



Senate Economics Legislation Committee

Budget Estimates Hearings 19-29 October 2020

Opening Statement

ANSTO

as read by Shaun Jenkinson, Acting Chief Executive Officer

Thank you chair and committee members.

It is a privilege to represent ANSTO before this committee for the first time, in my role as Acting Chief Executive Officer. Many on the committee would be familiar with Dr Adi Paterson, ANSTO's CEO. Dr Paterson was our CEO for over a decade, and I am sure you became used to seeing him in this chair. I know that he always appreciated the opportunity to engage with this committee over the years. Dr Paterson recently resigned from his role at ANSTO, and I would like to take the opportunity to acknowledge his tireless and forward-thinking leadership of the organisation and recognise the important connections he had with ANSTO staff.

COVID-19 is at the forefront of our nation's collective consciousness for good reason; it is one of the greatest health and economic challenges many of us will see in our lifetime. Of particular relevance to ANSTO, COVID-19 has presented unique challenges to the global supply of nuclear medicines. I can report that, as a result of Australia's domestic nuclear medicine manufacturing capability, ANSTO was able to



maintain nuclear medicine supply for Australian patients during the worst of the COVID-19 pandemic.

As a research organisation, ANSTO is pleased to provide preferential access at the Australian Synchrotron to researchers seeking to understand the nature of the virus and develop potential treatments.

Most notably, researchers from Monash University have used the Australian Synchrotron to construct the molecular structures of COVID-19 proteins in a clear 3D image. By understanding the positions of important components of these proteins, researchers can develop drugs that bind to these proteins. It is like designing a key for a lock, you need to know the dimensions of the keyhole. This information has now been made available to other researchers who are working on a vaccine or therapy.

I look forward to taking your questions.