

**Senate Standing Committee on Environment and Communications
Legislation Committee**
Answers to questions on notice
Sustainability, Environment, Water, Population and Communities portfolio
Supplementary Budget Estimates, October 2012

Program: Division or Agency: 2.1: EQD

Question No: 065

Topic: COAG – commissioning of a RIS for
Container Deposit Scheme

Proof Hansard Page and Date Written

or Written Question:

Senator Whish-Wilson asked:

In light of the August 24 COAG Standing Council on Environment and Water meeting commissioning a decision regulation impact (RIS) statement in regards to a National container deposit scheme.

1. The decision RIS includes three further options apart from ones looked at in the Consultation RIS Can you outline the process to include these further options?
2. Why weren't they included in the consultation RIS?
3. Is it unusual to include extra options in a decision RIS?
4. Do you have any indication when the decision RIS will be considered by the Standing Council? When is the next meeting of the Standing Council?
5. Does Queensland's decision to withdraw from the process have any impact noting they have said they won't be funding any further work?

Answer:

1. As noted by environment ministers in their 24 August 2012 communiqué, the three further options to be considered in the Decision Regulation Impact Statement (RIS) were developed in response to stakeholder feedback through the consultation process. Ministers outlined the process for including these further options in their communiqué, asking senior officials to "consult with key stakeholders on the design elements of the additional options before they are modelled in the Decision RIS".
2. The further options resulted from stakeholder feedback on the Consultation RIS, so they had not been developed at the time of releasing the Consultation RIS.
3. The COAG best practice regulation guidelines state that one of the goals of consultation is to elicit feedback from stakeholders "on alternative options to address the problem" (page six). Accordingly, the Packaging Impacts Consultation RIS included a question inviting feedback on "any other options that you think would be effective in addressing the problems" (page 33).
4. It is anticipated that the Decision RIS will be completed for consideration by the Standing Council in 2013. At this stage, a date has not been set for the next Standing Council meeting.

5. Following Queensland's decision not to provide funding, the budget for the project has been slightly reduced. As noted in the environment ministers' communiqué, Queensland "does not oppose the progression of further national work or the development of a Decision RIS".

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Question No: 066

Topic: Impact of carbon pricing on refrigerants

Proof Hansard Page and Date Written

or Written Question:

Senator McKenzie asked:

1. Dr Diana Wright from the Environment Quality Division confirmed the department has not done any modelling on the impact of carbon pricing on apple and pear coolstores. Why was this industry, heavily reliant on refrigerant to cool coolstores, overlooked by the department?
2. What feedback has the department received from people in this industry affected by the price hike in refrigerants?
3. Has there been any consultation since with the industry?

Answer:

1. Modelling of the impact of the carbon price was undertaken by The Treasury and any questions should be directed to that department.
2. To date the Department of Sustainability, Environment, Water, Population and Communities (the department) has not received feedback or enquiries from business or individuals specifically identifying themselves as apple and pear cool store operators. The department has received feedback and enquiries from the refrigeration and air conditioning sector relating to the implementation of the equivalent carbon price. The majority of enquiries have been seeking information about the equivalent carbon price.
3. To date consultation with the refrigeration and air conditioning sector on the equivalent carbon price has consisted of:
 - Engagement with peak industry bodies;
 - Presentations at public information forums, industry trade nights/branch meetings and industry conferences;
 - Publication of articles in industry newsletters and magazines;
 - Development and distribution of fact sheets on the department's website; and
 - Distribution of letters to inform existing and potential synthetic greenhouse gas importers of their extended responsibility following the application of the equivalent carbon price.

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Question No: 067

Topic: Tyre waste

Proof Hansard Page and Date Written

or Written Question:

Senator Whish-Wilson asked:

1. Is the Department aware of the continuing export of baled tyres overseas?
2. Has the Department provided any advice to the Minister on remedies to this trade outside the work being done on the voluntary product stewardship scheme for tyres?

Answer:

1. The Department of Sustainability, Environment, Water, Population and Communities (the department) is aware of the continuing export of baled tyres overseas.

The export of end-of-life tyres needs to be in accordance with Australia's international obligations under the Basel Convention and the Commonwealth's *Hazardous Waste (Regulation of Exports and Imports) Act 1989*; and with the regulations and policies of the recipient country.

2. The department has not provided any advice to the Minister on remedies to this trade outside the work being done on the voluntary product stewardship scheme for tyres.