

**Economics Legislation Committee**  
**ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON NOTICE**  
Industry, Innovation, Science, Research and Tertiary Education Portfolio  
Supplementary Budget Estimates Hearing 2012-13  
17 October 2012

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**AGENCY/DEPARTMENT:** COMMONWEALTH SCIENTIFIC AND INDUSTRIAL RESEARCH ORGANISATION (CSIRO)

**TOPIC:** IMT Division letter to centrelink – notice of termination of staff

**REFERENCE:** Question on Notice (Hansard, 17 October 2012, page 19)

**QUESTION No.:** SI-13

**Senator COLBECK:** I appreciate the committee's time. I need to go back to the issue about the termination of the staff in 2010. There was advice given to the IMT staff on 17 May that anticipated the loss of around 30 positions?

**Mr Roy:** I understand that is accurate. That is what we have said in response to a question.

**Senator COLBECK:** No, I do not think we are disputing that. I just want to confirm it. At that point the CSIRO had a clear obligation under section 530 of the Fair Work Act to inform the CEO of Centrelink of that proposed action?

**Mr Roy:** That is correct, and I think where you are probably going is we—

**Senator COLBECK:** Just before you go there—I have got to be quick—those terminations included library staff?

**Mr Roy:** There were some library staff included in that.

**Senator COLBECK:** You are right, I am going there, because the notice of termination did not go to Centrelink until 14 February 2011?

**Mr Roy:** That is correct.

**Senator COLBECK:** There effectively was a breach of the Fair Work Act in that circumstance?

**Mr Roy:** There were obligations under the act. We missed the time line to send it in. We have been transparent about that. We have corrected it subsequently in terms of our policies, but we did miss that—not guideline—obligation under the act to advise the Chief Executive of Centrelink as soon as practicable.

**Senator COLBECK:** This is not even actually addressed to anybody, it is just a fax to Centrelink. I suppose that is neither here nor there.

**Mr Roy:** But I understand we submitted the advice, albeit late, in the appropriate form once it had been submitted. I understand that is how they do go to Centrelink, but we can clarify that if that is your desire.

**ANSWER**

On 14 February 2011, the CSIRO wrote to Centrelink to advise that the CSIRO proposed to terminate the employment of 15 or more staff (redundancies of 15 or more staff triggers Centrelink notification). This letter further specified that at that time the CSIRO believed that 30 IT staff and eight library staff had been made redundant and that approximately ten additional staff were expected to finish employment with the CSIRO by the end of June 2011. Whilst these planned redundancies were arising from two different processes, they did emanate from the same function (IM&T) within the CSIRO and therefore both were referenced in the letter to Centrelink.