

Rural & Regional Affairs and Transport Legislation Committee
ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON NOTICE
Budget Estimates 2017 - 2018
Infrastructure and Regional Development

Committee Question Number: 131
Departmental Question Number: SQ17-000237

Program: n/a
Division/Agency: Surface Transport Policy
Topic: Response to questions asked in the Senate
Proof Hansard Page: 5 and 14-15 (23 May 2017)

Senator Cameron, Doug asked:

Senator CAMERON: Do you have a date when those responses went to the minister's office?

Mr Mrdak: We are just checking as to whether the minister has cleared the answers to be provided. I will get an answer for you as quickly as possible.

...

Senator CAMERON: Okay. I have questions on notice.

Mr Mrdak: Just in relation to that, I have made inquiries. My understanding is that advice has been provided, and I will undertake to seek the minister's agreement to finalise that response to you as quickly as possible.

Senator CAMERON: Can I just indicate my concern that these questions are over a month overdue. Not one question has been answered, and I think that is treating this committee with contempt and senators with contempt. We are entitled to have legitimate questions answered, especially when it relates to a death.

Mr Mrdak: Certainly, and I will undertake to find out why the answer has been delayed and, as I said, I will seek the minister's agreement to expedite the answer.

Senator CAMERON: I will have a look at the Hansard of this, and there may be further questions arising from the Hansard. Chair, thanks very much for your indulgence on this.

CHAIR: Can I say, Mr Mrdak, I join Senator Cameron's comments about these answers to questions on notice, particularly on these important matters, and I think I can speak on behalf of the whole committee in asking you to go to the minister to ask him or her to prioritise the return of these as soon as possible.

Mr Mrdak: Certainly. I think we have provided answers to questions taken on notice in this committee on time, but these were questions asked in the Senate, and Senator Cameron is quite right to ask that those time frames be met. I will undertake to find out why that has not taken place.

Answer:

Refer to Committee question number 86.

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Committee Question Number: 132
Departmental Question Number: SQ17-000268

Program: n/a
Division/Agency: Surface Transport Policy
Topic: Coastal Trading Consultation
Proof Hansard Page: 116-117 (23 May 2017)

Senator Sterle, Glenn asked:

Senator STERLE: No. I will get to the point. I was reading the submission from North Star Cruises. Were they consulted?

Ms Zielke: Yes.

Senator STERLE: Was the entire cruise industry consulted?

Ms Zielke: They were provided with the opportunity. We would have to double-check exactly who was in the industry as opposed to those that made submissions, but we went to the industry associations and invited submissions through them as well, where they passed on that information. But I am not sure if every single one attended the consultation.

Senator STERLE: I would be very interested to know, because they are fired up, as you know. They are really unhappy people, but I am sure they will have reason to be unhappy with the way that things might be going. Let us hope I am wrong. Can I take you to the Coastal shipping reforms document. I want to go to the amendments.

Answer:

The following cruise industry stakeholders were provided with the Coastal Shipping Reforms Discussion Paper and asked to comment:

- Australian Expedition Cruise Shipping Association – representing 86 members;
- Carnival Australia;
- Coral Princess;
- Cruise Down Under;
- Cruise Lines International Association (CLIA) Australasia – representing 8 regional members and 31 global members; and
- North Star Cruises.

The following stakeholders contributed submissions in response to the Discussion Paper:

- North Star Cruises;
- CLIA Australasia; and
- Ponant.

Tourism & Transport Forum and Carnival Australia attended a coastal trading reform consultation meeting with the Hon Darren Chester MP, Minister for Infrastructure and Transport, on 27 April 2016.

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Committee Question Number: 133

Departmental Question Number: SQ17-000269

Program: 2.3 Road Safety

Division/Agency: Surface Transport Policy

Topic: Spending on Program 2.3 Road Safety 2016-17 and 2017-18

Proof Hansard Page: 118 (23 May 2017)

Senator Gallacher, Alex asked:

Senator GALLACHER: I want to talk about road safety. I have been waiting all day for this. Is there someone at the table who has a handle on the budget figures for road safety?

Ms Zielke: Yes.

Senator GALLACHER: The budgeted amount was \$24,068,000, and we only spent \$23,402,000. Do you agree with those figures?

Ms Zielke: What program are you referring to?

Senator GALLACHER: Program 3.2—road safety expense. It is in the budget statements: PBS expenses, last budget, 2016-17. It is on page 31. It says \$23,402,000 was spent out of a budget of \$24,068,000. In an environment where we lost 1,300 Australians to death in a year and 8,000-plus were seriously injured, how is it possible that we cannot even spend the money allocated for road safety programs?

