



COMMONWEALTH OF AUSTRALIA

Official Committee Hansard

**HOUSE OF
REPRESENTATIVES**

STANDING COMMITTEE ON ECONOMICS, FINANCE AND
PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION

Reference: Current and future directions of Australia's service industries

THURSDAY, 1 MARCH 2007

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HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
STANDING COMMITTEE ON ECONOMICS, FINANCE AND PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION

Thursday, 1 March 2007

Members: Mr Baird (*Chair*), Dr Emerson (*Deputy Chair*), Ms Bird, Mr Ciobo, Ms Grierson, Mr Keenan, Mr McArthur, Mr Secker, Mr Somlyay and Mr Tanner

Members in attendance: Mr Baird, Ms Bird, Mr Ciobo, Dr Emerson, Mr Keenan, Mr McArthur, Mr Secker and Mr Somlyay

Terms of reference for the inquiry:

To inquire into and report on:

Where the service export sector now sits in Australia's export (and import competing) environment, focusing on, but not limited to:

- the tourism and education service sectors;
- the impact of the resources boom on the service sector;
- future global opportunities for Australian service exports; and
- policies for realising these opportunities.

WITNESSES

**KILEY, Mr Michael, Acting General Manager, Enforcement and Coordination Branch,
Australian Competition and Consumer Commission 1**

**RIDGWAY, Mr Nigel Cameron, General Manager, Compliance Strategies Branch, Australian
Competition and Consumer Commission 1**

Committee met at 9.39 am

KILEY, Mr Michael, Acting General Manager, Enforcement and Coordination Branch, Australian Competition and Consumer Commission

RIDGWAY, Mr Nigel Cameron, General Manager, Compliance Strategies Branch, Australian Competition and Consumer Commission

CHAIR (Mr Baird)—Welcome. I declare open this hearing by the House of Representatives Standing Committee on Economics, Finance and Public Administration. Today's hearing is for the inquiry into the current and future directions of Australia's service export industries. Today we will be hearing from representatives of the ACCC, focusing specifically on the issue of rogue operators in the tourism sector. I invite you to make an opening statement and then we will proceed to questions.

Mr Ridgway—Thank you. Perhaps by way of introduction I might provide a brief outline of some of the commission's engagement with the issues of alleged rogue traders in the sector of tourism and particularly with respect to inbound tourism. Before I do so, I outline that I represent the compliance and education and persuasion functions within the ACCC while my colleague Mr Kiley represents the enforcement and investigation and litigation part of the commission.

The ACCC has been engaged with the National Inbound Tourism Compliance Task Force established by the Department of Industry, Tourism and Resources in 2004. It was invited by that department to join the task force and to provide an outline of its roles and functions under the Trade Practices Act and to explore the application of the act and its functions in relation to allegations of unscrupulous inbound tour operators and related shopping outlets and the alleged exploitation of consumers who arrive for a short period of time from other countries, predominantly Korea and China and some other countries. The ACCC provided information at that point in time to the task force on how it operates and joined the task force in 2005. At that point we introduced a specific monitoring of the complaints that we receive in this area through our information centre, which receives approximately 90 per cent of complaints and inquiries taken by the commission.

CHAIR—The chances are you would not get too many direct complaints because you are dealing with people who are predominantly offshore.

Mr Ridgway—There are very few complaints—that is correct. We have had two substantive complaints in recent times, one in Sydney and one in Queensland. There are a lot of anecdotes in relation to concerns, but upon working with the task force and meeting with the industry associations, such as the Korean Inbound Tour Operators Council of Australia, we find as we drill down below the anecdotes to seek substantive information and facts that there is very little in evidence. Indeed, the two substantive concerns that have been brought to us—one in New South Wales—we proceeded to consider and investigate, as did the New South Wales Office of Fair Trading, and that inquiry was concluded for want of evidence in this area. The other matter which we have received in relation to conduct in Queensland is still under active investigation, however.

Mr SECKER—What is the nature of the complaints that have been brought forward?

Mr Ridgway—At the anecdotal level the complaints are that once inbound tourists arrive in Australia, if they are with particular companies that are engaged in this conduct, they are, for want of a better term, ‘herded’ or directed to particular stores and particular locations. The stores that they are directed to allegedly exploit them by charging above average prices in relation to the goods and services that are provided to them, and there are some allegations of coercion that, at their strongest, allege consumers are locked into dealing with those stores. That has never been evidenced, but at a lesser level it is alleged that they are strongly discouraged from shopping elsewhere.

