

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: OFFICE OF THE CHIEF SCIENTIST

TOPIC: Overseas meetings and/or events

REFERENCE: Question on Notice (Hansard 20 October 2010, E12-13)

QUESTION No: SI-9

Senator BUSHBY—Are you able to provide us, on notice, with a list of the overseas meetings and/or events that you have attended in your time as Chief Scientist?

Prof. Sackett—Certainly.

Senator BUSHBY—So we can get a proper understanding of how this works in practice, does the government ask you in any cases to attend events and/or go to meetings overseas or, when you travel internationally as part of your duties, is it really just an exercise of your own discretion as to what you should attend and what you shouldn't?

Prof. Sackett—Both of those are true. I have, on occasion, attended at the request of the government. I would say that the majority is at my own discretion looking at the complete nature and breadth of my remit and where I think the most value will be returned to Australia.

Senator BUSHBY—When you provide the list on notice of where you went, can you indicate, corresponding to each of those trips, whether it was at your own initiative or whether it was at the request of government?

Senator Carr—The question is a little obscure because there is crossover on work that is undertaken by the Chief Scientist, so you need to be more precise in your question.

Senator BUSHBY—I asked the Chief Scientist the degree to which discretion applies. She indicated there were some occasions where she was asked and others where she decided it was in the best interests of the position that she holds to attend. She did not appear to have any difficulty answering that. She just needs to say, 'Yes, I decided to go at the request of the government,' or she could, if she chooses to, say, 'A bit of both,' on some of them.

ANSWER

Attached are details of Professor Sackett's 2009-10 Overseas Meetings and/or Events.

Countries	Date	Australian Government request or Chief Scientist initiative or by invitation	Reasons for attending
Japan	September/October 2010	By invitation	7 th Science and Technology in Society <i>forum</i>
China//Germany	August 2010	Australian Government request and Chief Scientist	Shanghai World Expo 2010 (Expo) and Potsdam Institute for Climate Impact Research

			(PIK)
New Zealand	June 2010	By invitation	Enhance cooperation in mutual areas of research interest
USA	April 2010	By invitation, Chief Scientist initiation and Australian Government request	Meetings with Australian Ambassador to the USA, Mr Kim Beazley, the Association of Universities for Research in Astronomy (AURA), Daniel Kammen, Clean Energy Envoy for the US Secretary of State and Dr Arden Bement, Director National Science Foundation
China/Hungary	November 2009	By invitation and Chief Scientist initiation	To discuss China's fifty year science and technology road map with the Chinese Academy of Sciences (CAS) and the 4th World Science Forum
France/Japan	September /October 2010	By invitation	International Council for Science (ICSU) workshop and the 6 th Science & Technology in Society forum
USA	April 2009	By invitation and Chief Scientist initiation	Meeting with Dr Harold Varmus, co-chair of President Obama's Council of Advisors on Science and Technology (along with Eric Lander and John Holdren) and attendance at the Board Meetings and Annual Meeting of the Association of Universities for Research in Astronomy, in Tucson, Arizona
Denmark/Germany	March 2009	By invitation and Australian Government request	The Climate Change: Global Risks, Challenges and Decisions scientific congress and meetings with Professor Frieder Meyer-Krahmer, State Secretary, Education and Research
Europe/USA	January 2009	By invitation	Attended the American Astronomical Society 213 meeting. Also attended the UNESCO International Year of Astronomy launch in Paris with other European stakeholders.