

**Senate Standing Committee on Environment, Communications and the Arts**

Answers to questions on notice

**Environment, Water, Heritage and the Arts portfolio**

Additional Estimates, February 2009

<b>Outcome:</b>	1	<b>Question No:</b>	276
<b>Output:</b>	1.5		
<b>Division/Agency:</b>	Supervising Scientist Division		
<b>Topic:</b>	Groundwater study – Energy Resources of Australia (ERA)		
<b>Hansard Page ECA:</b>	21 (24/2/09)		

**Senator Ludlam asked:**

Can you tell us anything about the reports? Firstly, are those reports in the public domain?

**Answers:**

Energy Resources of Australia Ltd has advised that the reports are commercial in confidence and are not in the public domain.

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<b>Outcome:</b>	1	<b>Question No:</b>	277
<b>Output:</b>	1.5		
<b>Division/Agency:</b>	Supervising Scientist Division		
<b>Topic:</b>	SSD – Efficiency Dividend		
<b>Hansard Page ECA:</b>	Written Question on Notice		

**Senator Birmingham asked:**

1. How has the Supervising Scientist implemented the one-off two per cent efficiency dividend (ED)?
2. Where have savings been achieved – i.e. which programs/resources have been cut?
3. Has the Supervising Scientist had to reduce any activities that it considers to be ‘core business’ or has it had to reduce service standards as a result of the ED?

**Answers:**

1. Administration of the one-off two percent efficiency dividend (ED) is administered by the Department. Refer to Department’s response to QoN 81.
2. None.
3. No.

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<b>Outcome:</b>	1	<b>Question No:</b>	278
<b>Output:</b>	1.5		
<b>Division/Agency:</b>	Supervising Scientist Division		
<b>Topic:</b>	SSD – Staffing		
<b>Hansard Page ECA:</b>	Written Question on Notice		

**Senator Birmingham asked:**

1. Have staffing numbers been reduced as a result of the efficiency dividend and/or other budget cuts? If so, where and at what level?
2. Are there any plans for staff reductions? If so, please advise details i.e. reduction target, how this will be achieved, services/programs to be cut etc.
3. What changes are underway or planned for graduate recruitment, cadetships or similar programs? Are such employment programs being reduced? If so, by how many and has the Supervising Scientist done an analysis on long term effect on retention and attrition?
4. Has the Supervising Scientist's consultancy expenditure increased due to reduced staffing?

**Answers:**

1. No.
2. No.
3. Graduate recruitment, cadetships and similar programs are administered by the Department. Refer to Department's response to QoN 83.
4. No.

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<b>Outcome:</b>	1	<b>Question No:</b>	279
<b>Output:</b>	1.5		
<b>Division/Agency:</b>	Supervising Scientist Division		
<b>Topic:</b>	SSD - Appropriation		
<b>Hansard Page ECA:</b>	Written Question on Notice		

**Senator Birmingham asked:**

Noting the Government's *Federal Financial Relations Bill 2009*, which appropriates money to Treasury to pass on to the States;

1. Does the Supervising Scientist receive any appropriations that will be transferred to the Treasury Dept?
2. What are these?

**Answers:**

1. No.
2. Not Applicable.

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<b>Outcome:</b>	1	<b>Question No:</b>	280
<b>Output:</b>	1.5		
<b>Division/Agency:</b>	Supervising Scientist Division		
<b>Topic:</b>	SSD - Resources		
<b>Hansard Page ECA:</b>	Written Question on Notice		

**Senator Birmingham asked:**

1. Does the Supervising Scientist have enough analytical resources at its disposal? For example, the Government has cut funding to the ABS – is the Supervising Scientist provided with enough data collection for evidence-based policy making and evaluation?
2. Did the Supervising Scientist use any depreciation funding for recurrent expenditure in 2007-08?
3. Has the Supervising Scientist used any depreciation funding for recurrent expenditure this year?
4. Has any depreciation funding been used for purposes other than the replacement of capital items in 2007-08?
5. How much has the Supervising Scientist spent on the replacement of capital items in the first six months of 2008-09?

**Answers:**

1. Yes.
2. No.
3. No.
4. No.
5. \$29, 084.

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<b>Outcome:</b>	1	<b>Question No:</b>	281
<b>Output:</b>	1.5		
<b>Division/Agency:</b>	Supervising Scientist Division		
<b>Topic:</b>	SSD – Stimulus Package		
<b>Hansard Page ECA:</b>	Written Question on Notice		

**Senator Birmingham asked:**

1. Does the Supervising Scientist have any involvement in measures announced as part of the \$42 billion budget stimulus package?
2. If so, was (and when was) the Supervising Scientist asked for input before the stimulus package was announced?
3. When did the Supervising Scientist know details about the stimulus package affecting its portfolio?