Ms Zielke: I still cannot see what it is you are referring to. I apologise.

Senator GALLACHER: Do you have the budget statements?

Ms Zielke: I have the PBS in front of me. You said it was on page 31?

Senator GALLACHER: My extract here says that for program 3.2—road safety—the budget was \$24,068,000. In this budget we see that \$23,402,000 was actually spent. So someone in my office has taken the budget and compared what you wanted to spend with what you actually spent. My point is that you are \$666,000 underspent. While 1,300 Australians were losing their lives and over 8,000 were being seriously injured and hospitalised, you could not get the allocation to road safety spent. You cannot even spend this pitiful—my word—allocation for road safety. Can you give me a reason for that?

Ms Zielke: I am conscious that you referring to departmental expenses in that regard. I am sorry, but I do not think I am going to be able to answer your question in detail. I suspect it relates to the way we work with the states and territories in distributing funding. But I will need to take that on notice.

Senator GALLACHER: My overriding theme is: there is a very low allocation in the budget to road safety despite the fact that we lose 1,300 Australian lives each year and have 8,000-plus injuries, and we do not even expend that miserly allocation. That is my point. The figures that my staff have produced show that we underspent by \$666,000 in the year we are in. If we look at the forward estimates for 2017-18—which did not have a commitment for keys2drive, which is another absolute disgrace, although you did find the money—it looks like you are going to underspend again.

Ms Zielke: Senator—

Senator GALLACHER: The two points I am putting to you are the \$666,000 for 2016-17 and then, looking forward, that you are going to underspend by \$866,000 in 2017-18. I do not understand a department that does not prioritise road safety. I do not understand why allocated funds cannot be spent when there are any number of state and territory programs crying out for funding to alleviate those 1,300 deaths and 8,000-plus serious injuries. I just do not understand how you can get to the stage where you do not even get the money you have allocated onto the table. I would argue that it is a miserly amount anyway. I would like to know, on notice, why that is.

Ms Zielke: Certainly.

Answer:

The figures quoted (\$666,000 and \$866,000) are not underspends. Departmental funds were adjusted downwards to reflect the effects of efficiency dividends and whole of government savings applied to the Department's appropriation.

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On behalf of the Australian Government, the Department is currently managing funding for road safety initiatives including:

- \$4.4 billion for the Roads to Recovery programme from 2013-14 to 2020-21;
- \$684.5 million for the Black Spot programme from 2013-14 to 2020-21;
- \$420 million for the Bridges Renewal programme from 2015-16 to 2020-21;
- \$328 million for the Heavy Vehicle Safety and Productivity Programme from 2013-14 to 2020-21; and
- \$16 million to extend the Keys2drive programme to 2020-21.

The Government is also redirecting around \$4 million a year from the Road Safety Remuneration Tribunal to the National Heavy Vehicle Regulator to implement practical measures to improve safety.

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Committee Question Number: 134
Departmental Question Number: SQ17-000270

Program: 2.3 Road Safety
Division/Agency: Surface Transport Policy
Topic: Spending on Program 2.3 Road Safety 2018-19
Proof Hansard Page: 119 (23 May 2017)

Senator Gallacher, Alex asked:

Senator GALLACHER: And if you look forward to 2018-19, it looks like you are budgeting \$993,000 less. So, I would characterise the underspend and the lack of forward spend as a complete abrogation of your responsibility in terms of road safety. I do not see any evidence that you are determined to spend your allocated funds on a vital piece of spend—1,300 dead, 8,000 injured, and we are not even spending the money we allocate. I would like someone to address that. I am happy for you to take it on notice, but I do want a considered response. Does it mean that you are bereft of ideas, that you have no new safety programs? That is a rhetorical question. But if you cannot spend the money you are allocated, the conclusion could be drawn that you do not have any initiatives and you do not have any new ideas, and I find that quite surprising.

Mr Mrdak: Well, that is certainly not the case. The minister, in his budget statement, made clear a number of new initiatives as part of the National Road Safety Strategy, including three key areas that he is now leading work on, on behalf of all the jurisdictions—first, distractions, particularly mobile phones and electronic devices; second, roadside drug testing; and third, how to better utilise the Roads to Recovery funding with a safety focus.

Senator GALLACHER: So, if the secretary of the department can articulate what is going on, why can't the officers responsible for the—

Ms Zielke: We are very happy to give you information in relation to what we are doing on road safety.

Senator GALLACHER: No, the information I require is why you do not even spend your funds.

