

**Treasury Portfolio**

**Inquiry into Supermarket Prices**

**Department:** Department of the Treasury  
**Topic:** Supermarket datasets  
**Reference:** Spoken  
**Senator:** Nick McKim

**Question:**

CHAIR: They got a reasonable amount of what they wanted; they didn't get it all. I'm sure we can agree on that. This is the last question from me. Please feel free to take this on notice if you want because it is a question without notice. Treasury released a paper in October 2022 called Competition in Australia and its impact on productivity growth. It found that competition declined across the economy and that average firm mark-ups increased by about six per cent between 2003-04 and 2016-17. I want to ask: did that study disaggregate supermarkets or the supermarket sector, or do the datasets that were created by Treasury to inform that report provide for the disaggregation of the supermarket sector?

Mrs Barker: I think this was a question on notice from estimates.

CHAIR: I'm happy for you to take that on notice.

Mr J McDonald: We'll take that on notice and get back to you, Senator.

Mrs Barker: But I think there was a problem with desegregating further, in use of that data.

CHAIR: Perhaps you could take that on notice and follow up. If the datasets do allow for the disaggregation of the supermarket sector, could you provide the committee with any data that specifically relates to levels of competition or average firm mark-ups in the supermarket sector.

Mr J McDonald: We can do that.

**Answer:**

No the study did not disaggregate supermarket sector. Consistent with BLADE confidentiality safeguards, Treasury is not permitted to extract information where the extraction of this information would create a high risk of disclosing the identity of the businesses involved. There are a very small number of merger transactions each year in the supermarket sub-industry and the extraction of this information would risk disclosure.