

Senate Committee: Education and Employment

**QUESTION ON NOTICE
Supplementary Budget Estimates 2015 - 2016**

Outcome: Higher Education Research and International

Department of Education and Training Question No. SQ15-000649

Senator Carr, Kim asked on 21 October 2015, Proof Hansard page 56

Also refer to previous Question No. SQ15-000331, SQ15-000332

Copenhagen consensus centre - University of Western Australia

Question

Senator KIM CARR: It is also fair to say that you approached the University of Western Australia about the project?

Ms Borthwick: No, we did not approach the University of Western Australia. They approached us and Professor Lomborg.

Senator KIM CARR: I just want to be clear about this. I have an email here dated 7 October 2014 from a Virginia Hart. She says: 'I understand that Jessie Borthwick has discussed the project to set up a Copenhagen consensus centre at the University of Western Australia.' So you are saying the university had already approached you prior to that date?

Ms Borthwick: Correct.

Senator KIM CARR: And the university's submission to you arrived, Ms Paul, on 4 November?

Ms Borthwick: Yes, that is right.

Senator KIM CARR: How did the University of Western Australia know there was \$4 million available?

Ms Paul: We are not sure.

Senator KIM CARR: Was it communicated to the University of Western Australia?

Ms Borthwick: I am sorry—I would have to take that on notice.

Senator KIM CARR: Okay. The question is: on what date was the university advised that there was money available for this project?

Ms Borthwick: Sure.

Senator KIM CARR: On what date did the Prime Minister's department advise you that this was a project they wanted to see put into place?

Mr English: On 27 June 2014.

Senator KIM CARR: I am interested to know, then, how the University of Western Australia knew about this project.

Ms Borthwick: I have taken that on notice.

Senator KIM CARR: Was there a public advertisement that the money was available?

Ms Borthwick: No, there was not.

Senator KIM CARR: Who initiated the discussion with the University of Western Australia?

Ms Borthwick: We will take that on notice.

Senator KIM CARR: And on what date?

Ms Borthwick: Yes.

Senator KIM CARR: Thank you.

Ms Paul: We will have to ask them, because they approached us.

Senator KIM CARR: Presumably you will.

Ms Paul: Yes, sure.

Senator KIM CARR: I am interested to know the date. Obviously, a supplementary question will be: what was the first date on which the Commonwealth department of education raised the matter with the University of Western Australia?

Ms Paul: Sure.

Ms Borthwick: Yes, we can do that.

Answer

On 13 August 2014, Dr Lomborg advised the Department of Education and Training that he had held discussions with various Vice-Chancellors, including Professor Paul Johnson from the University of Western Australia, on the potential for collaboration to establish a consensus centre in Australia.

On 20 August 2014 the Secretary for the Department of Education and Training held a meeting with Professor Paul Johnson as part of routine discussions on higher education at which the potential for a consensus centre was discussed.