Ms Zielke: My concern is that I do not know the exact make-up of the figures you are referring to. I am very happy to come back to you with that information. But if your question was what activities we are undertaking at the moment, then, as Mr Mrdak just said, we have a number of activities that we are undertaking, and in addition—

Answer:

Refer to Committee question number 133.

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Committee Question Number: 135
Departmental Question Number: SQ17-000271

Program: n/a
Division/Agency: Surface Transport Policy
Topic: Electric Vehicles
Proof Hansard Page: 123-124 (23 May 2017)

Senator Rice, Janet asked:

Senator RICE: What policy measures or initiatives is the government currently looking at to encourage electric vehicle—

...

Ms Wieland: What I was going to say is that, under the Clean Energy Finance Corporation, there are arrangements to allow fleet owners to get attractive financing for purchasing electric vehicles.

Senator RICE: What are those financing arrangements?

Ms Wieland: I do not have the detail of that in front of me. That is actually the environment portfolio, so you may want to direct that question to them. As part of the ministerial forum, there is a collaborative whole-of-government effort across portfolios. We work very closely with the Department of the Environment and Energy in this space.

Senator RICE: Is there a time line on any proposed expansion of initiatives? If we are going to get anywhere close to the sorts of targets that are being set elsewhere in the world, we are clearly going to have to do a lot more than just provide information, which seems to be the bulk of what the government is doing at the moment.

Ms Wieland: Yes. The other element which I forgot to mention earlier is that, in the luxury car tax arrangements, there is certainly a concession for low-emissions vehicles, and, with the current price of electric vehicles, that translates to about a \$3,000 tax concession. I can provide you with more detail of that on notice.

Senator RICE: If you could. If there are any other initiatives that you have forgotten to encourage electric vehicle uptake, if you could take that on notice we would appreciate that.

Ms Wieland: Yes, we can certainly do that.

Answer:

Clean Energy Finance Corporation and Australian Renewable Energy Agency

The Government's Clean Energy Finance Corporation (CEFC), which is part of the Environment and Energy Portfolio, is investing in programs to support the uptake of electric vehicles. This includes a \$50 million funding program managed by Eclix Group that provides asset finance at favourable rates to fleet buyers who purchase eligible low emissions vehicles.

The CEFC also provides finance to other programs that will accelerate business and personal adoption of low emissions and electric vehicles. These include:

- a \$100 million CEFC/Commonwealth Bank Energy Efficient Equipment Finance program which provides Australian businesses with lower cost finance for a wide range of assets including vehicles that meet certain energy efficiency standards;
- a \$120 million Energy Efficient Bonus equipment financing program by National Australia Bank (NAB) to accelerate the uptake of energy efficient vehicles and clean energy equipment by businesses; and
- a \$200 million Westpac Energy Efficient Finance program to assist businesses to lower their energy costs and improve their competitiveness using clean energy for qualifying projects including low carbon vehicles.

Through the CEFC co-finance partnerships, over 1000 lower emissions vehicles have been financed to date, including 128 hybrids, 16 electric and 2 plug-in hybrid vehicles.

The Australian Renewable Energy Agency, which is also part of the Environment and Energy Portfolio, is providing funding to ClimateWorks Australia to support research, education and engagement on electric vehicles in Australia.

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Other Current Measures

Luxury Car Tax Concession

Electric and low emissions vehicles receive a concession on the Luxury Car Tax (LCT) through a higher threshold that applies to fuel efficient vehicles (vehicles that consume less than 7 litres of fuel per 100km). In 2016-17, a LCT of 33 per cent applies to the portion of the vehicle price over \$64,132. For fuel efficient vehicles, the LCT applies to the portion of the vehicle price over \$75,526. This higher threshold effectively reduces the LCT payable on fuel efficient vehicle sales by up to \$3,760.

Emissions Reduction Fund

The Land and Sea Transport method under the Emissions Reduction Fund, administered by the Environment Portfolio, allows vehicle fleet owners to earn Australian Carbon Credit Units by improving the efficiency of vehicle fleets. This includes replacing older vehicles with new, more efficient vehicles such as hybrid or electric vehicles. The resulting carbon credits may then be sold back to the Government through a reverse auction held by the Clean Energy Regulator.

Green Vehicle Guide

The Government's Green Vehicle Guide website www.greenvehicleguide.gov.au, and fuel consumption labelling standard for new vehicles, administered by the Infrastructure and Regional Development portfolio, provide consumers with information to assist purchasing decisions. 16 of the top 20 performing vehicle models currently listed on the front page of the Green Vehicle Guide website are electric or plug-in hybrid vehicles.

