

EDUCATION, SCIENCE AND TRAINING

SENATE LEGISLATION COMMITTEE - QUESTIONS ON NOTICE 2006-2007 BUDGET ESTIMATES HEARING

Outcome: 3
Output Group: 3.1 – Research Infrastructure

DEST Question No. E515_07

Senator Wong provided in writing.

Question:

Will the ARC retain the same powers to initiate inquiries on research matters under the current ARC Bill? Are there any differences in theory or in practice between the ARC's powers under the existing ARC Act and the Bill?

Answer:

Australian Research Council

The objects of the Australian Research Council Act 2001 include “the provision of high quality advice to the Minister about matters related to research” (s.3(a)(iii) of the Act). The functions of the CEO of the ARC include providing “advice to the Minister on research matters” (s.33B(c) of the Act). Undertaking this function and furthering the objects of the Act necessarily include the gathering of data and opinions, including by undertaking inquiries. The Act does not make the Minister's approval a precondition for doing this.