

## **Economics Legislation Committee**

The committee met on Thursday, 23 October 2014 from 9 am to 10.49 pm.

The committee called the department and agencies of the Industry portfolio, including the Australian Institute of Marine Science (AIMS), Australian Nuclear Science and Technology Organisation (ANSTO), Australian Skills Quality Authority (ASQA), Commonwealth Scientific and Industrial Research Organisation (CSIRO), IP Australia and the Office of the Chief Scientist.

Among other issues, the following matters were discussed:

- various matters relating to ANSTO, including nuclear waste storage, synchrotron funding and the beneficial work of the synchrotron, nuclear fusion developments overseas, the memorandum of understanding between the Australian National University and ANSTO, and ANSTO's collaboration with other organisations
- Dr Megan Clark's leadership and contribution to the CSIRO and to science in Australia, and the selection process for the new CEO of CSIRO
- the CSIRO's RV Investigator vessel
- CSIRO staff morale
- CSIRO research into Ebola and funding for biosecurity and infectious diseases
- funding for AIMS's various research programs
- impact of dredging and dumping on the Great Barrier Reef and AIMS's research reports on coral mortality
- the number of visitors to the Chief Scientist's website
- the Chief Scientist's involvement in the annual innovation report produced by the Department of Industry
- various matters relating to ASQA, including private and community training colleges, an investigation into possible breaches of standards, ASQA's legislative authority to deal with those falsely claiming to be registered training organisations, new standards requiring disclosure from training providers to better protect students, compensation for students and ASQA's funding arrangements
- the Federal Court's gene patent decision currently under appeal to the High Court
- the intellectual property bill currently before the Parliament and the inclusion of crown use provisions
- conference sponsorship and governance arrangements
- the definition of competitiveness
- the research and development tax incentive
- matters relating to Cooperative Research Centre (CRC) programs
- the Square Kilometre Array (SKA) telescope project
- assistance for reskilling workers in the automotive industry and the automotive diversification program

- the value of the Australian Renewable Energy Agency's (ARENA) managed projects and contingency plans for ARENA's projects should the agency be abolished
- an update on the anti-dumping reform package and the work of the Anti-Dumping Commission.