

Joint Standing Committee on the National Capital and External Territories

Australia's Antarctic Territory – 19 October 2017

ANSWER TO QUESTION ON NOTICE

Department of Defence

Topic: JSCNCET - Australia's Antarctic Territory Q2 - Op Southern Discovery

Question reference number: 2

Senator: McCarthy, Malarndirri

Type of question: 19 October 2017, Hansard Page

Date set by the committee for the return of answer: 10 November 2017

Question: Dr Sawczak: We won't really know what AAD's logistical requirements will be in the wake of a decision to go ahead with the year-round aviation access. They might well ameliorate their requirements over the course of a year. Of course, the attraction of air access is speed—much faster than an icebreaker. We will make an assessment in due course. We do have Operation Southern Discovery, which is a four-year program currently funded under the white paper, and we will reassess that in the light of our cooperation with AAD down the track.

Senator McCARTHY: When does that four-year program end?

Dr Sawczak: 2021—let me check that.

Senator McCARTHY: Perhaps you could take that on notice.

Dr Sawczak: I will take it on notice.

Answer:

Operation SOUTHERN DISCOVERY commenced on 1 July 2016 to provide Australian Defence Force support to Australia's whole-of-government activities in the Antarctic region. There is no end date for Operation SOUTHERN DISCOVERY. Operation SOUTHERN DISCOVERY occurs annually and is primarily – although not exclusively – for support during each Austral summer period (i.e. November to March).