

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

AGENCY/DEPARTMENT: INNOVATION, INDUSTRY, SCIENCE AND RESEARCH

TOPIC: Australia-India Strategic Research Fund

REFERENCE: Question on Notice (Hansard 26 February 2009, E86)

QUESTION No.: AI-73

Senator ABETZ—I was living in hope that ‘rephasing’ might have meant that it was going to start up again, but it looks as though it is not to be. Turning to page 21, we have International education and training Australia-India Strategic Research Fund. Do I read that, in layman’s terms, it has just been axed? Is that right?

Mr Peel—I cannot comment on that one.

Senator ABETZ—Who can?

Mr Peel—It may be under the science and research division.

Mr Paterson—They are here immediately after the break.

Senator ABETZ—Are you able to tell us just from the figures what that means? Does it mean that there is going to be no expenditure? The \$400,000 that was going to be spent in 2009-10 is no longer going to be spent; is that right?

Mr Paterson—I did not hear the question, but I think you might have asked a question as to whether that had been—

Senator ABETZ—Axed.

Mr Paterson—axed. No, it has not been axed.

Senator ABETZ—What about the money here allocated to it?

Mr Paterson—That is bringing—

Senator ABETZ—That is in the next financial year. There was going to be an allocation of \$400,000.

Mr Paterson—I will just check the detail of it. My recollection of that fund is that it is due to be fully expended by the end of this financial year, 2008-09.

Mr Peel—If you look on page 20, right at the bottom of the page, you will see \$400,000 for the Australia- India Research Fund, a plus figure for 2011-12. It looks to me as if the funding has been moved from 2009-10 to 2011-12.

Senator ABETZ—When we get on to science if there is somebody who could just confirm that for me that would be very helpful.

Mr Paterson—I am happy to do that.

ANSWER

No, the Australia-India Strategic Research Fund (AISRF) has not been axed. Funding is available through to financial year 2011-12.

Round Three of the AISRF opened for applications from 4 August to 26 September 2008. Following the recent agreement of the Indian and Australian Governments regarding applications for funding under Round Three it is expected that contracts for successful projects will be in place by mid-2009. However, given their three year duration not all projects will be completed by the scheduled conclusion of the AISRF in June 2011.

As it is best practice for Government grants to reserve approximately 10 per cent of the total project cost as a final payment the Department re-phased \$400,000 of AISRF funding from 2009-10 to 2011-12. The amount equates to 10 per cent of the total project costs for Round Three.