**Answers:**

1. No.
2. Not Applicable.
3. Not Applicable.

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## Environment, Water, Heritage and the Arts portfolio

Additional Estimates, February 2009

**Outcome:** 1 **Question No:** 282  
**Output:** 1.5  
**Division/Agency:** Supervising Scientist Division  
**Topic:** SSD – Staffing  
**Hansard Page ECA:** Written Question on Notice

### Senator Birmingham asked:

1. What is the current total staffing for the Supervising Scientist – permanent and temporary?
2. What was the total Full Time Equivalent (FTE) staffing level for the Supervising Scientist on 1 July 2008?
3. How many permanent staff were recruited in calendar year (CY) 2008 and in financial year (FY) 2008-09 to date? What level are these staff?
4. How many temporary positions exist or have been created in CY 2008 and in FY 2008-09 to date?
5. For CY 2008 and FY 2008-09 to date, how many employees have been employed on contract and what is the average length of their employment period?

### Answers:

1. Total number of staff employed by the Supervising Scientist Division on a:
  - (i) permanent basis is 52; and
  - (ii) temporary basis is 9.
2. The Full Time Equivalent (FTE) staffing level Supervising Scientist Division on 1 July 2008 was 51.39.
3. The number of permanent staff recruited by the Supervising Scientist Division:
  - (i) in CY 2008 was 7 (3 x APS3; EL2; APS4; 2x APS5 ); and
  - (ii) and 2008/09 YTD was 6 (2x APS5; 2 x APS3; APS4; RS1).
4. The number of temporary staff positions existing or created in the Supervising Scientist Division:
  - (i) in CY 2008 was 9; and
  - (ii) in 2008/09 YTD was 11.
5. The number of staff employed on contract in the Supervising Scientist Division:
  - (i) in CY 2008 was 16 with average period of 26 weeks; and
  - (ii) in 2008/09 YTD was 14 with average period of 28.5 weeks.

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<b>Outcome:</b>	1	<b>Question No:</b>	283
<b>Output:</b>	1.5		
<b>Division/Agency:</b>	Supervising Scientist Division		
<b>Topic:</b>	SSD – Program underspend		
<b>Hansard Page ECA:</b>	Written Question on Notice		

**Senator Birmingham asked:**

1. Which programs are currently tracking for an underspend this financial year?
2. How many of the Supervising Scientist's funding programs/budget measures lapse this Financial Year and what are they?

**Answers:**

1. None.
2. None.



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<b>Outcome:</b>	1	<b>Question No:</b>	284
<b>Output:</b>	1.5		
<b>Division/Agency:</b>	Supervising Scientist Division		
<b>Topic:</b>	SSD – Gershon Review		
<b>Hansard Page ECA:</b>	Written Question on Notice		

**Senator Birmingham asked:**

1. What impact will the Gershon Review have on the Supervising Scientist?
2. How much money will be saved?
3. Will the Supervising Scientist be required to return any money to Budget for 2009-10?

**Answers:**

1. Implications arising from the Gershon Review are being handled by the Department. Refer to the Department's response to QoN 86.
2. See response to part 1.
3. See response to part 1.

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<b>Outcome:</b>	1	<b>Question No:</b>	285
<b>Output:</b>	1.5		
<b>Division/Agency:</b>	Supervising Scientist Division		
<b>Topic:</b>	SSD – Media Monitoring		
<b>Hansard Page ECA:</b>	Written Question on Notice		

**Senator Birmingham asked:**

1. How much was spent on media monitoring in CY 2008?
2. How much has been spent on media monitoring in FY 2008-09 to date?
3. How many staff in the Supervising Scientist are employed for media related duties?

**Answers:**

1. Nil. Media monitoring is handled by the Department.
2. See response to part 1.
3. Two staff members of the Supervising Scientist Division have media related activities as a minor part of their duties.

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<b>Outcome:</b>	1	<b>Question No:</b>	286
<b>Output:</b>	1.5		
<b>Division/Agency:</b>	Supervising Scientist Division		
<b>Topic:</b>	SSD – Government Advertising		
<b>Hansard Page ECA:</b>	Written Question on Notice		

**Senator Birmingham asked:**

1. What communications programs has the Supervising Scientist undertaken, or is planning to undertake?
2. For each program, what is the total spend? Please detail including media advertisements (where placed and costs).
3. What was the total spend on advertising by the Supervising Scientist in CY 2008 and for FY 2008/09 to date?

**Answers:**

1. The Supervising Scientist Division undertakes a range of ongoing stakeholder consultation activities but has no current or planned communication programs as such.
2. Nil.
3. Nil.

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Additional Estimates, February 2009

**Outcome:** 1 **Question No:** 287  
**Output:** 1.5  
**Division/Agency:** Supervising Scientist Division  
**Topic:** SSD - Hospitality  
**Hansard Page ECA:** Written Question on Notice

### Senator Birmingham asked:

1. What is the Supervising Scientist's hospitality spend for CY 2008 and for FY 2008/09 to date?
2. Please detail date, location, purpose and cost of all events.

