

Senate Standing Committee on Economics

ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

Treasury Portfolio

Additional Estimates 20-21 February 2008

Question: aet 12

Topic: Supermarket and Retail Sector Inquiry

Hansard Page: Written

Senator ABETZ asked:

- How competitive is Australia's supermarket sector, are there any barriers to entry?
- How competitive is Australia's retail petrol sector, are there any barriers to entry?
- Which sector or industry would the ACCC consider to be the least competitive in the Australian economy?
- Which sector or industry would the ACCC consider to be the most competitive in the Australian economy?

Answer:

The Australian Competition and Consumer Commission (ACCC) is assessing the competitiveness of Australia's supermarket sector as part of the current ACCC Inquiry into the Competitiveness of Retail Prices for Standard Groceries (the Inquiry). The extent of barriers to entry will be considered as part of the Inquiry.

In 2007 the ACCC conducted a major inquiry into the price of unleaded petrol in Australia. The report of the unleaded petrol inquiry was publicly released on 18 December 2007. It provides an extensive discussion of issues surrounding the competitiveness of the retail petrol sector in Australia.

The ACCC does not conduct ongoing broad spread assessments as to the competitiveness of all industries in Australia or affecting Australians and as such is unable to provide a ranking as to which may be the most competitive and which may be the least.