Also, there are allegations that the tourists are required to pay for services that otherwise tourists would not be expected to pay for. One example given to us was that a group of inbound tourists, accompanied by a tour guide to Bondi Beach, would be expected to pay a certain fee to walk along Bondi Beach, when otherwise that would not be expected. Again, this information has never been substantiated to us, but that is the nature of the allegations. We have had a number of substantive concerns, one of which, as I say, has not been proceeded with for want of evidence, and one of which continues to be investigated.

Mr CIOBO—Which was which?

Mr Ridgway—The matter in New South Wales was not proceeded with. The matter in Queensland is still under investigation.

Mr CIOBO—Was the matter in Queensland at Cairns or at the Gold Coast?

Mr Ridgway—At the Gold Coast.

CHAIR—Did you have any complaints that the tour program that was advertised in the brochures bore only a passing similarity to what actually happened—so tours on the harbour, for example, ended up being visits to factories in Parramatta?

Mr Ridgway—In the broad, we have had allegations that representations of visits to significant monuments such as the Sydney Opera House, for example, have in fact manifested themselves as transport travelling past the said location rather than actually stopping and allowing tourists to get out and spend some time at the point of interest. The issue of broader alleged misrepresentations of going to particular points and then actually being taken to factories has not been made specifically that I am aware of, but it would not be surprising.

CHAIR—What about the complaints that you have got particularly from Korea and China and so on? You have a whole load of tourists arriving at Brisbane Airport, all the reservations are cancelled the night before and then the tour operators are on the phone on the way down, bargaining with whoever to try and get the lowest rate with this group of tourists who are travelling. I understand that happens regularly. Steve might have some comments on his evidence of it.

Mr Ridgway—That may be the case, but that is not a specific trade practices concern that has been raised with us. The greater tone has been that arrangements are put in place between a tourist outlet in one of the countries of origin, say Korea, with specific operators in Australia, that there will be a commercial agreement or arrangement between those parties with the effect

that the operator in Korea is able to offer a package that appears to be at a significant discount from packages offered by others, with the intention of attracting custom and then recouping the money that they would otherwise lose by the discounting operation from commissions rebated by operators of stores in Australia to the operation in Korea.

Mr SECKER—Are you saying that you really do not have a lot of evidence of widespread practice and that it is only minor issue?

Mr Ridgway—I am not indicating that it is a minor issue. It is certainly an issue that we are monitoring and working closely on with the department and other offices of fair trading around the country. But it is certainly an indication that, while there is a degree of anecdotal discussion and concern, that has not translated to many substantive complaints to date.

Dr EMERSON—In terms of anticompetitive behaviour, which obviously enlivens your jurisdiction, what is the physical set-up where people are alleging that tourists are being herded into one shop? Wouldn't there be other shops in the immediate precinct if it is a tourist area?

Mr CIOBO—That is not how it works.

Dr EMERSON—How does it work?

Mr CIOBO—The situation that you get on the Gold Coast, for example, is that, for starters, when the tourists come into the country they are all herded onto the bus and often their passports are taken off them and kept by the tour guides for safekeeping. The whole way from the airport into Surfers Paradise they are told that it is an exceptionally dangerous city to be in and that they have got to be particularly careful because people get stabbed, raped, murdered and so on and they should not venture out.

CHAIR—So far it sounds pretty accurate!

Mr CIOBO—The hotel they stay in is not in the middle of Surfers Paradise. I will not name them, but there are a couple of places that are a little bit removed from Surfers.

Dr EMERSON—In the hinterland or—

Mr CIOBO—Not that far back, but certainly not on the strip. When they do go on shopping tours, they are all picked up on the bus and they are taken not to Surfers Paradise or anything like that but to premises on Upton Street in Bundall and in suburbs like Ashmore and Southport. I have seen them. This is the point I make to the ACCC: you cannot say that there is not a problem; there is a massive problem, because there are duty-free shops that exist—and I could drive you past them today, if you wanted to—where for all intents and purposes there is no signage; there is a warehouse with a door and you look through that door and there is a warehouse filled from floor to ceiling with lambs wool and macadamia nuts covered in chocolate and all that sort of stuff. The prices are just ridiculous.

