



Media Release

Senator Mathias Cormann

Shadow Assistant Treasurer

Chair of the Senate Scrutiny of

New Taxes Committee

10/2312/MC

23 December 2010

Swan in hiding on mining tax

Labor's proposed mining tax is in such a mess that Wayne Swan is doing everything he can to stop further embarrassing details getting out.

"The more we learn about Labor's disastrous mining tax the more obvious it is that it's not in our national interest," Senate Mining Tax Inquiry Chair and Shadow Assistant Treasurer Mathias Cormann said.

"For more than two weeks now Wayne Swan has refused to release answers to questions taken on notice by Treasury Secretary Ken Henry before the Senate Mining Tax inquiry.

"Treasury told us the information was provided to the Treasurer on 8 December. Is he waiting for 5pm on New Year's Eve before he will release it?

"Again and again Wayne Swan got it wrong on the mining tax.

"Whether it's about the treatment of state royalties, revenue estimates, constantly changing revenue assumptions, constitutional complications, preferential treatment to three taxpayers above all others, the disproportionate impact of the tax on individual states or a plethora of other problems - Wayne Swan has been fudging, ducking for cover and at all times been economical with the truth.

"He is desperate to avoid further political embarrassment, so invariably he goes for the cover up.

"The Gillard government clearly has much to hide when it comes to the mining tax.

"We have pursued the government for more than five months about releasing the underlying mining tax revenue assumptions.

"In fact the Senate has ordered the government on three separate occasions to release its commodity price and production volume assumptions.

"Without that information no one can assess how much the tax will raise and what its impact will be on the budget, the economy and jobs.

"This is information the State government in Western Australia transparently publishes in its budget papers as a matter of course.

"For more than five months now the Gillard government has refused to release any of that information.

"We now know why.

"Senior Treasury sources have now confirmed that the government has not been telling the truth about its mining tax.

"This is a tax which has not even been introduced into the Parliament.

"Yet revenue estimates have been bouncing around from \$12 billion to \$24 billion, \$10.5 billion, \$7.4 billion and now less than \$5 billion according to senior Treasury sources.

"All based on changes in underlying assumptions the government is desperate to keep secret.

"If Julia Gillard was telling the truth when promising the Independent MPs a new era of openness and transparency she should force Wayne Swan to come out and release all of the outstanding information today," Senator Cormann said.

MEDIA CONTACT:

Senator Cormann

0411 874 546

Slade Brockman (CoS)

0427 261 980