

## EDUCATION, SCIENCE AND TRAINING

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

**Outcome:** ANSTO  
**Output Group:** ANSTO

#### DEST Question No. E546\_07

Senator Wong provided in writing:

#### Question:

Please provide:

- a) An update on what stage the OPAL commissioning process is at
- b) The current timeline for operation
- c) The total cost incurred so far for OPAL
- d) The total expected cost to complete OPAL project
- e) The original budgeted cost for the new reactor
- f) Whether ARPANSA's additional licence conditions are unusual or based on ANSTO's previous hiccups with operational incidents.

#### Answer:

*ANSTO has provided the following response:*

*OPAL research reactor*

- a) The OPAL reactor is currently undergoing Stage C commissioning.
- b) We expect approval for routine operation from ARPANSA in early 2007.
- c) The budget for the OPAL project was allocated to ANSTO in 1999 dollars, and we have continued to report on that basis in order to ensure proper cost control. In 1999 dollars, the total cost incurred as the end of September 2006 is \$356.21 million.
- d) The total amount allocated for the project, including additional funding provided in the 2004 budget to meet externally driven cost factors, amounts to \$359.66 million. We expect to complete the project within that allocation.
- e) The total amount originally budgeted for the reactor project and the Neutron Beam Instruments project (which has been budgeted separately), equates to \$335.3 million in 1999 dollars.
- f) You would need to ask the CEO of ARPANSA for the reasoning behind his decision to impose the additional licence conditions on the OPAL operating licence. From ANSTO's point of view, they are generally consistent with the type of conditions imposed on other licences issued to ANSTO by ARPANSA.