

Chapter 1

Introduction

Background

1.1 The Liquid Fuel Emergency Amendment Bill 2007 was introduced and read a first time in the House of Representatives on 28 March 2007.

1.2 On 29 March 2007, on the recommendation of the Selection of Bills Committee, the Senate referred the provisions of the bill to the Standing Committee on Economics for inquiry and report by 8 May 2007.¹

1.3 The bill is intended to amend the *Liquid Fuel Emergency Act 1984* which provides the Government with extensive powers to control the distribution and sale of fuel in a crisis which is beyond either the fuel industry or the relevant state or territory government to manage on their own. The proposed amendments are designed to improve the preparations for, and response to, a national fuel emergency.²

Conduct of the inquiry

1.4 The committee advertised the inquiry in *The Australian* on 4 April 2007 and invited written submissions by 13 April 2007. Details of the inquiry were placed on the committee's website. The committee also wrote to a number of organisations and stakeholder groups inviting them to make submissions.

1.5 The committee received one submission to its inquiry, from the Australian Institute of Petroleum (AIP).

1.6 A public hearing was held at the Australian Institute of Management in Melbourne on 23 April 2007. The AIP presented evidence at the hearing and provided additional information to the committee in relation to this evidence on 27 April 2007.

1.7 The Hansard transcript of the committee's hearing, the additional information received from the AIP and a copy of the submission are tabled with this report. These documents, plus the committee's report, are also available on the committee's website at: http://www.aph.gov.au/senate/committee/economics_ctte/liquid_fuel/index.htm.

1.8 The committee thanks those who participated in the inquiry.

1 Selection of Bills Committee, *Report No. 5*, dated 29 March 2007.

2 The Hon Robert Baldwin MP, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister for Industry, Tourism and Resources, *House of Representatives Proof Hansard*, 28 March 2007, p. 1.

Note on references

1.9 References to the committee Hansard are to the proof Hansard - page numbers may vary between the proof and the official Hansard.