

## EDUCATION, SCIENCE AND TRAINING

### SENATE LEGISLATION COMMITTEE - QUESTIONS ON NOTICE 2004-2005 SUPPLEMENTARY ESTIMATES HEARING

**Outcome:** 3  
**Output Group:** 3.1 Research Infrastructure

#### **DEST Question No. E362\_05**

Senator Stott Despoja provided in writing.

*Refers to DEST Question No E361\_05*

#### **Question:**

Can the Government provide a clear statement of the goals of such research, and estimates of what amount of public money was put towards its progress?

#### **Answer:**

*Nuclear matters*

The following response covers the three research agencies within the Education Science and Training Portfolio.

#### AIMS has provided the following response

The AIMS Annual Report 2003/2004 and the AIMS Research Plan 2003-2006 outline the goals of AIMS' work in the areas of Conservation and Biodiversity, Coastal Processes and Marine Biotechnology.

The research activities referred to in *E361\_05* contribute to the following core research goals:

- Determination of sedimentation rates using natural isotopes is a part of the calculation of carbon and other elemental budgets in the Marine Environment;
- Identify coral growth changes due to coral bleaching on the Great Barrier Reef;
- Reconstruct past rainfall and riverflow in Queensland;
- Growth characteristics of corals in the Arabian Gulf and responses to Gulf Wars;
- Measure the processing of materials by marine organisms to assess possible human impacts on coastal food webs;
- Develop a bioassay based on invertebrate proteins that could enable the testing of marine extracts for potential novel agrichemicals; and
- Develop a biosensor based on invertebrate proteins that could enable the diagnostic testing of marine toxins.

Revenue from Government to support this research and its outcomes amounted to \$0.7m.

#### ANSTO has provided the following response

The ANSTO Annual Report for 2003-4 (pp 24-25) provides a clear statement of the goals of research in each of its Core Business Areas. The projects referred to in *E361\_05* contribute to the following Core Business Areas:

- Nuclear Science for Environment and Sustainability: to improve our understanding of natural processes and the impact of human activity on the environment in order to identify strategies and solutions for environmental sustainability;

- Treatment of Man-made and Naturally Occurring Radioactive Substances: to develop advanced processes for treating radioactive waste;
- Sustainability and International Competitiveness of Industry: to strengthen Australia's research base and develop business opportunities; research objectives include diagnosing and treating life-threatening diseases, addressing environmental problems and improving industrial processes; and
- International Strategic Relevance of Nuclear Science and Technology: to provide technical advice to government about the nuclear fuel cycle and advice and information to international and local communities about nuclear-related issues, and to promote, for example, the implementation of security and safeguards technologies and processes to nuclear material and facilities.

One of ANSTO's six output groups directly relates to research. This is output group 3.3, for the acquisition of knowledge, through research, and its utilisation, through innovation, to advance the beneficial applications of nuclear science and technology to problems of environmental, medical, social and industrial importance. The departmental appropriation in 2004-05 for Output 3.3 is \$29,534,000 (see p193 of the 2004-05 Education Science and Training Portfolio Budget Statements).

CSIRO has provided the following response

As indicated in response to *E361\_05*, eighteen of CSIRO's twenty-one research divisions and a large number of research projects within them are covered by this question. A significant deployment of resources would be required to arrive at a comprehensive listing of relevant research projects that used nuclear materials in 2004 and the amount of public money allocated to those projects for 2004. This is not possible to achieve in the time frame available for preparing this response and it is considered that undertaking such a project would be an unreasonable diversion of resources.