

**Opening Statement – CSIRO Chief Executive
Senate Additional Estimates Hearing – 11 February 2016**

You will no doubt be aware of the strategic shift for CSIRO announced in our strategy last year and with more details just over a week ago.

As there has been some misreporting in relation to this matter, I'd like to put on the record the facts as they currently stand.

In our strategy 2020, we recognise that the Australian economy is in transition – we must respond, what carried us in the past can't carry us into the future. The future will be defined by science led innovation which will reinvent existing industries and create new ones to maintain Australia's prosperity.

CSIRO does research for a purpose. We are a big mission directed organisation created to deliver science and solutions to solve the biggest challenges facing Australia.

On Thursday last week I announced the outcomes of the latest review of our science investments in order to respond to our new Innovation Catalyst strategy. But it's more than just CSIRO's own strategy, it is responding to the nine National Science and Research Priorities, which include a priority to:

Build Australia's capacity to respond to environmental change and integrate research outcomes from biological, physical, social and economic systems.

This change is a refresh and redirection of capability in CSIRO, not a cut to staffing levels. After this process over 2 Financial Years our number of team members should be the same or slightly higher. But, worst case is that up to 350 people could be affected and if they can't be redeployed or reskilled, they will leave.

We are trying to be a more open organisation – that is why we crowdsourced our strategy – we communicated to our team as soon as we confirmed people's jobs could be affected. Because this affects people's lives I respectfully ask you to be patient with us while we work through the detail to be fair to those affected.

I must stress that this announcement marked the start of this journey, moving from setting the high level strategic science priorities as a first phase, to working out the detail of how to execute this with our staff and stakeholders in its second phase, and then executing the changes.

We are currently in the second phase of this process – consulting with our staff and our stakeholders in order to resolve the details, a process which we are committed to undertaking. Until this is complete and precise information is known, speculating on potential outcomes is not fair to our staff.