

EDUCATION, SCIENCE AND TRAINING

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

Outcome: 3.

Output Group: 3.1 Research Infrastructure

DEST Question No. E667_04

Senator Stott Despoja asked on 17 November 2003

Question:

- (a) What is the estimated cost of rebuilding the Mt Stromlo Observatory?
- (b) Considering the Commonwealth has allocated only \$7.3 million to the rebuilding of the Observatory, rather than the \$20 million originally promised by the Prime Minister, what is the shortfall facing ANU for the rebuilding of the Observatory?
- (c) Will DEST be providing any other grants towards the rebuilding of the Observatory?

Answer:

Rebuilding Mount Stromlo Observatory

- (a) The Australian National University (ANU) has estimated that the cost of re-building the Mt Stromlo Observatory is likely to be between \$70-\$80 million depending on the cost of re-building or restoring heritage buildings.
- (b) The ANU is still in negotiations with its insurers to determine an appropriate insurance payout and until these negotiations are finalised it is difficult to determine the extent of any shortfall.
- (c) No commitments have been made to provide any further grants, but DEST will continue to monitor the University's progress in its negotiations with its insurers.