

**Senate Standing Committee on Economics**  
**ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON NOTICE**  
Innovation, Industry, Science and Research Portfolio  
Budget Estimates Hearing 2010-11  
31 May 2010

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**AGENCY/DEPARTMENT:** AUSTRALIAN NUCLEAR SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY ORGANISATION

**TOPIC:** National Medical Cyclotron

**REFERENCE:** Written Question, Senator Heffernan

**QUESTION No.:** BI-40

There has been a recent decision to shut down the National Medical Cyclotron. How much was invested in that facility?

The NMC was used to produce isotopes for nuclear medicine such as Thallium 201, Gallium 67 and Iodine 123. Is ANSTO still importing these isotopes and if so at what cost annually? Will those costs continue and if so for how long?

Why did the NMC stop producing FDG, the main isotope used for PET (Positron Emission Tomography) for the Sydney market in 2003?

What is going to be done with the NMC facility and at what cost?

**ANSWER**

The 30MeV cyclotron has been shutdown (October 2009) and the facility will be used as the ANSTO Collaboration Centre (see response to (e), below for more details). The cyclotron cost \$13.5 million, which had a residual value at the time of shutdown of \$2million. ANSTO was importing the named isotopes prior to the shutdown of the cyclotron because of the unreliability and unpredictability of the cyclotron in producing them. Following shutdown, ANSTO has been importing at elevated levels, observing cost recovery and competitive neutrality requirements. The total cost cannot be disclosed as there are other parties in the market who import these isotopes.

ANSTO will continue to support the nuclear medicine community and their patients as required.

Please see response to Senate Estimates Question BI-2 (May 2010).

The NMC building will be used to house a dedicated 18MeV medical research cyclotron and radiochemistry facility, known as the ANSTO Collaboration Centre. This facility will be part of the National Imaging Facility (NIF), which has nodes in universities and research institutes across Australia.

The establishment of the cyclotron in the existing facility is estimated to cost \$10 million. Details of the new partnership and the facility were recently announced and can be found in the joint media release

[http://www.ansto.gov.au/\\_data/assets/pdf\\_file/0019/46612/Sydney\\_Uni\\_Collaboration.pdf](http://www.ansto.gov.au/_data/assets/pdf_file/0019/46612/Sydney_Uni_Collaboration.pdf)

More information on NIF can be found at: [www.anif.org.au](http://www.anif.org.au)