Ministerial Forum on Vehicle Emissions

Through the Ministerial Forum on Vehicle Emissions, the Government is considering, and consulting on, all potential options for encouraging the uptake of low emission vehicles. Stakeholder feedback has been sought through:

- the *Vehicle Emissions Discussion Paper* (released February 2016);
- the *Better Fuel for Cleaner Air Discussion Paper* (released December 2016); and
- the draft Regulation Impact Statements on *Improving the Efficiency of New Light Vehicles* and *Vehicle Emission Standards for Cleaner Air* (released December 2016).

The Government will take into account feedback received through these consultation processes in the design of any new measures.

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Committee Question Number: 136
Departmental Question Number: SQ17-000272

Program: n/a
Division/Agency: Surface Transport Policy
Topic: Coastal Shipping Reforms Discussion Paper
Proof Hansard Page: 125 (23 May 2017)

Senator McCarthy, Malrindirri asked:

Senator McCARTHY: The coastal trading green paper that was prepared following what looks to have been extensive consultations throughout 2016 was presented to government at the end of 2016. Is that correct?

...

Senator McCARTHY: But many of the concepts in that paper were not considered in the discussion paper, though.

Ms Zielke: There were requests or recommendations that were made in the paper that were not taken up in the discussion paper. That is correct

Senator McCARTHY: Can you tell me why not?

Ms Zielke: A number of them were actually outside the bounds of the coastal trading legislation.

Senator McCARTHY: For example?

Ms Zielke: There were suggestions in relation to tax treatment, for example.

Senator McCARTHY: Is that the only example?

Ms Zielke: No; there were other examples. Would you like us to come back to you with more detail on that?

Senator McCARTHY: Yes, if you could. What other feedback has the government provided to participants in the green paper process?

Answer:

The coastal trading green paper was considered during the development of the discussion paper. The discussion paper itself is therefore feedback in response to the green paper.

The recommendations from the Maritime Industry Australia Ltd paper that were not included in the Coastal Shipping Reforms Discussion Paper because they were outside the bounds of the *Coastal Trading (Revitalising Australian Shipping) Act 2012* were:

1. adjusting the settings around the Australian International Shipping Register (AISR) to provide a platform whereby AISR ships are competitive with foreign ships;
2. preserving the national highway (Bass Strait crossings) for Australian operators (where Tasmanian Freight Equalisation Scheme is already in place);
3. reserving essential services (i.e. Northern Australia to the communities in Torres Strait and across the top end) for Australian operators;
4. creating a 'Strategic Fleet' which would be defined as vessels that offer strategic national interest benefits to the nation;
5. redirecting funds raised via the application of the Seagoing Industry Award Part B (and simplify the administration and process of raising funds) to a Strategic Maritime Development Fund (SMDF);
6. using the SMDF funds to, amongst other things, act partly as the external funds required by the strategic fleet;
7. developing infrastructure needed to encourage the establishment of dedicated coastal ro-ro services for containerised cargo and trucks; and
8. changing taxation arrangements for seafarer income tax, seafarer offset and dividend with-holding tax as well as providing fiscal incentives to the shipping industry.

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Committee Question Number: 137
Departmental Question Number: SQ17-000273

Program: n/a
Division/Agency: Surface Transport Policy
Topic: National Heavy Vehicle Regulator
Proof Hansard Page: Written (24 May 2017)

Senator Williams, John asked:

In correspondence to my office Mr. Mrdak indicated the Regulator is hoping to move away from the road access permits through the development of 'national notices'.

Can you clarify how these will work and will it reduce the red tape and frustration heavy vehicle operators are now facing when faced with conflicting decisions from the NHVR and State-based jurisdictions.

Answer:

A national notice is a publicly gazetted exemption for specific vehicle types, allowing them in many circumstances to operate freely on preferred routes, without the need for individual road access permits. Agreement on national notices is achieved via the National Heavy Vehicle Regulator (NHVR), in conjunction with state, territory and local government road authorities.

In 2016, a *National Class 1 Special Purpose Vehicle Notice* reduced red tape for the construction industry and ensured that vehicles like mobile cranes and concrete pumps would have access to a large network of state controlled roads across Australia. The NHVR estimates the Notice removes more than 4000 road access permits each year. The cost of an individual road access permit is \$70.

The National Harmonisation Program

Delivering heavy vehicle productivity

The NHVR recognises the importance of national harmonisation for our safety and productivity agendas. The role of the National Harmonisation Program team, established in October 2016, is to drive progress towards improving heavy vehicle regulation consistency on a national level.



