

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

DEPARTMENT: DEPARTMENT OF INDUSTRY, INNOVATION AND SCIENCE

TOPIC: Boron Content of Steel

REFERENCE: Written Question – Senator Xenophon

QUESTION No.: SI-68

What is Standards Australia's responsibility to ensure that Australian Steel Standards do not jeopardise the safety of steel structures?

ANSWER

The below response has been prepared by the Department of Industry, Innovation and Science in consultation with Standards Australia.

Standards Australia has a responsibility for ensuring that all standards development projects progressed through its process meet the requirements of its process based on:

- Openness
- Transparency; and
- Consensus

This standards development process relies on broad stakeholder support from all interests including those, for instance, who may import goods and services to Australia.

Standards Australia also undertakes a Net Benefit assessment prior to the commencement of project development work to ensure that the work will result in a net benefit to the Australian community. Ultimately, it is a matter for the jurisdictional regulators to set the standards for construction works in Australia. This process is undertaken largely through the states and territories giving legislative and regulatory effect to the National Construction Code.

Standards Australia is not a regulator. Standards Australia develops voluntary, consensus based documents. Industries and governments have a range of other technical and policy measures available to them to manage risk in the built environment.

Standards Australia has reaffirmed its commitment to working with the steel sector in Australia and will continue to seek to achieve outcomes which meet the Net Benefit criteria and the needs of stakeholders. Standards Australia also reaffirmed its commitment to use its processes, which must remain in compliance with Australia's international trade obligations, for the development of standards for the steel sector.