

**Economics Legislation Committee**  
**ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON NOTICE**  
Industry, Innovation, Science, Research and Tertiary Education Portfolio  
Additional Estimates Hearing 2012-13  
13 February 2013

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**AGENCY/DEPARTMENT:** DEPARTMENT OF INDUSTRY, INNOVATION, SCIENCE, RESEARCH AND TERTIARY EDUCATION

**TOPIC:** Bushfire and Natural Hazards Cooperative Research Centre (CRC)

**REFERENCE:** Written Question – Senator McKenzie

**QUESTION No.:** AI-176

1. What funding did the Commonwealth Government contribute to flood, earthquake, cyclone and tsunami research in the year 2011-2012?
2. Will research funding provided by the Government for flood, earthquake, cyclone, and tsunami events be provided by other sources other than the newly formed Bushfire and Natural Hazards Cooperative Research Centre (CRC)? If so, please list the programs and funding.
3. What funding did the Commonwealth Government contribute to bushfire research in the year 2011-2012?
4. Was all of this funding directed towards the Bushfire CRC? If not, please give a breakdown of programs and funding.
5. What involvement will the Commonwealth have in setting the priorities of research in the newly announced Bushfire and Natural Hazards Cooperative Research Centre (CRC)?
6. The Commonwealth Government has contributed about \$5 million per year to the Bushfire CRC over the last three years. The newly announced Bushfire and Natural Hazards Cooperative Research Centre (CRC) will receive \$47 million over the next eight years or \$5.8 million per year. Does this level of funding signal a decrease in bushfire research?
7. Will the newly announced Bushfire and Natural Hazards Cooperative Research Centre be located in Melbourne?
8. What steps need to be taken for the Bushfire and Natural Hazards Cooperative Research Centre (CRC) to be in operation by 1 July 2013?
9. Will the Bushfire and Natural Hazards Cooperative Research Centre (CRC) be a public good CRC?
10. Will the proposed formation of the Bushfire and Natural Hazards Cooperative Research Centre (CRC) be a full implementation of recommendation 65 from the 2009 Victorian Bushfires Royal Commission Final Report?

**ANSWER**

1. The amount provided by the Industry, Innovation, Science, Research and Tertiary Education portfolio is provided in the following table.

<b>Program</b>	<b>Period</b>	<b>Amount \$ (GST exclusive)</b>
Australian Research Council (ARC) National Competitive Grants Program*	Funding (over the life of the project) awarded for commencement in 2011	5,677,866

<b>Program</b>	<b>Period</b>	<b>Amount \$ (GST exclusive)</b>
Australian Research Council (ARC) National Competitive Grants Program	Funding (over the life of the project) awarded for commencement in 2012	4,315,184
Australian Research Council (ARC) National Competitive Grants Program	Funding allocated to new and ongoing research projects in 2011-12	6,280,007
Cooperative Research Centres (CRC) – Spatial Information CRC**	2009-10 to 2017-18	32,200,000 <sup>^</sup>
The Commonwealth Scientific and Industrial Research Organisation (CSIRO) undertakes research on cyclones and floods funded by CSIRO appropriation and external government sources. CSIRO is not currently undertaking any research in relation to earthquakes and tsunamis.		The work is embedded in larger programs concerning climate variability, change and adaptation so cannot be extracted to provide investment figures.

\* Includes projects both directly and indirectly related to flood, earthquake, cyclone and tsunami research. Potential relevant projects were identified using a search based on keywords and ABS research codes. The resulting list was then vetted for relevance to flood, earthquake, cyclone and tsunami research. In addition, \$21.4 million over seven years, commencing in 2011, has been awarded to the ARC Centre of Excellence for Climate System Science. The ARC funding allocation for the Centre in 2011–12 is \$3.1 million. The centre's research programs include research aimed at increasing understanding of climate extremes, including extreme climatic events such as floods and cyclones.

\*\* The Cooperative Research Centre for Spatial Information will receive a total of \$32.2 million in funding from 2009-10 to 2017-18. The Spatial CRC undertook research on flooding following the 2011 Queensland floods.

<sup>^</sup> The figure quoted represents the total Commonwealth funding provided to the CRC. Funds are matched by the CRC's participants. Funds are pooled and then allocated by the CRC to its specific research activities. The Commonwealth does not collect data on which funds are spent on which individual activities.

- Through the National Competitive Grants Program, administered by the Australian Research Council (ARC), the Australian Government funds research in all disciplines, including research related to floods, earthquakes, cyclones and tsunamis. Funding is awarded on the basis of a competitive peer review process.

The Commonwealth Scientific and Industrial Research Organisation (CSIRO) undertakes research on cyclones and floods funded by CSIRO appropriation and external government sources. However this work is embedded in larger programs concerning climate variability, change and adaptation so cannot be extracted to provide investment figures. CSIRO is not currently undertaking any research in relation to earthquakes and tsunamis.

- Bushfire research funding from the Industry, Innovation, Science, Research and Tertiary Education Portfolio in 2011-12 is provided in the following table.

<b>Program</b>	<b>Period</b>	<b>Amount \$ (GST exclusive)</b>
Australian Research Council (ARC) National Competitive Grants Program*	Funding (over the life of the project) awarded for commencement in 2011	2,409,651
Australian Research Council (ARC) National Competitive Grants Program	Funding (over the life of the project) awarded for commencement in 2012	1,056,000

<b>Program</b>	<b>Period</b>	<b>Amount \$ (GST exclusive)</b>
Australian Research Council (ARC) National Competitive Grants Program	Funding allocated to new and ongoing research projects in 2011-12	2,366,363
Cooperative Research Centres (CRC) – Bushfire CRC	2011-12	5,000,000 (includes 800,000 provided to CSIRO)
Commonwealth Scientific and Industrial Research Organisation (CSIRO)	2011-12	Co-invested 900,000 of CSIRO appropriation into the Bushfire CRC.  Also committed 30,000 of appropriation to small projects outside the Bushfire CRC and received 100,000 in external investment from a range of sources in 2011-2012.

\* Includes projects both directly and indirectly related to bushfire research. Potential relevant projects were identified using a search based on keywords and Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) research codes. The resulting list was then vetted for relevance to bushfire research.

4. No, see responses to Questions 1, 2 and 3.
5. The research program of the new Bushfire and Natural Hazards Cooperative Research Centre will be the subject of consultation between the Commonwealth and a range of stakeholders including State and Territory Governments, the Australasian Fire and Emergency Services Authorities Council (AFAC), the Bushfire CRC and educational and research institutions.
6. No. A range of research activity currently funded through the Bushfire CRC has broad application across a range of natural hazards. It is not anticipated that broadening the scope of work on other hazards will require a reduction in bushfire research.
7. The location of the Bushfire and Natural Hazards Cooperative Research Centre's headquarters has not yet been determined.
8. A Commonwealth Agreement will need to be finalised which includes a number of steps such as securing the Cooperative Research Centre's participant commitments, developing its research programs and establishing a legal entity including its governance and management arrangements.
9. Yes.
10. Yes.