

Economics Legislation Committee

The committee met on Thursday, 4 June 2015 from 9 am until 4.58 pm.

The committee called the Department of Industry and Science.

Among other issues, the following matters were discussed:

- staff numbers and profile in the resources and energy areas of the Department,
- the Department's graduate program,
- the government's energy policy in relation to the gas market,
- types of major projects in Tasmania,
- renewable energy certificates,
- in relation to the Australian Renewable Energy Agency (ARENA), sources of funding for operational and staff expenses, including for external expertise,
- total economic activity derived from ARENA and its partners, valued at up to \$3 billion,
- cost comparisons between diesel, fossil, wind and solar energy in the short and long terms,
- the status of the Department's consultations, negotiations, and proposals in relation to its enterprise agreement with staff,
- Departmental expenditure on market research and advertising for the current and previous financial years,
- the contribution that the science, technology, engineering and mathematics program (STEM) makes in terms of jobs for the future,
- the low percentage of women undertaking STEM subjects such as engineering,
- the survey being undertaken regarding STEM skill levels of employees and coordination across departments in regards to science programs,
- an update on the Inspiring Australia program and visitor rates at Questacon,
- the manufacturing transition grants program, including a breakdown of where projects are based,
- funding for cooperative research centre programs,
- the review of country of origin labelling laws, and
- the number of complaints about steel dumping received by the Anti-dumping Commission