Dr EMERSON—Ridiculously high?

Mr CIOBO—Yes. They all go through, they get ripped off and they jump back on the bus and it takes them back to their hotel in the middle of nowhere and they are told not to venture out of the hotel or they are going to get bashed.

Dr EMERSON—Because it is dangerous.

Mr CIOBO—That is the way that works. There is not even any opportunity for comparative shopping.

Dr EMERSON—That is what I was getting at: how would they control—

Mr CIOBO—That is how it is all controlled. They do not have their passports and they are told not to leave.

CHAIR—That is similar to my understanding of it, but the thing that concerns me is that this issue has been around for years.

Mr SOMLYAY—I have not heard about it.

CHAIR—Really? You do not have as many internationals in your electorate, though, do you?

Ms BIRD—More independent travellers.

CHAIR—In my period at the Tourism Council, there was a mission that went to countries such as South Korea and Taiwan to try and sort this out with the governments. The governments said: 'It's your problem; the government should just determine approved operators and we will be happy to deal with those.' We seem to have dropped the ball, and this has been allowed to go on and on. We do have the issue that the people who are affected are offshore, but what happens is that they tell their friends it was a dud experience—

Dr EMERSON—That is exactly right.

CHAIR—We are frustrated that nothing has happened from your organisation, Mr Ridgway. Please proceed. We have jumped in. Everyone in the tourism industry will tell you: 'This is a big issue; why don't you fix it?'

Mr CIOBO—The last raid I recall from the task force was about 18 months ago, when they raided the tour buses near Water World or Cades County, or whatever it is called, on the Gold Coast. That is the last raid I am aware of. You do not get warehouses springing up in suburbs left, right and centre because they are doing trade at a retail level. There is no-one walking past these places in the middle of industrial areas going in to do their duty-free shopping, yet they are maintaining sustainable businesses. And they are everywhere. I do not understand how, from an enforcement point of view—whether it is Tax, Immigration, misleading and deceptive conduct in trade and commerce or whatever—nothing is happening against these guys.

CHAIR—People in the tourism industry feel really frustrated that we, the Commonwealth government, have done nothing and have allowed this to happen, affecting a multibillion-dollar industry—it is worth at least \$17 billion to the economy. Some of our markets from Asia have

been on the decline. This is pointed to as one of the reasons why—because people have such a bad experience and word of mouth spreads. Anyway, please proceed.

Mr Ridgway—Perhaps I could just conclude with one or two points and then address the issues that have been raised specifically about the task force. The ACCC, in addition to the work it has done with the task force directly and with industry associations such as the Korean Inbound Tour Operators Council of Australia, also met twice in 2006 with our counterparts in, for example, the Korea Fair Trade Commission, to express our concerns and to promote a joint set of activities in relation to these concerns.

That is, to identify whether or not consumers, once they return to their countries of origin, raise concerns locally and, in the event that they do, whether those can be related through to us and provide some opportunity for joint operations between the ACCC and its counterparts such as the KFTC. On both of those occasions, while the counterpart organisation has expressed interest and support in the event that there are substantive concerns, they themselves have not identified any complaints or concerns being raised in that country of origin.

CHAIR—It sounds all very passive. You are waiting for them to raise it—the average person has gone back to their home country. If one of us felt that we had been ripped off in Italy are we going to raise it with the department of consumer affairs here? Are we going to say, ‘I had a bad experience in Italy’? The department would say, ‘Tough; I can’t afford to go to Italy.’ It defies belief that we have not taken a proactive approach, had raids on these tours, questioned people on the tours about what has been offered to them and where they have been taken, and looked at the programs. Why don’t we have a registration program where people are approved as operators and if they breach they lose their licence and they cannot operate in Australia? It is so important for the industry.

Mr Ridgway—While issues of registration regimes and so forth may be explored, they do not fit within the remit of the ACCC as the enforcer of the Trade Practices Act. We are not unmindful of other proposals to promote—

CHAIR—Tell us what you are doing now. You have not had any breaches. The only action you had was dropped. What has happened?

