

**EDUCATION, SCIENCE AND TRAINING**

**SENATE LEGISLATION COMMITTEE – QUESTIONS ON NOTICE  
2003-2004 BUDGET ESTIMATES HEARING**

**Outcome:** CSIRO  
**Output Group:** CSIRO

**DEST Question No. E243\_04**

Senator Carr asked on 4 June 2003.

**Question:**

There is a history of constant tension in achieving a balance between public good research and commercialisation.

What lessons have you drawn from that?

**Answer:**

CSIRO has provided the following response.

*DSIR New Zealand*

All research performing agencies strive to maximise the return on their research investment. This is as true of public good research as it is of research carried out in the expectation of short term commercialisation. Research performed to advance knowledge is only useful to the extent that other researchers make use of it and build on the knowledge it produces. Public good research is only useful to the extent that we have in place mechanisms to capture and use the results of the research. The performance of any research agency depends on the effective management of research and this requires a focus on outcomes and assessing the difference that the research makes. There is no optimum balance between public good research and commercialisation. The balance depends on what you are trying to achieve. And it is always possible that public good research can have unexpected commercial outcomes.