2017 Priority Notices

The initial work program includes the development of the following four priority notices and associated networks:

National HML Declaration	National Class 2 B-double Notice
National Class 2 Road Train Notice	National Class 1 Agricultural Vehicle and Combination Notice

National HML Declaration

Our goal is to develop a single National Higher Mass Limits (HML) Declaration to authorise the operation of HML vehicles. The National HML Declaration aims to replace transitional arrangements for HML operations in several states and to enact the standard conditions for HML as per the *Heavy Vehicle (Mass, Dimension and Loading) National Regulation*.

National Class 2 B-double Notice

This project consists of a comprehensive review and redesign of the existing *National Class 2 Heavy Vehicle B-double Authorisation (Notice) 2014* aimed at improving the consistency of B-double access and vehicle conditions nationally. This project will also integrate existing state based B-double transitional notices into the new national notice.

National Class 2 Road Train Notice

Our objective is to conduct a comprehensive review and redesign of the existing *National Class 2 Heavy Vehicle Road Train Authorisation (Notice) 2015*. We aim to create a nationally harmonised notice by producing standard definitions and categorisation of road train configurations and improve the overall consistency of access and vehicle conditions.

National Class 1 Agricultural Vehicle and Combination Notice

Our aim is to develop a National Class 1 Agricultural Vehicle and Combination Notice to authorise the operation of agricultural vehicles and combinations. This national notice will replace transitional arrangements for agricultural operations in several states and will harmonise the dimension limits and access conditions.

Delivering together

Consultation will occur with key industry associations as well as local government and state road managers throughout the duration of these projects. In particular, engagement with road managers will be instrumental in developing networks supporting our four national notices.

Table 1. Next steps

Key Steps	Timing
1 Project scoping	Nov 2016–Jan 2017
2 Review of the current inconsistencies and draft policy positions	Feb 2017
3 Preliminary engagement with industry associations, local government, state and territory road transport authorities	Feb–Mar 2017
4 Draft policy positions and technical/legal review	Apr–Jun 2017
5 Finalising policy positions	Jul–Aug 2017
6 Road manager consultation	Sep–Oct 2017
7 Notices/Declaration published and networks gazetted	Late 2017

Please note these timelines are subject to change



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Committee Question Number: 138
Departmental Question Number: SQ17-000274

Program: n/a
Division/Agency: Surface Transport Policy
Topic: National Heavy Vehicle Regulator
Proof Hansard Page: Written (24 May 2017)

Senator Williams, John asked:

In March this year the NHVR conducted market research and sought feedback on its role, performance and service. Responses had to be in by the 14th of March.

Are the results public and if so how does the Regulator rate in public opinion?

Answer:

No. The performance survey undertaken by the National Heavy Vehicle Regulator earlier in 2017 was for internal purposes only.

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Committee Question Number: 139

Departmental Question Number: SQ17-000299

Program: 2.2 Surface Transport

Division/Agency: Surface Transport Policy

Topic: Tasmanian Freight Equalisation Scheme Expenditure

Proof Hansard Page: Written (2 June 2017)

Senator Sterle, Glenn asked:

- How much funding was budgeted for in the 2016-17 for the scheme?
 - How much do you now expect to pay out in 2016-17?
- How much is allocated in the budget for the 2017-18?
- Can you provide a breakdown of the allocations in the budget as against the actual expenditure for the last five years?

Answer:

- The budget for the Tasmanian Freight Equalisation Scheme in 2016-17 was \$170.595 million. ¹
 - The estimated actual expenditure for the Tasmanian Freight Equalisation Scheme in 2016-17 is \$170.095 million. ¹
- The budget for the Tasmanian Freight Equalisation Scheme in 2017-18 is \$171.609 million. ¹
- A breakdown of the allocation in the budget against the actual expenditure for the last five years is provided in the table below.

Financial year	Budget (\$'000) ¹	Actual Expenses (\$'000) ²
2016-17	170,595	170,095 ¹ (Estimated Actual)
2015-16	141,950	129,835
2014-15	114,300	111,856
2013-14	114,300	101,730
2012-13	101,900	111,046

¹. Source: Department of Infrastructure and Regional Development Portfolio Budget Statements. Includes figures obtained from Portfolio Budget Statements prepared under the Department's previous name.

². Source: Department of Infrastructure and Regional Development Annual Reports. Includes figures obtained from Annual Reports prepared under the Department's previous name.

