

Senate Standing Committee on Economics

ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

Treasury Portfolio

Additional Estimates

13 – 14 February 2013

Question: AET 118-120

Topic: Price Signalling

Written: Received from Committee – 22 February 2013

Senator RYAN asked:

118. Has the Commission instigated any action to have any other sector or market included within the reach of the price signalling provisions?

If so, which markets or sectors and what kind of anti-competitive conduct has the Commission observed and what metrics are used to identify market dysfunction, competition impairment or consumer detriment in order to qualify for potential inclusion within the reach of the price signalling prohibition?

119. Has Government asked the Commission to examine any other sector or market for possible inclusions within the reach of the price signalling provisions?

If so, which markets or sectors and what kind of anti-competitive conduct has the Government identified observed and what evidence has been provided to identify market dysfunction, competition impairment or consumer detriment in order to qualify for potential inclusion within the reach of the price signalling prohibition?

120. It was reported in December 2012 that petrol prices have reached their highest ever sustained level despite the high dollar, and the consumer watchdog is investigating whether price monitoring by 'Informed Sources' may be reducing competition.

If price signalling provisions were extended to other markets, would it have an impact on the operation of the retail petrol market?

Answer:

118. No

119. No

120. The ACCC considers that competition laws should be applied generally across all sectors of the economy. Compliance with such provisions would be expected to improve competition over time.