

Senate Economics Legislation Committee
ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON NOTICE
Innovation, Industry, Science and Research Portfolio
Budget Estimates Hearing 2008-09
2-3 June 2008

AGENCY/DEPARTMENT: INNOVATION, INDUSTRY, SCIENCE AND RESEARCH

TOPIC: CSIRO funding

REFERENCE: Written Question

QUESTION No. BI-6

Senator EGGLESTON asked:

Now, I have a quote here from a man by the name of Kim Carr of a statement he made 5 years ago and it reads as follows: "The government does not understand how important CSIRO is to the future of this country. It's failed to fund it. It's seen massive job cuts. Morale is shot and as a result of this, CSIRO is facing serious problems." Now in light of the \$63 million dollars that you Minister have cut from the CSIRO, sources have already reported that staff morale has plummeted, that jobs will go, and that research programs will be culled. Could the Minister explain if the scientific work of CSIRO has become less important to Australia, or if the staff of CSIRO and their jobs is in any way less important than it was five years ago when these comments were made?

ANSWER

The Minister has consistently made it clear, including during the Budget Estimates hearing, that the Government considers CSIRO and its research programs to be vital elements of the national innovation system, undertaking critical science and research in the national interest.