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Committee Question Number: 140
Departmental Question Number: SQ17-000300

Program: n/a
Division/Agency: Surface Transport Policy
Topic: Coastal Trading discussion papers
Proof Hansard Page: Written (2 June 2017)

Senator Sterle, Glenn asked:

1. What process will be undertaken to consult with stakeholders on any substantial shifts from the concepts outlined in the discussion paper?
2. What process will be undertaken to consult with stakeholders on finessing the concepts outlined in the discussion paper?
3. The Coastal Trading Green Paper that was prepared following what looks to be extensive consultations throughout 2016 was presented to Government at the end of 2016 – is that correct?
4. Many of the concepts in that paper were not considered in the Discussion Paper, can you tell me why not?
5. What feedback has the Government provided to the participants in the Green Paper process?

Answer:

- 1, 2. The Government is considering the feedback received in response to the discussion paper and following this it will consider whether any further consultation is necessary.
3. MIAL provided a paper to Government at the end of 2016 titled 'Coastal Trading Green Paper'.
4. See Committee question number 136.
5. See Committee question number 136.

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Committee Question Number: 141
Departmental Question Number: SQ17-000303

Program: n/a
Division/Agency: Surface Transport Policy
Topic: National System for Domestic Commercial Vessel Safety
Proof Hansard Page: Written (2 June 2017)

Senator Sterle, Glenn asked:

1. Why is the government not making any appropriation for the funding of the national system for domestic commercial vessels?
2. Why is the government pursuing a full cost recovery model from the maritime industry when comparable arrangements for other sectors (light aviation for example) have a government appropriation?
3. Why is the government expecting industry to pay for the transition costs from the State to Federal regime?
4. How are functions currently being delivered by AMSA for the national system being funded? If from AMSA budget, is that cross subsidisation for the levies applied to other parts of industry? How does that comply with guidelines that specify cross subsidisation ought not occur?

Answer:

1. The Commonwealth contributes 10 per cent of funding for the national system for domestic commercial vessel safety as outlined in the 2011 Intergovernmental Agreement on Commercial Vessel Safety. See www.coag.gov.au/agreements.
2. Proposed cost recovery arrangements for the national system for domestic commercial vessel safety were agreed with all states and the Northern Territory on 6 November 2015.

The maritime and aviation safety industries are not directly comparable. Aviation receives government appropriation from an excise on aviation fuel. There is, for example, no unique maritime fuel so any such arrangement is not implementable for maritime.
3. This is not correct.
4. Funding for the national system for domestic commercial vessel safety is outlined in the 2011 Intergovernmental Agreement on Commercial Vessel Safety.

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Committee Question Number: 142

Departmental Question Number: SQ17-000307

Program: n/a

Division/Agency: Surface Transport Policy

Topic: Improving the efficiency of new light vehicles: Draft Regulation Impact Statement

Proof Hansard Page: Written (6 June 2017)

Senator Rice, Janet asked:

At this stage, when is the expected date for the completion of the draft implementation plan for consideration by Government?

Why was the overall emissions target of 95g CO₂/km by 2025 (as opposed to a 105g CO₂/km target that would result in a 95g CO₂/km average for passenger vehicles and 147g CO₂/km average for light commercial vehicles) not included or costed as a potential policy option for the “Improving the efficiency of new light vehicles: Draft Regulation Impact Statement”?

Was it a departmental or ministerial decision to include or not include the 95g CO₂/km target?

Is there likely to be any opportunity to revisit the options presented in the draft regulation impact statement after consultation on further options?

Has the Ministerial Forum done any work on investigating both the costs and benefits of implementing a 95g CO₂/km 2025 target?

If so, when was this work completed?

Would you be able to supply a copy to the committee?

In either case, does the department have any estimate of what the total cumulative CO₂ abatement to both 2025 and 2030 would be with a 95g CO₂/km by 2025 target compared to Business as Usual?

Answer:

The Ministerial Forum intends to provide a draft implementation plan on potential vehicle emissions and fuel efficiency measures later this year for consideration by Government.

The Department assessed the cost and benefits of three possible targets based on the ‘strong’ (105gCO₂/km), ‘medium’ (119gCO₂/km) and ‘mild’ (135gCO₂/km) standards proposed by the Climate Change Authority in 2014. The most stringent target in the draft Regulation Impact Statement is equivalent in stringency to the European Union (EU) targets for 2020-21 and the current US targets for 2025.

A target of 95gCO₂/km for all light vehicles would be more stringent than the current EU and US standards. If Australia adopted more stringent requirements than those currently required under EU and US standards, manufacturers are more likely to remove vehicles from sale than develop technology specifically for Australia, as Australia accounts for only 1.5 per cent of global vehicle sales and will soon import all of its light vehicles.

For these reasons, the Government did not consider that a target stronger than 105gCO₂/km would be feasible in 2025, and has not modelled the costs, benefits or potential abatement of any stronger target.

