

Senate Standing Committee on Economics
ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON NOTICE
Innovation, Industry, Science and Research Portfolio
Additional Estimates Hearing 2009-10
10 February 2010

AGENCY/DEPARTMENT: AUSTRALIAN RESEARCH COUNCIL

TOPIC: Excellence in Research for Australia (ERA) Initiative

REFERENCE: Question on Notice (Hansard, 10 February 2010, E-69).

QUESTION No.: AI-104

Senator COLBECK—In the previous quality framework that you have decided to move away from, one of the concerns that came through some of the rural and regional universities, and also some of the research organisations, was that the publication requirements rather than the practical applications requirements were potentially a disadvantage to institutions or organisations taking research in those areas. I am curious to know how that particular concern has been managed as part of this process.

Senator Carr—There are a range of measures that are being undertaken to evaluate the research programs that are presented by individual institutions. The question of impact was one that was, as you say, the subject of considerable controversy in the last measures undertaken by the previous government, known as the RQF. The concern that was being raised in regard to the measurements of impact is that that was impossible to verify. These new arrangements, it is believed, will provide a much higher level of certainty about the quality of any research that is undertaken.

Senator COLBECK—So there is some recent information that was put on the website as late as last night?

Senator Carr—The information was put on the website last night. I can tell you that of the 20,000 journals that I have mentioned, the overwhelming number of them have been by agreement through the expert committee. There were some others that were always going to be subject to argument. I suggest that, where there are specific cases that you might have questions about, we can direct those to the ARC.

Senator COLBECK—So the details of the expert committee and those involved are all part of the document on the website?

Senator Carr—I believe so.

ANSWER

The Ranked Journal List was developed on the basis of expert review and public consultation. The Learned Academies and discipline peak bodies involved in developing and reviewing the Journal List are listed on the Australian Research Council (ARC) website at www.arc.gov.au/pdf/ERA_expert_reviewers.pdf

There were four phases of consultation in the development of the 2010 Journal List, which was released on 9 February 2010. The phases of consultation are listed at www.arc.gov.au/era/journal_list_dev.htm.