

**Economics Legislation Committee**  
**ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON NOTICE**  
Industry and Science Portfolio  
Additional Estimates 2014-15  
26 February 2015

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**AGENCY/DEPARTMENT:** DEPARTMENT OF INDUSTRY AND SCIENCE

**TOPIC:** Square Kilometre Array

**REFERENCE:** Question on Notice – Senator Carr

**QUESTION No.:** AI-69

Is there a critical date for the Australian Government to commit to the next phase of funding for the international project? If so, is the required funding already available in the forward estimates?

**ANSWER**

There is no specific date for a funding commitment to be made to the next phase of the Square Kilometre Array (SKA) project. The SKA Board recently requested that Australia and South Africa, as the telescope host countries, invite other governments to participate in a negotiation process which would define the project in the detail needed for prospective partner governments to make funding decisions. The end result will be a treaty level agreement between the partners that will specify funding commitments. At that point the Australian Government, and other governments, would need to consider whether to accept and ratify the terms of the treaty as per their domestic processes.

Funding for the next phase of the SKA is not currently in the forward estimates. As the negotiation process is expected to take at least until the end of 2015, it is envisaged that the matter might be ready for consideration in the context of the 2016-17 Budget.