The Government is currently considering the detailed feedback provided by stakeholders on the draft Fuel Efficiency Regulation Impact Statement.

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Committee Question Number: 143
Departmental Question Number: SQ17-000336

Program: 2.3 Road Safety
Division/Agency: Surface Transport Policy
Topic: Identification Plate Revenue
Proof Hansard Page: Written (16 June 2017)

Senator Gallacher, Alex asked:

What was the revenue made from the \$6 identification plate fee over the last 3 financial years?

It was stated in Estimates that the Road Safety Division recovers that money - what programs does that fund?

Answer:

Revenue collected from identification plate fees during the current financial year to May 2017 and the last two financial years is in the table below. This includes the \$3 plate fee applicable for motorcycles.

July 2016 – May 2017	\$6.2 million
2015-16	\$7.4 million
2014-15	\$6.8 million

The Department collects this fee to contribute to covering the cost of administration of the *Motor Vehicle Standards Act 1989*.

Rural & Regional Affairs and Transport Legislation Committee

ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

Budget Estimates 2017 - 2018

Infrastructure and Regional Development

Committee Question Number: 144

Departmental Question Number: SQ17-000337

Program: 2.3 Road Safety

Division/Agency: Surface Transport Policy

Topic: Staff Employed in Road Safety

Proof Hansard Page: Written (16 June 2017)

Senator Gallacher, Alex asked:

How many staff are employed in the Road Safety Division?

How is this compared to the last 5 years?

Answer:

There were 5.5 full time equivalent (FTE) road safety staff employed in the Road Safety Policy and Transport Standards Section within the Road Safety and Productivity Branch of the Surface Transport Policy Division as at 30 June 2017.

The FTE count over the last five financial years is as follows:

June 2017: 5.5

June 2016: 3.9

June 2015: 4.9

June 2014: 4.9

June 2013: 4.8

Rural & Regional Affairs and Transport Legislation Committee
ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON NOTICE
Budget Estimates 2017 - 2018
Infrastructure and Regional Development

Committee Question Number: 145
Departmental Question Number: SQ17-000338

Program: 2.3 Road safety
Division/Agency: Surface Transport Policy
Topic: Priority technologies
Proof Hansard Page: Written (16 June 2017)

Senator Gallacher, Alex asked:

It was discussed that ABS for motorbikes became a priority for the department – how do technologies such as Autonomous Emergency Braking become a priority?

Answer:

The Australian Government will consider its prioritisation in line with the National Road Safety Strategy 2011-2020 action plans.

The Government's policy is to harmonise Australian standards with international standards. An international standard is currently under development and the Department will contribute to this work to ensure it addresses the needs of Australia.

Rural & Regional Affairs and Transport Legislation Committee
ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON NOTICE
Budget Estimates 2017 - 2018
Infrastructure and Regional Development

Committee Question Number: 146
Departmental Question Number: SQ17-000339

Program: 2.3 Road safety
Division/Agency: Surface Transport Policy
Topic: Motor Vehicle Standards
Proof Hansard Page: Written (16 June 2017)

Senator Gallacher, Alex asked:

What is currently on the priority list for motor vehicle standards?

Answer:

The current priorities for motor vehicle standards are set out in the National Road Safety Action Plan 2015-2017, available at <http://transportinfrastructurecouncil.gov.au/publications/>. These are:

1. Pole side impact occupant protection for new light vehicles (completed);
2. Anti-lock brake systems for new motorcycles; and
3. Electronic stability control for new heavy vehicles.

Rural & Regional Affairs and Transport Legislation Committee
ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON NOTICE
Budget Estimates 2017 - 2018
Infrastructure and Regional Development

Committee Question Number: 147
Departmental Question Number: SQ17-000340

Program: 2.3 Road Safety
Division/Agency: Surface Transport Policy
Topic: Inquiry into the National Road Safety Strategy
Proof Hansard Page: Written (16 June 2017)

Senator Gallacher, Alex asked:

Could you provide more information in regards to the new inquiry into the National Road Safety Strategy?

Answer:

The details of the Strategy are under consideration by the Minister.

Rural & Regional Affairs and Transport Legislation Committee
ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON NOTICE
Budget Estimates 2017 - 2018
Infrastructure and Regional Development

Committee Question Number: 148
Departmental Question Number: SQ17-000341

Program: 2.3 Road Safety
Division/Agency: Surface Transport Policy
Topic: Funding distributed to states and territories
Proof Hansard Page: Written (16 June 2017)

Senator Gallacher, Alex asked:

How much of the funding do you distribute to states and territories?

