Senate Standing Committee on Economics

ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

Treasury Portfolio

Budget Estimates

29 May – 31 May 2012

Question: BET 145

Topic: Consultation Since the Release of the PJC Report

Hansard Page: Thursday 31 May 2012, page 68

Senator CORMANN asked:

Senator CORMANN: Can you talk us through the nature and extent of consultations that Treasury has engaged in since the PJC reported?

Ms Vroombout: There have been consultations with the industry, the payday lending industry and the consumer groups, since the release of the PJC report.

Senator CORMANN: Can you talk us through the process? Has there been a round of consultation in relation to specific proposals? What sort of consultation has there been?

Ms Vroombout: There have been meetings and discussions. As we have discussed previously, sometimes these things are iterative processes.

Senator CORMANN: So you sit around the table and you both look at the PJC report and you say, 'We could do it this way,' or somebody else says, 'We could do it another way'? I assume that as the government you go to these things with—

Mr Murphy: We put up a proposal.

Ms Vroombout: Yes. We put up a proposal and we discuss it.

Senator CORMANN: What is the proposal? I assume it is not secret. If you have publicly consulted on it then you are not going to tell me that it is confidential or anything.

Ms Vroombout: As I said, we have consulted with the payday lenders and the consumer groups, but we have not consulted more broadly and publicly. Ultimately, it is a government decision as to the nature of the changes that are made.

Senator Wong: I am not trying to be difficult, and obviously I am here as the minister representing, but I genuinely do not know the stage at which this is at, when Mr Shorten is proposing to make this public and what briefings might be offered. Rather than putting officers in a difficult position, we could take on notice the questions which essentially go to what decision, as a result of the PJC report, the government has made and how they are reflected in the bills. We could take that broad suite of questions on notice and if we can come back earlier because legislation is on then I am sure that is something the government could be amenable on.

Answer:

The Government, through the Commonwealth Treasury, released the following documents for comments from stakeholders

Senate Standing Committee on Economics

ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

Treasury Portfolio

Budget Estimates

29 May – 31 May 2012

1. A discussion paper in relation to specific reforms in respect of small amount credit contracts was released for comment on 4 April 2012.

2. Draft amendments to the Consumer Credit and Corporations Legislation Amendment (Enhancements) Bill 2011 were released for comment on 24 April 2012.

The Commonwealth Treasury was also in regular contact with stakeholders in relation to the reforms.