

EDUCATION, SCIENCE AND TRAINING

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

Outcome: 3
Output Group: – 3.1 Research Infrastructure

DEST Question No. E185_05

Senator Stott Despoja provided in writing.

Question:

The 2003-04 Report into BAA1 estimates the total Commonwealth support for science and innovation for 2002-03 at \$4989 million and for 2003-04 at \$5426 million. By how much did these estimates exceed the actual expenditure for their year and which programmes were not funded as estimated and why?

Answer:

2003-04 Report into BAA1 estimates

The information referred to is in Table 5, page 98 of the Australian Government's innovation Report 2003-04.

With the exception of two programmes, there has been no significant variation between the funding appropriated and the actual expenses for the programmes administered by the Education, Science and Training Portfolio.

Regional Protection Fund

Funding for this programme is appropriated under the Higher Education Funding Act (1988) and the Higher Education Support Act (2003) on a calendar year basis. In compiling Table 5, the funds were notionally apportioned on a financial year basis.

As outlined in *Knowledge and Innovation: A policy statement on research and research training* in 1999, the Government made a policy commitment that no regional institution would suffer a deterioration in its research funding in the first three years of the new funding arrangements, as measured against its 2001 benchmark.

To this end, \$6 million was legislated for allocation under the Regional Protection Fund (RPF) for an initial three year period.

2002

The appropriation for 2002 was fully allocated.

2003

The appropriation for 2003 was \$2 million. In order to meet the commitment that no regional institution would be disadvantaged, an additional \$1.2 million was spent in 2003 to restore eligible institutions to their 2001 benchmark levels bringing the total expenditure for 2003 to \$3.2 million.

2004

The appropriation for 2004 was \$2 million. In order to meet the commitment that no regional institution would be disadvantaged, an additional \$3.8 million was spent in 2004 to restore eligible institutions to their 2001 benchmark levels bringing the total expenditure for 2004 to \$5.8 million.

Australian Nuclear Science and Technology Organisation (ANSTO)

2002-03

ANSTO received an equity injection of \$104.175 million of which \$73.836 million was drawn down by the Agency. The outstanding amount of \$30.339 million (\$104.175 million - \$73.836 million) can be drawn down by the Agency at a future date as required.

2003-04

Total expense appropriations for Outcomes 2 and 3 for ANSTO were \$121.054 million. The equity injection for the financial year was \$84.690 million. The amounts have been fully drawn down.