

Environment and Communications References Committee
ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON NOTICE
CSIRO
Impacts of climate change on marine fisheries and biodiversity
17 March 2017

QUESTION: Hansard page 4 – Senator Urquhart

Senator URQUHART: How often is the Investigator out observing the changes in the ocean?

Dr Schiller: That is something I cannot answer at the moment. Again, that is something we would have to take on notice, because that really requires an assessment of the cruise plan, which I do not have available right now.

Senator URQUHART: I am just interested to see whether or not it could be utilised more and, if it is not, is that due to funding or other opportunities?

ANSWER

The *Investigator* is funded by the Australian Government to operate up to 180 days at sea per annum. In 2015/16 the ship delivered 248 research days at sea, through a combination of Australian Government funding and research charters. In 2016/17 with collaboration through a CSIRO/industry research partnership, the *Investigator* is planned to be at sea for an additional 19 days, and also a further 13 days for the Australian Hydrographic Service making an expected total of 204 research days at sea in 2016/17.

A wide range of science is possible on *Investigator*. Applications for science voyages are assessed against three equally-weighted criteria of science excellence, contribution to national benefit and track record of the science party. Some voyages have primary objectives relating to monitoring changes to the ocean whereas others involve the collection of underway data that contributes to datasets that are used globally by scientists to observe and monitor changes in the ocean.

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QUESTION: Hansard page 5 – Senator Whish-Wilson

Dr Smith: I would add that there has been a strong push from the National Marine Science Committee and also in CSIRO's submission to the NCRIS road map to increase the number of days that the Investigator is funded so that we can do more of this research.

CHAIR: Have you had any luck with getting the minister's ear on that?

Dr Smith: I could not respond to that because I am not directly involved. I would have to take that on notice. I suspect you would have to speak to the facilities people who run the ship, but I am saying that there is a very strong push to get an extra 100 days.

ANSWER

Discussions with the Government are ongoing within the context of the National Infrastructure Roadmap.