

**Miletic, Daniel (REPS)**

**From:** John Runcie  
**Sent:** Friday, 5 December 2003 10:44 AM  
**To:** Committee, NCET (REPS)  
**Cc:** Clements, Quinton (REPS)  
**Subject:** Antarctic program funding enquiry



Dear Quinton,

We spent some time together on the Polar Bird returning from Casey Station, and I demonstrated the recently constructed 8 channel submersible fluorometer to your party when on station.

I have submitted the following comments to Dr Graham Jones who is preparing a statement representing the Australian Marine Science Association, my comments will be incorporated in that statement. I also wish to submit these comments as an individual researcher with an active interest in Antarctic research.

1. Australia has an obligation to assist in medical emergency. With air transport being available, other nationals from other neighboring stations will be at liberty to call on us for medivac if required. We will rarely be able to refuse. This will cost us considerably, and any such event may completely disrupt our careful budgeting. Research often comes off second best to OH&S and international relations. So I suggest a contingency fund be set up for a worst case medical emergency, that this emergency include evacuation of foreign nationals from their stations (e.g. station burns down, with associated casualties). The fund must be managed in a responsible manner, and only be accessed with written authority from the Minister etc etc.

2. Currently, AAD research has just enough funds to carry out minimal basic research in a safe manner. With the influx of new science that will inevitably arise with the air link, there will be a greater demand on logistics and support. Unless the budget is increased to match increased demand, safety and research quality will plummet. I suggest a realistic projection be made to predict increased usage and increased research related costs.

In summary: Air transport consumes funds that could otherwise be spent on research, and the budget should be increased to account for this if we are to maintain a high international standard of scientific research.

cheers,  
John

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*Dr John W. Runcie*

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