

Economics Legislation Committee
ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON NOTICE
Industry, Innovation and Science Portfolio
2015-16 Supplementary Budget Estimates Hearing
22 October 2015

DEPARTMENT: DEPARTMENT OF INDUSTRY, INNOVATION AND SCIENCE

TOPIC: Australia's steel industry

REFERENCE: Written Question – Senator Carr

QUESTION No.: SI-93

Please provide an update on what action is this government taking to address the crisis in Australia's steel industry.

ANSWER

The Australian Government recognises the current challenges facing Australia's steel industry, including pressure from low international steel prices impacted by global overcapacity. Specifically in relation to the Illawarra and the Whyalla regions, there has been a positive level of cooperation with the NSW and South Australian governments in working to address a range of steelmaking issues.

The Government is committed to fostering an environment that supports competitive Australian industries. It has repealed the carbon tax; introduced regulation reform to reduce the cost of red tape by \$4.5 billion; and provided a 100 per cent exemption from the Renewable Energy Target for emissions intensive, trade exposed industries. The Government also has a number of broad industry initiatives. These include the Industry Growth Centres initiative to foster smart, high value and export focused industries; the Entrepreneurs' Programme for business competitiveness and productivity at the firm level; and the Industry Skills Fund, which provides training places and support services across Australia.

In addition, on 2 November 2015 the Government announced reforms to Australia's anti-dumping system, which will help to address instances of steel dumping. The reforms ensure the system will be more responsive in dealing with unfairly dumped imports and cracks down on entities which seek to undermine the system. Additional funds have also been provided to the Anti-Dumping Commission to employ more investigators and implement measures to improve the efficiency of their internal operations.

The Australian Industry Participation National Framework also provides a nationally agreed set of objectives, principles and strategies that aim to provide Australian industry with full, fair and reasonable opportunities to participate in major projects.