EDUCATION, SCIENCE AND TRAINING

SENATE LEGISLATION COMMITTEE - QUESTIONS ON NOTICE
2004-2005 ADDITIONAL ESTIMATES HEARING

Outcome: CSIRO
Output Group: CSIRO

DEST Question No. E551_05

Senator Carr provided in writing.

Question:

Please provide a full history of CSIRO's current program to upgrade its website? On what date did the first work commence? At that time, was the anticipated date for a fully operational system?

Answer:

CSIRO has provided the following response.

CSIRO's Information Architecture and Website - history

In late 2001 the *CSIRO Live!* Project was initiated. It was aimed at developing standards and a toolkit to maximise the coherence and value of CSIRO's extensive and complex information base in an integrated way. CSIRO had identified approximately 250 independent web-servers operating in the organisation which needed to be consolidated, along with 80,000 + pages of content which needed to be reviewed and in many cases modified or supplemented.

A project "Reference Group" comprised of both corporate and divisional representatives was established to develop the scope, business requirements and a high level plan on the best method of rollout. The aim was to deliver a website using CSIRO's existing web structure as a basis for the redesign (i.e. 20 divisions with one corporate overview) and a prototype site was developed by November 2003.

In parallel with this development, the business goals of the project were reviewed with consequent impact on the originally scoped project. Additional delays occurred within some areas of the technical/infrastructure development. Critical path issues with the main technical product also emerged and whilst the product had been extensively used within Australia at the time it was selected by CSIRO, there emerged significant shortcomings in its fit for our purposes. During the latter part of 2003 a full analysis of the technical product was undertaken and a decision was made in January 2004 to retain the product but move to the next version.

A decision was made by the *CSIRO Live* Steering Committee in March 2004 to focus on Information Architecture that would make it possible to ensure delivery of a one-CSIRO web approach - allowing representation of CSIRO under major science themes (eg Farming and Food, Health and Medicine, Information and Communication Technology and Manufacturing) as opposed to promoting 20 separate Divisions. This new focus presents a significant challenge for the organisation.

In June 2004 the *CSIRO Live* project was terminated having successfully established the underlying architecture and structure of the integrated web site and after extensive capital investment (mainly 3 Sunfire 6800 servers, IBM Websphere, Content Management software, etc) and a new project, *CSIRO.au*, was established to focus on content development and delivery.

The first version of the content management system and website was delivered before 30 April 2005, however after extensive technical and business testing some issues with the web

infrastructure were discovered. Therefore, essential changes needed to be made before the public launch of the website. Once the web infrastructure issues are resolved the site will be launched internally to allow for adequate testing with internal stakeholders before the external launch later this year. Ongoing content management and functionality improvements will continue over the life of the site.