Can you provide a breakdown of funding for each state and territory?

Is this funding attached to specific programs? If so can you provide the detail of each of these programs?

Answer:

None of the funding allocated to Program 2.3: Road Safety is distributed to the state and territory governments.

The administered component of the funding, \$4 million per year for 4 years, is allocated to the Keys2drive learner driver programme, which is delivered by the Australian Automobile Association on behalf of the Australian Government.

Rural & Regional Affairs and Transport Legislation Committee

ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

Budget Estimates 2017 - 2018

Infrastructure and Regional Development

Committee Question Number: 149

Departmental Question Number: SQ17-000342

Program: 2.3 Road Safety

Division/Agency: Surface Transport Policy

Topic: Road Safety

Proof Hansard Page: Written (16 June 2017)

Senator Gallacher, Alex asked:

Can the Road Safety division identify all the programs, regulations, and legislation that you preside over?

Answer:

The Surface Transport Policy Division includes the Road Safety and Productivity Branch and the Vehicle Safety Standards Branch.

The Road Safety and Productivity Branch administers the Keys2drive learner driver programme and the Vehicle Safety Standards Branch administers the *Motor Vehicle Standards Act 1989* and associated legislation, including the Australian Design Rules.

Rural & Regional Affairs and Transport Legislation Committee

ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

Budget Estimates 2017 - 2018

Infrastructure and Regional Development

Committee Question Number: 172

Departmental Question Number: SQ17-000344

Program: 2.3 Road safety

Division/Agency: Surface Transport Policy

Topic: Autonomous braking technology and vehicle safety

Proof Hansard Page: 122 (23 May 2017)

Senator Gallacher, Alex asked:

Senator GALLACHER: I accept that that is the bulk of the department's spend, but what I would like to put to you is that you could complement that effort by investigating. Minister, could you take this to the Hon. Darren Chester: why can't we give these people better protection by adopting technologies that have been tried and proven in the United States and in the European Union in respect of autonomous braking technology for heavy vehicles and for lighter vehicles? You could really make the place safer and better with the administrative stroke of a pen. I would like to hear in detail the arguments for not moving quicker than we are at the moment. I know the impediments that are before us. But I also know this: there are companies in Australia—maybe BHP, Rio—who are mandating five-star vehicles for all of their staff. The governments, state and territory, should be mandating five-star vehicles for every part of their fleet. It will then immediately affect that second-hand market. That is how you change the profile of my state, which has probably got the oldest vehicle fleet. We do know, and ANCAP is doing this now. They are getting an eight- or 10-year-old Toyota Corolla, crashing it and comparing it to a new one. People think, 'Child is going on the road—get them a second-hand car.' We do not want to put our most vulnerable road users in the unsafest vehicles. I think we can move lot quicker on this. Minister, if you could get me an answer from the Hon. Darren Chester, I would appreciate that.

Senator Nash: I most certainly will, Senator. I will convey all of that to him and I will certainly undertake to specifically put that through on notice for you.

Answer:

In the Australian fleet, close to 90 per cent of all new light vehicles are now five star rated. In the case of the Commonwealth fleet, there is a primary requirement to purchase only five star rated vehicles.

The Australian Government is a major funder of the Australasian New Car Assessment Program (ANCAP), which develops the star ratings.

Around the world, the role of such programs is the same; to encourage manufacturers to exceed mandated levels of safety performance. In particular, where international standards are yet to be developed, or there is not a strong case for development or implementation, these non-regulatory programs can be almost equally as effective in improving safety. The Government also supports the Used Car Safety Ratings program, which helps young drivers to purchase safer used vehicles.

The Government has mandated a comprehensive suite of national standards for new vehicles (the Australian Design Rules or ADRs). The ADRs have provided significant safety benefits over a number of years. They are based on international standards and are broadly comparable to those of all other developed nations. However, there are inevitable individual differences as countries have varying road safety issues, fleet and market characteristics and so set different priorities for regulation.

With respect to autonomous braking technology (Autonomous Emergency Braking or AEB) for light vehicles, no market has mandated it and there is currently no international standard available for adoption. An international standard for AEB for light vehicles is currently under development and the Department will contribute to this work to ensure it addresses the needs of Australia. Once agreed internationally, the Government will consider its prioritisation. In the meantime, ANCAP currently rewards the fitment of AEB and by 2018, as is the case in Europe, AEB will become a requirement towards achieving a five star rating.

With respect to AEB for heavy vehicles, the recent mandating of antilock brake systems through the ADRs and the Government's current consideration of advanced stability control systems, is paving the way for the subsequent adoption of related AEB technology, as set out in existing international standards.