions.

Indeed, COAG has agreed that implementation of its initiatives should be closely monitored and progress reviewed of any initiatives that are experiencing implementation problems or delays.

There were a number of ongoing issues on the COAG meeting agenda for 19 and 20 April 2010 that COAG commissioned other fora, such as ministerial councils, to progress and report back to it. They include further aspects of health and hospitals reform, vocational education and training, regulatory reform and housing supply and affordability. These will be dealt with by COAG once the work has been completed.