

Economics Legislation Committee
ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON NOTICE
Industry and Science Portfolio
Additional Budget Estimates Hearing 2014-15
26 February 2015

AGENCY/DEPARTMENT: Commonwealth Scientific and Industrial Research Organisation (CSIRO)

TOPIC: Australia's Telescope National Facility Steering Committee

REFERENCE: Question on Notice (Hansard, 26 February 2015, page 99-100)

QUESTION No.: AI-7

Senator KIM CARR: Page 185 of MYEFO. It says, 'The government has abolished CSIRO Australia's Telescope National Facility Steering Committee', and there are a whole lot of others. What has happened there?

Ms Beauchamp: As part of the smaller government, you are right, we have been looking at rationalising a number of boards and committees and taking them out of the process for government appointed representatives. Where there is a clear business need within CSIRO that they need technical expertise to assist in doing their jobs then the government is saying, 'We are abolishing it at the government political level. If you need it as part of your business then you need to look at a much simpler and streamlined process within CSIRO.'

Senator KIM CARR: So, the government is not appointing people to the committee? Is that what has happened?

Ms Beauchamp: I think the appointments are made by the board.

Senator KIM CARR: They used to be made by whom?

Ms Beauchamp: I would have to take that on notice.

Ms Hazel Bennett: I believe previously the appointments were made by the minister.

Senator KIM CARR: On the recommendation of the board?

Ms Hazel Bennett: I am sorry, but I would not be able to answer that.

ANSWER

Until 9 October 2014, members and the Chair of the Australian Telescope National Facility (ATNF) Steering Committee were appointed by CSIRO's responsible minister from candidates nominated by the CSIRO Chief Executive, based on the recommendations of the ATNF Director.

From 9 October 2014, members and the Chair of the ATNF Steering Committee are appointed by the CSIRO Board from candidates nominated by the CSIRO Chief Executive, based on recommendations of the ATNF Director and consistent with the Steering Committees status as an advisory committee of the CSIRO Board in accordance with section 24 of the *Science and Industry Research Act 1949*. In view of the Steering Committee's role in the operation of a national research facility and its influence in Australia's science agenda, CSIRO also consults with the Secretary of the Department of Industry and Science prior to taking nominations to the Board.