

**Senate Standing Committee on Education and Employment - Education**

**QUESTIONS ON NOTICE  
Budget Estimates 2014-2015**

**Agency - Australian Curriculum, Assessment & Reporting Authority (ACARA)**

**Department of Education Question No. ED0259\_15**

**Senator Wright provided in writing.**

**Question**

**ACARA Budget cuts**

ACARA communications director Robyn Ziino was reported in the Adelaide Advertiser on June 11 (<http://www.adelaidenow.com.au/news/south-australia/online-naplan-tests-adapt-to-students-abilities-reducing-stress/story-fni6uo1m-1226949886450>) budget cuts to ACARA could delay the transition to adaptive NAPLAN testing. How will budget cuts to ACARA effect the transition to adaptive testing? What was the timeline for adaptive testing to be introduced? Is a delay likely, and if so, how long is that likely to be? What other programs or operations of ACARA will be effected by reduced funding?

**Answer**

The Australian Curriculum, Assessment and Reporting Authority has provided the following response:

Robyn Ziino, ACARA's Communications Director did not make this statement to the Adelaide Advertiser. The journalist asked Ms Ziino how difficult was the NAPLAN online project. Ms Ziino replied, "it is a challenging project". The Adelaide Advertiser used those words to create the story as it was ultimately printed. Having said that, there will be changes in ACARA's staffing profile in 2014/15 compared with 2013/14.

These changes will be a result of:

- a) \$4.1 million reduction from \$29 million in FY 2013/14 to \$24.9 million in FY 2014/15 in ACARA's funding from the Commonwealth, states and territories. This change is part of ACARA's quadrennial funding arrangement, agreed by education ministers in October 2011. The changes result, in part, from completion in the current year of F-10 curriculum and the move to monitoring in 2014/15.
- b) reduction in project funding (National Assessment and Surveys Online Project [NASOP] and National Trade Cadetships [NTC]) from the Australian Government as these projects are completed or are in their final stages.

It is anticipated that 8-11 staff involved in core funded activities in 2013/14 will not be retained by ACARA in 2014/15 (some staff whose fixed term contracts are coming to an end, and some redundancies) and up to 12 staff who were involved in Australian Government funded projects with fixed term contracts whose engagement by ACARA will come to an end in early 2014/15.