

Senate Standing Committee on Economics

ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

Treasury Portfolio

Additional Estimates 25-26 February 2009

Question: aet 9

Topic: Australia's Fertility Rate

Hansard Page: Written

Senator EGGLESTON asked:

In the Productivity Commission's Staff working paper on fertility rates in Australia the return to more acceptable rates of fertility was attributed in the main part to recuperation or in other words older women catching up on previously postponed births and secondly to anticipation of women bringing babies forward in response to good economic times.

1. With the current downturn, many older women who are contemplating childbirth are now making this decision against a backdrop of lowered superannuation values and for younger women, there is no longer economic security with which they can plan. To what degree does the Commission see this downturn affecting fertility rates?

Answer:

The Productivity Commission has not conducted any specific research on the impact of the current downturn on fertility rates, but we noted in the report that:

‘...reflecting the effects of the slowdown in global growth, there may be a short-lived ‘relapse’ in fertility in 2008 and 2009 (as has occurred during other slowdowns).’
(p. xiii)