

Economics Legislation Committee
ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON NOTICE
Industry Portfolio
Supplementary Budget Estimates Hearing 2014-15
23 October 2014

AGENCY/DEPARTMENT: Commonwealth Scientific & Industrial Research Organisation

TOPIC: CEO Recruitment

REFERENCE: Question on Notice (Hansard, 23 October 2014, page 45)

QUESTION No.: SI-24

Senator KIM CARR: Thank you. I probably cannot take this further. I will have to take it up elsewhere. Could I, finally, turn to the issue of the appointment of the CEO. This will be a matter that goes to the department, I suspect. Mr Ryan, can you assist me with this matter?

Mr Ryan: Sure.

Senator KIM CARR: Did the board engage a recruitment company to assist in the search for the new CEO?

Mr Ryan: Yes, they did. They engaged Egon Zehnder to conduct a search program. The search program considered over 70 candidates.

Senator KIM CARR: Where do those 70 come from?

Mr Ryan: I would have to either take that on notice—

Senator KIM CARR: Were they all domestic? How many were international?

Mr Ryan: The coverage was national and international. The actual numbers we cannot give you.

Senator KIM CARR: On what basis did the company select the 70? Was there an advertisement placed somewhere? How did you know if you wanted to be interviewed?

Mr Ryan: It was advertised nationally and internationally.

Senator KIM CARR: So with the response to advertisements—

Mr Ryan: The process for all of these very senior positions is a mixture of response to public advertisements and, as you would appreciate, a degree of head hunting takes place.

Senator KIM CARR: Of course. How many applications were there? You told us there were 70 interviewed but how many applications were there?

Mr Ryan: I am not saying there were 70 interviewed. I am saying—

Senator KIM CARR: I am sorry.

Mr Ryan: Over 70 candidates were considered.

Senator KIM CARR: My apologies. How many were interviewed?

Mr Ryan: I would have to take that on notice.

ANSWER

From a total candidate pool of 151 people, 51 were not resident in Australia at the time. The total candidate pool was identified from a leadership mapping exercise and advertisement, with each potential candidate then being reviewed against the criteria set out in the role specification. This led to the recruitment agency approaching 51 candidates (10 of which were not resident in Australia at the time) to assess their interest in the role. Following interviews with the recruitment agency, the profiles of a long list of 17 candidates were presented to the CSIRO Board for consideration against the criteria set out in the role specification. Eight candidates were interviewed by the Board nominations committee (first round interviews), from which three were further interviewed (second round interviews) by the full CSIRO Board.