Mr Ridgway—There is a matter under active investigation at the moment. Another matter was not proceeded with for want of evidence. In relation to actions such as raids and so forth—and Mr Kiley can probably provide a little more detail—there is a base threshold required before the ACCC or other regulators have sufficient cause to enter premises, without which the ACCC or other regulators would arguably go beyond their powers. That is, there needs to be a reason to believe that a particular breach of the Trade Practices Act has taken place and that needs to be a reason sufficiently weighty that will convince the commission that we are able to use this power. If we were to proceed without that reason to believe, arguably we could be stopped quite quickly by the courts, for example, with an injunction.

CHAIR—Has that ever happened?

Mr Ridgway—I am not aware of circumstances where we have moved without having a reason to believe.

Mr Kiley—The commission in its early days was challenged in relation to its powers in relation to use of reason to believe. I do not think there have been any occasions where we were found to have not had reason to believe.

CHAIR—How many raids have you actually made?

Mr Kiley—There are three powers that we have in relation to requiring people to provide us information. We can require them to provide us with documentary information. We can require people to attend interviews and answer questions. Failure to do so can be a breach of our act and there can be fines for that. We now have search warrant powers. Prior to those search warrant powers we had powers to enter premises and obtain information. We did not have the power to take material away with us but to obtain information when we were there. I would have to take on notice the exact number of raids we have had.

CHAIR—In the last two years is it less than five?

Mr Kiley—In relation to all the matters we have investigated, it is less than five.

Mr CIOBO—How many for tourism?

Mr Kiley—I would have to check but I think it is none.

CHAIR—Surprise, surprise!

Ms BIRD—Did you want to make some further comment, Mr Kiley?

Mr Kiley—In relation to raids, it is a power the commission uses discreetly because of the issues involved in raiding a premises. As Nigel was saying, we have to have information in relation to particular complaints and particular companies and individuals before we can do a raid.

CHAIR—For heaven's sake! If you talk to anybody in the tourism industry they are full of stories about what happens. It always comes up in discussions with government: 'Can't you do something about these rogue operators?'

Mr CIOBO—There is complete inertia. This task force is formed for the right reasons but I am highly sceptical that, on the ground, we actually see that translate into activity. On the Gold Coast we are not seeing much at all. And yet there is much anecdotal evidence. If you sit around waiting for some Korean or Chinese person who has been ripped off to come forward and start moving against the authorities, then we might as well just be sitting here in another 30 years time.

Ms BIRD—Can I just observe, before we move on, and following on from what Mr Ciobo said, that I have a little bit of hesitancy about the raid thing, because—

Mr CIOBO—I am not saying there has to be a raid.

Ms BIRD—I reckon if I were overseas on a tourist bus and a whole lot of authorities from that country suddenly jumped on the bus and started questioning me—

Mr CIOBO—It would be something to remember.

Ms BIRD—I would be a little bit intimidated and probably not likely to go back. But I am interested in what Mr Ciobo is talking about in terms of these warehouse places which are clearly, by their lack of advertising and their lack of engagement with the broader community, behaving in a way that is, at face value, very anticompetitive for the rest of the retail industry in that area. I do not know why it would not be possible to perhaps institute raids and other behaviours against those in Australia who are supplying and supporting it, rather than the actual tour operator jumping on the bus questioning the people who are here. I am interested in that side of it.

Mr Kiley—As I said, I think, in relation to the commission raiding a premises, we would have to have reason to believe that there was a potential breach of the Trade Practices Act—

Ms BIRD—Would you talk me through how that ‘reason to believe’ is arrived at? Is it somebody making contact and you then checking their level of evidence?

Mr Kiley—The chairman of the commission has to be satisfied, has to have reason to believe, that the party we intend to raid can provide information in relation to a breach of the Trade Practices Act, one that we can actually specify. In terms of reaching that reason to believe, staff of the commission analyse the information that is provided and form a view as to whether or not, if this matter was proceeded with, we could possibly establish a breach of the Trade Practices Act. It is not a matter that we—

Dr EMERSON—What sort of information do you need, precisely? I think that is what is being asked.

Ms BIRD—Is it if the local federal member wrote to you and said, ‘I have observed these places and this is what is going on’?

Mr Kiley—It has to be more at a particular level than a general level; you have to be able to drill down and—

Ms BIRD—Is it: ‘This action took place at this time on that day’?

Mr Kiley—Maybe not quite that specific, but we have to be able to independently verify that this conduct may have occurred.

