

Senate Standing Committee on Economics
ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON NOTICE
Innovation, Industry, Science and Research Portfolio
Additional Estimates Hearing
26 February 2009

AGENCY/DEPARTMENT: AUSTRALIAN NUCLEAR SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY ORGANISATION

TOPIC: OPAL-INVAP

REFERENCE: Written Question – Senator Eggleston

QUESTION No.: AI-6

1. The issue of costs during the commissioning phase of OPAL has been before this Committee for some time now; could you provide us with an update of how your negotiations are going with both INVAP, the Argentineans that supplied the reactor?
2. When do you foresee these negotiations coming to an end?

ANSWER

There are a number of issues in relation to the contract still outstanding. In particular, the contractual issues relating to the seepage of light water into the reflector vessel have not yet been resolved. Both ANSTO and INVAP have agreed that the remaining issues will be dealt with as a package – and that package cannot be finalised until the circumstances in relation to those outstanding issues are clear. ANSTO note that Dr Cameron advised the Committee on 23 October 2008 at Supplementary Budget Estimates (Hansard, page E 53) that “during the period of commissioning there is no compensation for business losses.”