

Economics Legislation Committee
ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON NOTICE
Industry, Innovation and Science Portfolio
2016-17 Supplementary Budget Estimates
20 October 2016

DEPARTMENT: DEPARTMENT OF INDUSTRY, INNOVATION AND SCIENCE

TOPIC: National Science, Technology and Research Committee

REFERENCE: Written Question – Senator Carr

QUESTION No.: SI-112

1. What is the membership of the National Science, Technology and Research Committee?
2. How often as the National Science, Technology and Research Committee met in 2015 and 2016? On what dates?
3. What topics were discussed at these meetings?
4. Who does this body report to?
5. Is this body involved in the development of an international science engagement strategy? If so who has been consulted and what is the timeline for this work?

ANSWER

1. The National Science, Technology and Research Committee (NSTRC) is the officials level body that supports the work of the Commonwealth Science Council. Membership of the NSTRC is drawn from senior levels of Commonwealth departments and agencies, namely:
 - Australia's Chief Scientist (Chair)
 - Department of Industry, Innovation and Science (Deputy Chair)
 - Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet
 - Department of Education and Training
 - Department of Health
 - Department of Environment
 - Department of Agriculture and Water Resources
 - Department of Defence
 - CEO of the Australian Research Council
 - CEO of the National Health and Medical Research Council
 - CEO of the Commonwealth Scientific and Industrial Research Organisation
 - CEO of the Office of Innovation and Science Australia
 - CEO of the Australian Nuclear Science and Technology Organisation
 - CEO of Geoscience Australia
 - CEO of the Australian Centre for International Agricultural Research
 - CEO of the Bureau of Meteorology
 - CEO of the Australian Institute of Marine Science.

Deputy Secretaries of other departments with an interest or direct role in funding or supporting science and research can be co-opted as the agenda requires.

2. The NSTRC has met on six occasions since its inception - four times in 2015 and twice in 2016. The dates of these meetings are:
 - 20 February 2015
 - 11 June 2015
 - 19 August 2015
 - 17 November 2015
 - 7 June 2016
 - 16 November 2016

3. Discussion at the meetings covered:
 - National Science and Research Priorities
 - Chief Scientist's report on Science, technology, engineering and mathematics: Australia's Future, and strategies to address its recommendations
 - Securing Australia's Future reports developed by ACOLA
 - Outcomes from Commonwealth Science Council meetings
 - General updates from NSTRC members on science and research activities.

4. The NSTRC reports directly to the Commonwealth Science Council, which is chaired by the Prime Minister.

5. No. The Australian Government's approach to international science engagement is outlined in the Global Innovation Strategy.