

**Senate Standing Committee on Economics**

**ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON NOTICE**

**Treasury Portfolio**

Additional Estimates

10 – 11 February 2010

**Question: aet 84**

**Topic: SBT 72 – Qualifications of Productivity Commission Staff**

**Hansard Page: E24 – E25 (10/02/2010)**

**Senator CAMERON asked:**

**Senator CAMERON**—You have provided the committee, on a question on notice, the qualifications of your staff. Thank you for that; it was quite comprehensive. I would like to take that to the next step. Could you now provide the committee with the mix of employees between public and private schools—not the tertiary institutions but the schools?

**Mr Banks**—Perhaps I could go back to the last meeting. I think you were concerned that the commission may have staff who were all cut from the same cloth, if I could put it that way, in terms of their economic qualifications. The information that we provided to this committee indicates quite a diversity of qualifications among our staff. In fact, it surprised me. For example, the first page of what we sent you indicates that we have staff with qualifications and degrees in public administration, social work, forest science, law, linguistics, urban geography, social sciences, development, environmental economics, psychology—

**Senator CAMERON**—That is all on the public record. I have a few things I need to go through. That is not what I am asking you at the moment. I am happy for you to come back to that some time later, but can I now move on to another issue, and that is your executive remuneration report.

**Mr Banks**—I am sorry, Senator. We probably should finish in relation to that. You were seeking further information beyond the tertiary qualifications of our staff.

**Senator CAMERON**—Yes.

**Mr Banks**—I guess I would make two points in relation to that. One is that we have provided this information, which took a while to get. I think it is good to have it, and we can see a public interest in having that. I guess there is a question of the utility of having more detailed information about the primary and secondary schooling of our staff, particularly in the context of a commission for which the responsibility lies at the level of statutory officers who are commissioners and not with the staff—as in, for example, executive remuneration, to which you are going to come in a moment.

**Senator CAMERON**—Are you telling me you will not provide it?

**Mr Banks**—All I am asking is what purpose that would serve.

**Senator CAMERON**—I am simply asking. What you have done is far more complex than what I am asking now—that is, to simply provide the break-up between public education and private education of your employees. I think that is a fair and reasonable question.

**Senator Sherry**—We will take it on notice.

**Answer:**

In contrast to information about the tertiary qualifications of its staff, the Commission does not hold information on whether staff attended public or private schools, as such information is not directly related to or necessary to discharge the Commission's functions (as would be required under the *Privacy Act 1988*).