

**Senate Economics Legislation Committee**  
ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON NOTICE  
Industry, Tourism and Resources Portfolio  
Supplementary Budget Estimates 2005-2006, 2 November 2005

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**AGENCY/DEPARTMENT:** DEPARTMENT OF INDUSTRY, TOURISM AND RESOURCES  
**OUTCOME/OUTPUT:** Outcome 2, Outputs 2.1 and 2.2  
**TOPIC:** AUSTRALIAN STEM CELL CENTRE  
**REFERENCE:** WRITTEN QUESTION

**QUESTION No.SBI-95**

**Senator Forshaw** asked:

How much funding has been provided by the Australian Government to the Australian Stem Cell Centre (ASCC) since 2002? Please provide a break-up of this funding by Department and Agency.

**ANSWER**

From 2002 to November 2005 the ASCC has received \$40.25 million under two Australian Government programs. This comprises \$36.25 million under the Biotechnology Centre of Excellence program, jointly administered by DITR (\$17.5 million) and the Australian Research Council (\$18.75 million), and \$4 million under the Major National Research Facilities program, administered by the Department of Education, Science and Training.

**QUESTION No.SBI-96 and No.SBI-97**

**Senator Forshaw** asked:

Is the ASCC required to report to the Federal Government on how it has expended such funds?

If so, have these reports been provided to the Government? Please provide a copy of the reports to the Committee if available.

**ANSWER**

Under the Biotechnology Centre of Excellence Deed of Agreement the ASCC provides the Australian Government with Annual, Mid-Financial Year and two Quarterly Reports (for the March and September quarters) each year. These Reports outline the strategic, commercial and research priorities of the ASCC. They identify the prioritisation of ASCC activities, commercial strategies, potential collaborators, research areas and therapeutic targets.

The disclosure of these Reports would undermine the ASCC's commercial interest vis-à-vis its commercial competitors and would prejudice the ASCC's ability to deliver against its objectives under the Deed. DITR consulted the Minister for Industry, Tourism and Resources. The Minister has determined that the ASCC's reports contain commercially-sensitive information and should not be released for the reasons stated above. A letter signed by the Minister confirming his decision not to release the ASCC reports is attached.

In addition to these confidential reports, the ASCC has produced a Public Annual Report which is available on the ASCC's website (<http://www.stemcellcentre.edu.au>). A copy of the latest Public Annual Report has been provided to the Senate Economics Legislation Committee Secretariat.