

**Senate Standing Committee on Economics**  
**ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON NOTICE**  
Innovation, Industry, Science and Research Portfolio  
Supplementary Budget Estimates Hearing 2009-10  
21 October 2009

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**AGENCY/DEPARTMENT:** INNOVATION, INDUSTRY, SCIENCE AND RESEARCH

**TOPIC:** Cooperative Research Centres (CRCs)

**REFERENCE:** Question on Notice (Hansard 21 October 2009, E56)

**QUESTION No:** SI-34

**Senator BACK** – Ms Kelly, I want to draw your attention to a topic that the minister and I are somewhat familiar with, which is the Australian Biosecurity CRC for Emerging Infectious Diseases.....

**Senator BACK**— Do you know on this occasion if there was a peer review committee established and whether the application was passed on to them?

**Ms Morahan**—There was no peer review committee established for it.

**Senator BACK**—Could you perhaps take on notice why that decision would have been taken not to, particularly in an area as complex as infectious viral diseases? I wonder why that would not have been passed over to a committee of peers to review.

**Ms Kelly**—I think one of the reasons is that we did have some relevant expertise on the committee, including the head of the National Health and Medical Research Council, Professor Warwick Anderson.

**ANSWER**

The Australian Biosecurity Cooperative Research Centre (CRC) for Emerging Infectious Diseases submitted an application for funding in the 11<sup>th</sup> CRC Selection Round. The assessment process is undertaken in two stages. For the 11<sup>th</sup> round, the CRC Committee reviewed applicants' written applications at stage 1 and decided which applications should continue to stage 2 of the assessment process.

Applicants that progressed to stage 2 of the assessment process were required to prepare one Research Project Proposal (RPP) for each Research Program of the proposed CRC. These RPPs were then peer reviewed by independent experts. The Australian Biosecurity CRC for Emerging Infectious Diseases was not successful in progressing to stage 2 and as a result, they were not required to prepare RPPs for independent experts to peer review.