

Senate Standing Committee on Economics

ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

Treasury Portfolio

Budget Estimates

31 May – 2 June 2011

Question No: BET 227

Topic: Relates to BET 225 – BER and P21

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Senator Back asked:

Senator BACK: Can you advise me, without having to take it on notice, whether there are benchmarks that would have been prepared against which these sorts of quarterly reports—the ones to which I refer are BER and P21—would be considered?

Mr Heferen: I am sorry, no—I do not even know what a P21 is. We would have to take that on notice.

Senator BACK: I think then the remainder of my questions, if you have not been able to answer those, would also have to go on notice. It relates to an interchange I had, in my capacity as chairman of the Education, Employment and Workplace Relations References Committee, with the minister in terms of trying to ascertain some information through the Senate regarding performance under P21 and BER. The reason for bringing it here was that the ongoing advice from the minister in his responses was that these were matters for the Department of the Treasury, that the evidence the committee was seeking is being monitored by Treasury on a quarterly basis through the provision of quarterly reports from each of the states and territories. You would not be in a position to comment or advise on that?

Mr Heferen: No, that division I mentioned in Fiscal Group—the Commonwealth-state relations division—would be the one that—

Senator BACK: In that case, in consideration of the brevity of time, I will place those questions on notice for the fiscal section.

Answer:

Benchmarks

- The National Partnership Agreement required Heads of Treasuries to establish benchmarks for sectors that are receiving additional Commonwealth funding and for these benchmarks to be agreed by the Ministerial Council.