

Senate Standing Committee on Economics
ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON NOTICE
Innovation, Industry, Science and Research Portfolio
Budget Estimates Hearing 2009-10
01 June 2009

AGENCY/DEPARTMENT: AUSTRALIAN NUCLEAR SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY ORGANISATION

TOPIC: Future Industries

REFERENCE: Written Question – Senator Bushby

QUESTION No.: BI-102

Nuclear science facilities for ANSTO are promised as part of \$504m for ‘future industries’ – as part of Super Science Initiative in the Budget 08-09.

- a) Has ANSTO been told how much of this money they will actually receive? How much will ANSTO receive?
- b) What specific projects are ANSTO are planning to spend the money on?
- c) Previous testimony suggests that increased operating expenses, particularly relating to reactor fuel assemblies and operating costs with the OPAL reactor, have increased over the past few years. Will the \$6.4m over three years cover these costs?
- d) Out of the promised \$504m, is only \$6.4m going to ANSTO?
- e) Is the Government considering the option of nuclear power?
- f) Has Government adequately funded ANSTO to set them up as a viable power option?

ANSWER

- a) This response and the following responses are based on the assumption that the question refers to the 2009-10 Budget. As stated in the Budget Measures 2009-10, Budget Paper No. 2, Part 2, which can be found at http://www.aph.gov.au/budget/2009-10/content/bp2/html/bp2_expense-20.htm, ANSTO has been allocated \$62 million over four years from the Education Investment Fund through the Super Science Future Industries Initiative.
- b) As indicated generally in the media release of the, Minister for Innovation, Industry, Science and Resources, Senator Carr, dated 12 May 2009, (<http://minister.innovation.gov.au/Carr/Pages/SUPERSCIENCEFUTUREINDUSTRIES.aspx>), and with more detail in ANSTO’s media release and Federal Budget Background Paper of 13 May and 15 May 2009, respectively (http://www.ansto.gov.au/discovering_ansto/news_and_events/for_media), \$37 million will be used to construct three additional neutron beam instruments attached to the OPAL research reactor. This will provide additional and new research beam lines for the Australian and international research communities. \$25 million will be used to establish a new Centre for Accelerator Science, including the construction of two new accelerators.
- c) The additional operating funding of \$6.4 million over three years will meet the increased costs of reactor fuel for that period. Details of the funding can be found in the Budget Measures 2009-10, Budget Paper No. 2, Part 2. Other substantially increased costs for electricity and water have been absorbed in ANSTO’s operational budget.

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- d) No. As outlined in the Budget Measures 2009-10, Budget Paper No. 2, Part 2, the \$6.4 million is additional funding for operational activities and does not form part of the \$504 million Education Investment Fund Super Science Initiative. As stated in the response to question b), ANSTO received an allocation of \$62 million from the Super Science Future Industries Initiative.
- e) As stated in the response to part 1 of Senate Question 1444 of 18 March 2009, the Government's policy is that nuclear power is not needed as part of Australia's energy mix given our natural diversity of low cost and reliable energy sources, both fossil fuel and renewable based.
- f) See response to e).