

Senate Standing Committee on Economics
ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON NOTICE
Innovation, Industry, Science and Research Portfolio
Supplementary Budget Estimates 2011-2012
19 October 2011

AGENCY/DEPARTMENT: COMMONWEALTH SCIENTIFIC AND INDUSTRIAL RESEARCH ORGANISATION

TOPIC: DOUBLE HELIX SCIENCE CLUB

REFERENCE: Written Question – Senator Colbeck

QUESTION No.: SI-90

1. On what date was the Double Helix Science Club's regional chapters program closed?
2. What was the reason for its cessation?
3. Have any CSIRO staff lost their jobs because of the closure?
4. How much was spent on this program for each of the five financial years immediately preceding its closure?
5. Is it correct that CSIRO has sent a letter(s) to Double Helix members advising them that the closure is, in part, attributable to health and safety issues? If so, what specifically are these issues?

ANSWER

1. Chapters were contacted and progressively closed between March and June 2011. The final chapter was closed in June 2011.
2. To continue to operate the program required sophisticated training in working with children for a mainly volunteer workforce which was beyond the capacity of the program to deliver and monitor.
3. No.
4. The program is not budgeted separately to the Double Helix program as a whole and staff involved work on numerous projects. Expenditure on the entire regional chapters program has been consistently in the order of \$5,000 per year for the last five years.
5. Yes. See answer two above.