

EDUCATION, SCIENCE AND TRAINING

SENATE LEGISLATION COMMITTEE - QUESTIONS ON NOTICE 2005-2006 SUPPLEMENTARY ESTIMATES HEARING

Outcome: CSIRO

Output Group: CSIRO

DEST Question No. E737_06

Senator Webber provided in writing.

Question:

Can CSIRO explain why in the last financial year, have staff numbers in Admin Support gone up by 50 and in Communications and Information by 23, whilst research projects have gone down by 9 and research scientists gone up by only 26?

Answer:

CSIRO has provided the following response.

Staff Numbers

The data in this question has been derived by subtracting the number of cessations during the 2004/05 financial year from the number of commencements. While this data is a useful indicator of the "churn" in staff numbers, it does not accurately indicate growth or contraction in overall staff numbers.

Many commencements (over 70%) were casual and fixed term employees, largely addressing short term needs such as seasonal work, temporary vacancies due to leave absences or staff movements, temporary peaks in workload and to resource projects with defined end dates.

There is no one single explanation for these particular commencements. The additional commencements are not the result of a corporate or CSIRO wide strategy or decision. They are the aggregation of individual decisions made on a position by position basis over the full financial year within each of CSIRO's 30 business units (divisions plus corporate groups).

Variations of 50 (0.7% of total staff numbers) or 23 (0.3% of total staff numbers) in commencements are negligible, particularly given the large proportion of these which are casual and fixed term.

Details of CSIRO's staffing levels for each year from June 2000 by Principal Functional Area, designation and gender are contained in tables included in the response to E744_06.