

Economics Legislation Committee
ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON NOTICE
Industry, Innovation, Science, Research and Tertiary Education Portfolio
Budget Estimates Hearing 2012-13
28 and 29 May 2012

AGENCY/DEPARTMENT: DEPARTMENT OF INDUSTRY, INNOVATION, SCIENCE, RESEARCH AND TERTIARY EDUCATION

TOPIC: Green Car Innovation Fund – Nexteer Automotive

REFERENCE: Question on Notice (Hansard, Tuesday 29 May 2012, page 21)

QUESTION No.: BI-58

Senator RYAN:What was the reason for the almost 18 months that it took to consider the Nexteer Automotive application? The date of their application was January 2010 and the final approval was almost six months later, in June 2010.

Ms Kennedy: It was six months?

Senator RYAN: Sorry, 18 months. It was January 2010 to June 2011. Nexteer Automotive Australia Pty Ltd: it stands out with a number of others as being long.

Ms Kennedy: This was one about which both the committee and the board required additional information. Before the committee could refer it on to Innovation Australia, it required additional information. Then once it was considered by Innovation Australia, as a board they too required additional information. There were changes that came to light in terms of company structures that needed to be taken into account. Then, of course, it had to be considered by cabinet.

Senator RYAN: So the process is that the committee required further information. Then they approved it. Then Innovation Australia required further information before they approved it and recommended it to cabinet?

Ms Kennedy: That is correct.

Senator RYAN: So in terms of the delay here—I appreciate that part of it will be about lining up for meetings; you may need to take some of this on notice—how quickly was the further information requested? You could request further information after a two-month wait or after a two-week wait. I appreciate the company will take some time to get back. I am interested in the dates for further requests from the committee for information and when the company was able to get back to them. The second is the consideration by the committee. I want simply a timeline of application, consideration, request for information and feedback all through the process because it does seem like an inordinately long period of time.

Ms Kennedy: Yes.

ANSWER

Consideration of the application by Nexteer Automotive Australia Pty Ltd (Nexteer) took five months from 13 January 2011, when the application was accepted, to a decision on 10 June 2011. The 18 months recorded in response to Question on Notice AI-23 was incorrect due to a typing error in the acceptance date. The application acceptance date was 13 January 2011, not 13 January 2010 as originally indicated in AI-23.

The timeline for the Nexteer application was as follows.

- 13 January 2011 – Application accepted.
- 7 February 2011 – Considered by Green Car Innovation Committee.
- 7 February 2011 – Considered by Innovation Australia.
- 18 February 2011 – Request for additional information sent to Nexteer.
- 10 March 2011 – Response received from Nexteer.
- 30 March 2011 – Additional information considered by Innovation Australia.
- 12 April 2011 – Request for additional information sent to Nexteer.
- 3 May 2011 – Response received from Nexteer.
- 19 May 2011 – Additional information considered by Innovation Australia.
- June 2011 – Consideration by Government.
- 10 June 2011 – Decision by Program Delegate.