

Rural & Regional Affairs and Transport Legislation Committee
ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON NOTICE
Supplementary Budget Estimates October 2012
Infrastructure and Transport

Question no.: 126

Program: n/a

Division/Agency: (PAR) Policy and Research

Topic: BITRE Report on Transport Energy Futures

Proof Hansard Page/s: 50-51 (16/10/12)

Senator EDWARDS asked:

Senator EDWARDS: When will the government publish its revised peak oil report, BITRE 117, which Minister Carr said in February 2012 hearings was not up to scratch?

Mr Williamson: There is no intention to republish that report that you are referring to. I think we discussed at the last hearing that a lot of the work that went into that report has manifested in a variety of other pieces of work the bureau has done, and we have provided a list of those. But there is no specific intention to republish that report.

Senator EDWARDS: Is that when you sent it out to all these other organisations—the German Federal Institute for Geosciences and Natural Resources and a number of other government departments?

Mr Williamson: No, in the process of that work being undertaken, some of the consultation that was done on that report.

Senator EDWARDS: It has been a controversial report, hasn't it. Can their feedback be provided, on notice?

Mr Williamson: I would have to check, but I think we provided an answer—again, this might be several hearings ago—that actually outlined the feedback we got.

Senator EDWARDS: I am not sure you have.

Mr Williamson: I will take it on notice and check.

Answer:

This question was answered at the February 2012 hearings, refer to Question on Notice - 107.

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Division/Agency: (PAR) Policy and Research

Topic: Research on the State of Bridges in Australia

Proof Hansard Page/s: 52 (16/10/12)

Senator NASH asked:

Senator NASH: On local road bridges, has there been any research done on the state of the local state and federally controlled bridges across Australia?

Dr Dolman: Our bureau has not done such work.

Senator NASH: Have you done anything at all in relation to bridges?

Dr Dolman: Not directly. ARRB—the Australian Road Research Board is its former name—do some work for the state governments. I imagine they have done some work on bridges.

Senator NASH: Are there any statistics available through BITRE on perhaps the local, state and federally owned numbers of what is where?

Dr Dolman: The number of bridges?

Senator NASH: Yes.

Dr Dolman: No, we do not collect statistics on that.

Senator NASH: Have you considered doing any work on bridges?

Dr Dolman: No.

Senator NASH: Will you consider doing any work on bridges?

Mr Mrdak: AusRoads and ARRB, as Dr Dolman said, are the research bodies for the state governments. We also participate. We are happy to take on notice what work they have done and come back to you in relation to that.

Answer:

Austrroads is an association of Australian and New Zealand road transport and traffic authorities (the Department is a member) which undertakes technical research in a range of areas. In 2009 Austrroads published a Guide to Bridge Technology, an Australasian approach to bridge technology that covers the majority of road authority requirements. It also identifies and references specific locally applied areas of practice or standards. The Guide to Bridge Technology is available at www.austrroads.com.au.

ARRB has published five research papers on bridges over the last five years and they are available on the ARRB website.

Also, in 1997, the Bureau of Transport and Communication Economics (BTCE, a predecessor organisation of BITRE) published a paper (Working Paper 35 – Roads 2020) which included an evaluation of the adequacy of bridges for the Australian National Highway System (see Appendix IV of Working Paper 35 available at www.bitre.gov.au)

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Division/Agency: (PAR) Policy and Research

Topic: Peak Oil

Proof Hansard Page/s: Written

Senator EDWARDS asked:

When will the government publish its revised peak oil report BITRE 117?

Answer:

As advised during the Supplementary Budget Estimates hearings, the draft report will not be published. Please refer to page 51 of Hansard.

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Division/Agency: (PAR) Policy and Research

Topic: Peak Oil

Proof Hansard Page/s: Written

Senator EDWARDS asked:

1. How many million barrels of oil, million tons of coal, billion m³ of gas are needed to run Australian cities in the next 10 years?
2. What is the absorption capacity of the atmosphere when burning these fossil fuels?
3. Some state that Queensland plans to export more than 10 times the gas NSW needs.
 - (a) Has the Department done any work on this?
 - (b) What is your view on this?
4. The NSW Government has plans to use gas as a transport fuel instead of oil.
 - (a) Are there sufficient quantities to replace oil?
 - (b) Has the Department done any work on this?
 - (c) If so what, is it public, can we have a copy?

Answer:

The Department of Resources, Energy and Tourism is the lead portfolio regarding the issues raised.