### Answers:

1. The Supervising Scientist did not incur any expenses for official hospitality in CY2008 and FY 2008-09. However, a total of \$748.33 of business related catering expenses has been incorrectly recorded as official hospitality for these periods (\$141.64 in CY 2008 and \$606.69 in FY 08/09 YTD).

2.

Date	Location	Purpose	Cost
January 2008	Darwin	Australia Day Awards	37.49
March 2008	Jabiru	Alligator Rivers Region Technical Committee Meeting 21	104.15
July 2008	Darwin	NT Regional Heads Meeting	409.15
July 2008	Darwin	Secretary's Morning Tea	37.64
August 2008	Darwin	Northern Futures Assessment	29.05
September 2008	Darwin	Minesite Technical Committee Meeting	109.04
December 2008	Darwin	Northern Australia Sustainable Yield Steering Committee Meeting	21.81

Note: all of the above expenditure is business related catering which has been incorrectly coded to official hospitality.

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<b>Outcome:</b>	1	<b>Question No:</b>	288
<b>Output:</b>	1.5		
<b>Division/Agency:</b>	Supervising Scientist Division		
<b>Topic:</b>	SSD - Appointments		
<b>Hansard Page ECA:</b>	Written Question on Notice		

**Senator Birmingham asked:**

1. What is the gender ratio on each board across the portfolio, and what is the total ratio across the portfolio?
2. In which states/territories do these Board members reside?

**Answers:**

1. The Supervising Scientist Division supports two statutory advisory committees: the Alligator Rivers Region Advisory Committee (ARRAC) and the Alligator Rivers Region Technical Committee (ARRTC). ARRAC comprises 22 male and 8 female members, ratio approximately 3:1. ARRTC comprises 10 male and 3 female members, ratio approximately 3:1. For detail on gender ratios across the portfolio, refer to the Department's response to QoN 213.
2. Members of ARRAC reside in the Northern Territory, the Australian Capital Territory and Victoria. Members of ARRTC reside in the Northern Territory, the Australian Capital Territory, Victoria, Western Australia and New South Wales.

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<b>Outcome:</b>	1	<b>Question No:</b>	289
<b>Output:</b>	1.5		
<b>Division/Agency:</b>	Supervising Scientist Division		
<b>Topic:</b>	SSD - FOI		
<b>Hansard Page ECA:</b>	Written Question on Notice		

**Senator Birmingham asked:**

1. Has the Supervising Scientist received any advice on how to respond to Freedom of Information (FOI) requests?
2. How many FOI requests has the Supervising Scientist received?
3. How many have been granted or denied?
4. How many conclusive certificates have been issued in relation to FOI requests?

**Answers:**

1. The Supervising Scientist Division has not received any advice on how to respond to Freedom of Information (FOI) requests other than the general guidance set out in the Departmental FOI Manual.
2. The Supervising Scientist Division has received one FOI request to date in 2008-09.
3. One FOI request has been granted.
4. None.

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**Outcome:** 1 **Question No:** 290  
**Output:** 1.5  
**Division/Agency:** Supervising Scientist Division  
**Topic:** SSD - Consultancies  
**Hansard Page ECA:** Written Question on Notice

### Senator Birmingham asked:

1. How many consultancies have been undertaken or are underway since November 2007?
2. Please identify the name of the consultant, the subject matter of the consultancy, the duration and cost of the consultancy, and the method of procurement (i.e. open tender, direct source, etc). Please also include total value for all consultancies.
3. How many consultancies are planned or budgeted for this calendar year?
4. Have these been published in the Supervising Scientist's Annual Procurement Plan (APP) on the AusTender website? If not, why not? In each case please identify the subject matter, duration, cost and method of procurement as above, and the name of the consultant if known.

### Answers:

1. Three.
- 2.

Name	Subject Matter	Duration and Cost	Procurement Method
Charles Darwin University	Seed Biology Project at Ranger Mine	FY2005-2010 \$15000 per FY, Total cost: \$75000	Direct Source
Allan Watson Associates Pty Ltd	Design for the lift of the Ranger Mine TSF	2 - 30Jun 2008 Total cost: \$9,700	Direct Source
Tropical Rivers & Coastal Knowledge (TRaCK) Consortium	Biodiversity & high conservation value aquatic ecosystems	Nov 2007-\$7000, Dec 2007-\$2334, Mar 2008-\$3500, Sep 2008-\$7000, Mar 2009-\$7000, Sep 2009-\$7000, Mar 2010-\$7000, Sep 2010-\$7000. Total cost: \$47, 834	Direct Source

3. Two.
4. Yes. Refer to table above.