

**Economics Legislation Committee**  
ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON NOTICE  
Industry and Science Portfolio  
2015-16 Supplementary Budget Estimates  
22 October 2015

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**AGENCY/DEPARTMENT:** DEPARTMENT OF INDUSTRY AND SCIENCE

**TOPIC:** Safeguards Senate Resolution

**REFERENCE:** Question on Notice (Hansard, 22 October 2015, page 103)

**QUESTION No.:** SI-38

**Senator KIM CARR:** Are you aware of the resolution passed in the Senate on 10 September as a joint notice of motion, urging much more rapid action before Australia loses its steelmaking capacity, comparing us to the global steel industry crisis, and urging a range of procurement safeguard measures? Are you aware of that?

**Mr Seymour:** Yes, I am aware of the motion.

**Senator KIM CARR:** The notice of motion called for the government to immediately refer matters to the dumping of sub-cost steel in Australia to the Anti-Dumping Commission for a preliminary report within three weeks, including an assessment of the possible harm to the local industry and options for action, including duties and WTO emergency safeguards.

**Senator Sinodinos:** Safeguards are not a matter for the commission.

**Senator KIM CARR:** That was the nature of the resolution carried by the Senate. Was that matter referred to you?

**Mr Seymour:** No, Senator.

**Senator Sinodinos:** The safeguards are not a matter for the commission, as I understand it.

**Senator KIM CARR:** No, but the other matters are. That matter was not referred to you?

**Mr Seymour:** No.

**Senator KIM CARR:** That is obviously a matter we will have to take up elsewhere. Senator, were you aware that the matter was not referred?

**Senator Sinodinos:** I have not been briefed on that.

**Senator KIM CARR:** Would you undertake to find out why that was not referred?

**Senator Sinodinos:** Yes.

**ANSWER**

The Anti-Dumping Commission (Commission) is responsible for investigating allegations of dumped and subsidised goods imported to Australia. Under Australia's anti-dumping system, and in accordance with World Trade Organization rules, Australian industries bring applications to the Commission for investigations. The Australian steel industry has a very good understanding of the anti-dumping system and has successfully brought many applications to the Commission without the need for a Government referral.

In the last two years the Commission has been under historically high demand for its services. A significant proportion of this demand is being driven by investigations concerning allegedly dumped and subsidised steel products. Since 2010, 20 cases have been completed relating to steel products and as at 21 October 2015, another 8 cases are ongoing.

While the Senate motion of 10 September 2015 is well intentioned, a broad sectoral referral to the Commission at this time would necessarily divert essential resources away from current investigations – including those on steel products. This would likely cause delays to cases underway and delay the possible imposition of remedial duties to prevent any ongoing injury being caused to Australian industries.