Mr CIOBO—How has the ACCC sought to do that? Can you explain that to us, or can you provide on notice all the examples where the ACCC has sought to independently verify the allegations that have been made?

Mr Ridgway—The fact that a particular commercial operation exists, and whether or not it is located in a particular place or so forth, is not, on the face of it, prima facie evidence that that trader is engaging in breaches of the Trade Practices Act.

Mr CIOBO—Sure; it is only one part of the puzzle.

Mr Ridgway—So—to expand a little further—therefore the ACCC requires something more than the fact that there is this operation here. One of the avenues that we have pursued in this regard, beyond identifying and promoting awareness of consumer complaint, is, as I mentioned before, to work with industry associations such as the Korean inbound tour operators association which as a group have expressed concerns that such practices as they outline are having an anticompetitive effect in relation to their own operations—that they feel that these other operators, by engaging in the practices they allege, are thereby taking market share from what the members of the organisation offer themselves. So, to that end, we encourage and identify the sorts of information that those competitors might like to be alert to, so that they can bring those to us as well. Often in our experience with the Trade Practices Act it is information from market competitors as much as consumers that is likely to bring the sorts of evidence to us that we require.

CHAIR—Has anybody from your organisation visited some of these warehouses—

Mr CIOBO—That is what I am asking: where is the independent verification?

CHAIR—to look at prices and what is happening within them?

Mr Ridgway—I mentioned before that there is an active investigation in Queensland underway at the moment in relation to some of these issues. I am not really able to expand on that without risking compromising the operation, so perhaps we can expand on that particular matter at a future time. That is probably the most relevant—

Mr SECKER—Are you able to give the committee a report on those investigations when they are completed?

Mr SOMLYAY—We can go in camera in this hearing.

CHAIR—Yes, we can. There being no objection, we will now go in camera.

Evidence was then taken in camera but later resumed in public—

Proceedings suspended from 10.06 am to 10.08 am

CHAIR—We will now resume the public hearing. Mr Ridgway, would you continue.

Mr Ridgway—I understand that at least one complainant individually has perhaps canvassed the idea of encouraging someone to come through within the operational process with these inbound tourist operators, but we are not aware that that has actually been pursued. Indeed, we have not had any sense that that has taken place or that it has generated any kind of evidence beyond that which already is generally in the public domain.

Mr SECKER—I would like an answer to my earlier question as to whether, when the investigations are completed, you can give us a report on them.

Mr Kiley—If the outcome is a public outcome we can advise you of it. The commission does not normally comment on investigations in which we do not establish any breach.

Mr SECKER—Is there a role for the Queensland police, for example, under the Queensland Tourism Services Act?

Mr SOMLYAY—Is it fraud that they are all involved in, the—

Mr CIOBO—Task force.

Mr SECKER—Are they? Okay.

Ms BIRD—I do not think it is entirely fair to expect the ACCC to solve all the problems because they are jurisdictional across a few, but it would be a bit disheartening if you were a retailer to feel things were moving this slowly. They probably all view it as their right to exploit tourists and wonder why anybody should have a narrow right to exploit them. So my observation to you is that I understand your hesitancy but perhaps behaviour that is a little more aggressive would be useful.

Mr CIOBO—As someone who represents Surfers Paradise, I think the issue is not that everyone is sitting here saying it is all the ACCC's fault; it is the realisation—to the extent that you are representatives in part of the task force—that this is our second largest export. It is a \$17 billion industry. There seems to be basically very little happening to deal with what seem to be systemic problems in a certain percentage of the industry with inbound operators, kickbacks and a bad wrap in terms of the tourism experience, with all the consequent impacts. The message we are trying to get across—and what the industry has told us, if you look at the transcripts of evidence we have received over the past several months—is that there is a big problem here and we want to see some action. We do not want reasons why nothing can happen; we want to see something happen.

CHAIR—I agree totally on this.

Mr SOMLYAY—The ACCC should tell us where their powers are deficient to do anything about this—

CHAIR—Exactly.

Mr SOMLYAY—and where they need their powers expanded to be able to deal with this sort of thing.

