

Senate Standing Committee on Environment and Communications
Legislation Committee
Answers to questions on notice
Environment portfolio

Question No: 17

Hearing: Supplementary Budget Estimates

Outcome: Outcome 3

Programme: Australian Antarctic Division

Topic: AAD Staffing

Hansard Page: 37

Question Date: 18 November 2013

Question Type: Spoken

Senator Urquhart asked:

Senator URQUHART: I am going to have another crack at this one. This is to do with the economic growth plan for Tasmania again. It seeks to ensure that Hobart is a world centre for Antarctic research and capabilities. Could you outline if scientific staff at the Antarctic Division in Tasmania have been affected by the direction to not re-engage temporary staff. Could you outline the levels of these positions. And what effect will that decision have on ensuring that Hobart is a world centre for Antarctic research and capabilities?

Dr Fleming: The detail of that question I can take on notice, but, as I have said, we are part of the whole-of-government Public Service and, as the secretary has said, we are part of the department. So the things that you speak about will affect the AAD, but the government has committed to re-fund the cooperative research centre based in Hobart, with \$25 million over five years. The government has also committed to fund a new centre for Antarctic and Southern Ocean research, with \$24 million over three years. That is a significant injection of funds into the science program based in Hobart. We are in discussions with the university, the CSIRO and the CRC about that. The AAD is on the CRC board and the board will have discussions in the next month or two about the science program that will be continuing when the CRC is re-funded next 1 July. It is a very exciting program. So there is no prospect of Hobart being diminished as a scientific centre for Antarctic and Southern Ocean research. In fact, it is likely to grow.

Answer:

The Government has established a process for filling temporary vacancies and the Australian Antarctic Division has been using that process.