

## EDUCATION, SCIENCE AND TRAINING

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

**Outcome:** 3

**Output Group:** 3.2 – Assistance for collaboration and innovation

#### DEST Question No. E557\_07

Senator Wong provided in writing.

*Refers to DEST Question No E390\_07*

#### Question:

1. Was the money spent on MNRFs in line with the BAA2 overview?
2. What was spent in each year?
3. Why does BAA 2 outline \$155 million when E390\_07 totals \$152.637 million for the MNRFs, What's the discrepancy?
4. How this \$152.6 million sits with the Funding Overview in the Backing Australia's Ability material - BAA gives total funding at \$155 million?
5. E390\_07 lists one-off funding for 6 MNRFs in 2006-07. What has happened to the other 9 MNRFs that did not receive one-off funding?
6. Have they closed?
7. Have the staff lost their jobs?
8. What has happened to the facilities at each?
9. What happened to the staff?
10. Will they receive NCRIS funding?
11. If some of them do receive NCRIS funding, what happens to them until the money comes through?
12. Please give a report on each of the 9 that did not receive one-off funding.

#### Answer:

##### *Funding for Major National Research Facilities Programme (MNRF)*

1. The funding profile included in the BAA 2 funding table set out below was re-profiled in the 2002-03 Additional Estimates to better reflect the funding needs of the facilities.

2001-02	2002-03	2003-04	2004-05	2005-06
\$m	\$m	\$m	\$m	\$m
5.0	20.0	30.0	50.0	50.0

The funding of \$155 million included Administered payments totalling \$150.85 million reflected in fixed price contracts and Departmental expenses of \$4.15 million spread across the five year period.

2. Total administered payments made to facilities each year are set out in the following table:

2001-02	2002-03	2003-04	2004-05	2005-06	Total
\$m	\$m	\$m	\$m	\$m	\$m
4.517	25.033	38.520	42.259	42.308	\$152.637

3. The Administered payments made to facilities included \$150.85 million in fixed price amounts plus an additional \$1.787 million available from indexation.

4. See answers (1, 2 and 3).
5. The nine MNRFs that did not receive one-off NCRIS funding are all still operating post the 2005-06 financial year. The Deeds of Agreement signed between the Commonwealth and each of the 15 facilities make it clear that funding under the Major National Research Facilities Programme was only provided until 2005-06. In addition, the Deed requires each facility to make endeavours to reasonably ensure the long term maintenance and viability of the facility through appropriate financial and administrative arrangements with third parties.
6. No.
7. The Department is not in a position to provide actual staffing details.
8. See answer (5).
9. See answer (7).
10. A number of MNRFs include facilities and equipment directly relevant to the priority capabilities identified in the NCRIS Roadmap (which will be the focus of NCRIS funding). Some of the new national facilities to be developed under NCRIS are likely to incorporate these facilities and equipment and will therefore continue to be funded in this new form. On 27 November 2006 the Minister announced funding of \$500 million for proposals relating to the nine priority capabilities identified in the NCRIS Roadmap for development in 2006. In addition, the Minister allocated funding for the development of a further three capabilities. MNRFs not incorporated into the new national facilities will be subject to the arrangements provided for in their original funding agreements.

As noted in answer to E558\_07, DEST identified six MNRFs to receive the one-off funding to provide funding continuity until NCRIS investments plans were completed and approved. However two MNRFs potentially directly relevant to Roadmap capabilities (the Australian Synchrotron Research Program and Gemini and Square Kilometre Array) did not require one-off funding.

11. All MNRFs that might potentially be incorporated into NCRIS facilities are expected to have sufficient operating funds. As noted in answer (5), the Deed requires each facility to make endeavours to reasonably ensure the long term maintenance and viability of the facility through appropriate financial and administrative arrangements with third parties.
12. See answers (5, 6, 10 and 11).