

EDUCATION, SCIENCE AND TRAINING

SENATE LEGISLATION COMMITTEE – QUESTIONS ON NOTICE 2005-2006 BUDGET ESTIMATES HEARING

Outcome: CSIRO
Output Group: CSIRO

DEST Question No. E228_06

Senator Carr provided in writing.

Question:

CSIRO: ARPANSA Quarterly Report, 1 October – 31 December 2004

Appendix A, A.83 mentions two incidents of overexposure to UV reported in previous quarterly reports. Chief Executive of CSIRO is mentioned as having issued a direction on 21 September 2004 for all Divisions to review their operations.

Please provide details of the 2 incidents.

Were any staff affected? Which Divisions?

What measures has CSIRO taken to ensure such incidents do not occur again?

What was the result of the review of Divisions operations with regard to licensing conditions?

Answer:

CSIRO has provided the following response.

ARPANSA Quarterly Report - Exposure to UV

In 2004 two CSIRO Ultra-Violet exposure incidents occurred where staff received injuries. Two staff were affected in CSIRO Land and Water and one in CSIRO Livestock Industries. These injuries were the result of not wearing appropriate protective equipment. The two Land & Water staff sustained minor eye and facial burns. The Livestock Industries staff member received minor facial burns.

Comcare was informed as was ARPANSA because of the UV radiation exposure.

In response to these incidents CSIRO undertook the following measures:

- All CSIRO staff were informed of the two incidents and new proposed safety measures via an organisational 'Safety Alert' communiqué.
- With the assistance of ARPANSA, CSIRO agreed to new safety measures including:
 - all equipment to have risk assessments reviewed or completed;
 - instructions and signage on the use of all equipment to be provided;
 - staff trained in the use of all equipment and personal protective equipment;
 - and
 - training records maintained to a high standard.
- Divisional Chiefs have reported that these safety measures have been implemented. ARPANSA subsequently conducted several audits of Divisions to verify implementation and were satisfied with the safety measures.
- A new safety brochure *Guidelines for the safe use of Ultra-Violet emitting equipment in laboratories and workshops* was distributed to all staff via the CSIRO intranet and to specific staff in hard copy.

The Divisions undertook reviews of their equipment and identified that over 50 Ultra-Violet Transilluminators had not been licensed. This was a misunderstanding of the regulations required for this type of Ultra-Violet equipment to be licensed.

As part CSIRO's action plan Divisional Chiefs were required to provide letters to the Chief Executive confirming all radiation sources had been identified and put onto the license. All known sources have since been licensed through ARPANSA. CSIRO Corporate OHS&E Office maintains a register of all known licensed radiation equipment.