

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

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

TOPIC: Payments to Journalists

REFERENCE: Written Question – Senator Bushby

QUESTION No.: SI-84

1. Is it true that CSIRO paid for the airfares to and from Cape Grim for the journalist Angus Thompson to attend events associated with the launch of the State of the Climate report? If so, was this all that was paid to him – and why would a journalist be paid for something like this by the CSIRO at all?
2. Since 1 December 2007, has any form of payment or benefit been provided to Mr Thompson and/or any other journalist at any other time by the CSIRO – and, if so, to whom, when and for what reason?

ANSWER

1. CSIRO paid the cost of Angus Thompson's return airfare from Melbourne to Burnie in order for him to visit Cape Grim in conjunction with the release of the 2012 State of the Climate Report. No funds were paid to Mr Thompson. CSIRO decided to pay for the airfare as he would not otherwise have been able to visit the site and it was determined that his participation would enable broader coverage of the Report. CSIRO does not pay journalists to cover stories. CSIRO does however on occasion commission pieces by freelance journalists and editors for use in brochures, publications and websites.
2. In October 2012 the CSIRO paid the transportation costs from Perth to Murchison and from Geraldton to Murchison for those journalists that attended the launch of the Australian Square Kilometre Array Pathfinder telescopes and opening of the Murchison Radio Observatory. Given the remote locality of that site, the CSIRO determined that meeting these costs would enable better reporting of the opening of this significant new international research facility. The following journalists were transported from Perth to Murchison for this event:

Name	Role	Outlet
Jeannette Francis	Reporter	SBS TV
Cheryl Jones	Journalist	The Australian
Colin Murty	Photographer	The Australian
Nick Way	Senior journalist	Channel 10 News
Karl Carosella	Camera operator	Channel 10 News
Jane Norman	Reporter	ABC TV News
Marcus Alborn	Camera operator	ABC TV News

Peter Kapsanis	Reporter	Channel 9 News
Glenn Clarke	Camera Operator	Channel 9 News
Stuart McDill	Reporter (TV camera)	Reuters
Rebekah Kebede	Reporter (print)	Reuters
Rebecca LeMay	Perth Bureau Chief	AAP
Wilson Da Silva	Editor-in-Chief	COSMOS magazine
Geof Parry	Reporter	Channel 7 News
Trent Nind	Camera operator	Channel 7 News
Ben O'Halloran	Journalist	Geraldton Guardian
Jane Kennedy	Cross-media reporter	ABC Mid West
Sarah Taillier	Journalist (radio)	ABC Mid West

The following journalists were transported from Geraldton to Murchison for the same event:

Name	Role	Outlet
Ben O'Halloran	Journalist	Geraldton Guardian
Claire Connelly	Journalist	News Limited
Charlie Brewer	Photographer	News Limited
Narelle Towie	Journalist	Sunday Times
Kathryn Diss	Journalist	ABC local TV
Jane Kennedy	Journalist	ABC local radio
Damian Smith	Reporter	GWN TV
Natalie Browning	Camera Operator	GWN TV
Amanda Rowlings	Journalist	JAM magazine

In December 2011, CSIRO, ACIAR and Crawford Fund collectively funded the accommodation costs and airfares for two journalists, Laura Poole from ABC and Catherine Miller from Rural Press, to travel to Kenya to see and potentially report on the food security related research activities being undertaken by these organisations with partner organisations in Africa.

In November 2011, CSIRO paid for the travel and accommodation costs for Mr Paul Skelton from Connection Magazines to visit the CSIRO Energy Centre for a tour and to attend the opening of the new Heating, Ventilation and Air Conditioning (HVAC) performance testing facility.

In 2009, CSIRO provided meals and accommodation at the guest observers quarters at the Parkes Observatory for Alana Valentine from the ABC in support of the production of a documentary on astronomy and the Parkes telescope.