CHAIR—It is clear that this is one of the key things in our review of the services sector and where we go in the future, so we are looking at where we can make some recommendations. If you think you do not have enough power to take action then let us know. I know that Graeme Samuel is in favour of the free market, and so are we, but in my view this is a situation of market failure, and with criminal aspects to it—fraud. Yet it just drifts on and on. I was involved 12 years ago when all this was being said. Everyone nodded and agreed that it was such a big issue and then there was nothing—no prosecutions, nothing.

Ms BIRD—Raids and close-downs are the only thing that is changing.

CHAIR—In some cases that is not so simple either, because they can set themselves up in other forms and—

Ms BIRD—Keeping them on the move makes it more difficult.

CHAIR—get links back into the South-East Asian countries.

Ms BIRD—Could we invite the ACCC to return, having reviewed where they feel—

Mr CIOBO—What about the task force? Why don't we get the task force here as well?

CHAIR—Can you remind us again who is on the task force.

Mr Ridgway—I think the Department of Industry, Tourism and Resources is probably best able to provide details of the full membership of the task force. My understanding is that there are a number of fair trading agencies, Tourism Australia and—

CHAIR—They have state ones as well, do they?

Mr Ridgway—State based; that is correct.

CHAIR—Perhaps we will invite them and, in the meantime, you could consider and come back to us with your recommendations as to how your role could be enhanced—whether you need further powers to carry out this investigative role so that we do have a change of behaviour.

Mr Ridgway—Without wanting to pre-empt a response, my immediate sense is that it is not a want of powers that prevents the ACCC being more active in this area; it is really a want of evidence. We have sat with a number of complainants in this area on some occasions—

CHAIR—Yes, but it sounds like it is a want of trying.

Ms BIRD—It also the want of the standard of evidence you are requiring. If you look at manufacturing and product provision to the general community, we have got much more capacity and the legislation to follow up on complaints about shoddy products and so forth than I think we do with services.

CHAIR—One of the basic problems, it seems to me, is that you are dealing with consumers offshore and therefore there is probably not a high priority and we are not seeing the complaints coming through. Yet what happens affects everyone in the tourism industry. There are 650,000 people in the tourism industry and they would expect that we would be doing something about it. Not everyone is affected, clearly, but it does permeate—

Mr Kiley—To establish a breach of the act the commissioner has to prove, for a civil proof, a balance of probabilities, as you know, and the evidence we have has to reach that standard before we can establish a breach.

CHAIR—But there is also a way of saying: okay, if this is all difficult, is a strict licensing of operators the way to go so that we do have a cleaner industry?

Mr Kiley—I think Mr Ridgway said that that would be somewhat outside the remit of the Trade Practices Act.

CHAIR—Maybe that is something we can pass to the task force. But you can sense that the committee is disappointed in where we sit at the moment, and we are basically reflecting the concerns of the industry. Have you had roundtables with the industry on this issue?

Mr Ridgway—As we have indicated, on a number of occasions we have met with some representatives of the key organisations that have concerns in this area. We have spoken to them and we have explained what we do—

CHAIR—Whom did you meet?

Mr Ridgway—We met with the Korean Inbound Tourism Operators Council and also with Tourism Australia, who are in contact with a number of the organisations and traders who have concerns in this area. As well, we have met with the departmental officials within the Department of Industry, Tourism and Resources who have raised a number of these issues with us on an operational basis.

Mr SOMLYAY—Who made the complaints that resulted in your investigation?

Mr Ridgway—I do not have the name of the individual complainant in Queensland. That was a direct complaint.

Mr SOMLYAY—They were individuals, were they? It was not the council or another organisation?

Mr Ridgway—The information in relation to the New South Wales operation, as I recall, was facilitated by the task force, but I would have to check that detail.

Mr CIOBO—Have you met with ATEC, Australian Tourism Export Council, the pinnacle body that represents the tourism industry in the country?

Mr Ridgway—I am not personally aware of having a meeting—

CHAIR—They should be number one. The Korean operators are more a fringe group within it, so I would encourage you to speak to ATEC and we will follow up with them as well. Thanks for coming. I would hope that you would share our disappointment with your organisation. If you want to come back to us, having discussed it within, that would be fine. Clearly, we feel that not enough is being done. We have got such a major industry and it is being jeopardised by this. Thank you for coming today and we look forward to further input.

Resolved (on motion by **Ms Bird**):

That this committee authorises publication, including publication on the parliamentary database, of the transcript of the evidence given before it at public hearing this day.

Committee adjourned at 10.19 am