

Economics Legislation Committee
ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON NOTICE
Industry, Innovation and Science Portfolio
2016 - 2017 Additional Estimates
2 March 2017

AGENCY: COMMONWEALTH SCIENTIFIC AND INDUSTRIAL RESEARCH ORGANISATION

TOPIC: Number of Executives

REFERENCE: Question on Notice (Hansard, 2 March 2017, page 71-72)

QUESTION No.: AI-18

Senator KIM CARR: Thank you very much. I know it takes a long time to get here, but I wanted to know what the figure was.

You have indicated in your annual report that there has been a change in the number of executives. In 2015-16 there were 20 executives reported on 121 of the report. In 2012-13 there were 33 members. That is correct?

Ms Bennett: Correct.

Senator KIM CARR: Can you account for the change in the numbers?

Ms Bennett: Yes. In the 2013-14 year, under the definitions that were required, which is leaders who essentially have influence in management control over the organisation, CSIRO included the executive, the personnel who were formerly known as flagship directors and the personnel formerly known as chiefs of divisions, whereas in the last annual report, in 2015-16, we determined that an equivalent of that definition would have been the executive and the business unit directors of the science business units. Hence the difference.

Senator KIM CARR: So you have changed the definition?

Ms Bennett: We have not changed the definition. We believe that we are being true to the definition of those who control. As you know, we do not have flagships and chiefs of staff anymore. We have integrated those. Hence the difference.

Senator KIM CARR: Thank you. So is it fair to say, like with like, that the number of executives has changed?

Ms Bennett: Like for like, we have a smaller number with broader responsibilities.

Senator KIM CARR: What is the difference? You say, like for like, there are fewer. How many fewer?

Ms Bennett: The executive team has moved down by four, and therefore the balance of the 13 would be nine, which is essentially the amalgamation of the flagship director and the chief of division roles into now the business unit director roles.

Senator KIM CARR: Of that group that have actually declined in number—that is, left the organisation—how many—

Ms Bennett: Senator, if I may: many of the chiefs of divisions did not leave the organisation. The roles were amalgamated and—

Senator KIM CARR: Mr Wannias did though, didn't he?

Ms Bennett: A few may have done, but the roles of what were then the chiefs have now become, in many instances, the deputy of the business unit and they, in particular, take up a role in deep science.

Senator KIM CARR: Can you give me a number for who actually left?

Ms Bennett: I would not be able to say which chiefs—

Mr Roy: Just to clarify, over what period of time?

Senator KIM CARR: Over the past two years.

Mr Roy: We would have to take that on notice.

Senator KIM CARR: Can you tell me how many of those executives were offered a new contract or

an extension on their existing contract?

Mr Roy: I am just trying to follow the question, Senator.

Senator KIM CARR: How many people notified you that they wanted to go and then were offered an extension on their contract or a new contract, but still chose to leave?

Ms Bennett: Of this executive management group?

Mr Roy: I do not recall cases of that nature, but we will look—

Senator KIM CARR: So it did not happen?

Mr Roy: I am saying I do not recall cases of that nature.

Senator KIM CARR: Would you like to take that on notice?

Mr Roy: We will take it on notice.

Senator KIM CARR: If you could check the records for that, that would be appreciated.

Mr Roy: We will.

ANSWER

Seven senior executives have left CSIRO since 2015. Of those, none were offered a new contract, or an extension on their existing contract.