

Senate Standing Committee on Economics
ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON NOTICE
Innovation, Industry, Science and Research Portfolio
Supplementary Budget Estimates Hearing 2010-11
20 October 2010

AGENCY/DEPARTMENT: INNOVATION, INDUSTRY, SCIENCE AND RESEARCH

TOPIC: Bushfire Research

REFERENCE: Written Question—Senator Colbeck

QUESTION No.: SI-67

In Recommendation 65 of the Royal Commission's Report into the 2009 Victorian bushfires, it says that "the Commonwealth (should) establish a national centre for bushfire research in collaboration with other Australian jurisdictions to support pure, applied and long-term research in the physical, biological and social sciences relevant to bushfires and to promote continuing research and scholarship in related disciplines".

Given there is currently a Bushfire Research CRC for which we understand Research Division has administrative responsibility, what are the implications of this recommendation for that CRC's work in the future? And what work has been done by the Department with your Victorian Government counterparts on implementing this recommendation?

A \$16.5 million payment was made to the Bushfire Research CRC early in 2010. What was the reason for this?

ANSWER

The Commonwealth tabled its response to Recommendation 65 of the Royal Commission's Report into the 2009 Victorian bushfires on 25 October 2010.

The Department of Innovation is working with the Attorney General's Department which is responsible for coordinating the Commonwealth's efforts in response to the Royal Commission's report. The Attorney General's Department is working with Victoria and other states and territories to develop options for the promotion of bushfire research within the nationally agreed all hazards framework and through existing institutions.

The Commonwealth has provided an additional \$15 million over 2010-11 to 2012-13 for the Bushfire CRC to tackle specific tasks arising from the experience of the Victorian bushfires.

The Department of Innovation reported the \$15 million grant (\$16.5 million, GST inclusive) to the Bushfire CRC in its grants register during the period July 2010 to September 2010. These funds will be paid over the grant period, that is, 2010-11 to 2012-13.