

**Economics Legislation Committee**  
ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON NOTICE  
Industry and Science Portfolio  
Budget Estimates Hearing 2015-16  
3 and 4 June 2015

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**AGENCY/DEPARTMENT:** Commonwealth Scientific and Industrial Research Organisation (CSIRO)

**TOPIC:** Beef Roads – CSIRO’s involvement

**REFERENCE:** Question on Notice (Hansard, 3 June 2015, page 91-92)

**QUESTION No.:** BI-10

**Senator CANAVAN:** Is it a tool that—if a local government or an industry association wants to advocate for a particular road or investment under this \$100 million program—they could come to you and say, 'We're going to work to get the information from this tool to help us build our case to government'?

**Mr Roy:** The importance here is that it provides an objective assessment as to the most optimal route to minimise the cost. We are open to approaches from any stakeholders in order to assist them with challenges that they have.

**Senator CANAVAN:** Would you charge them for that?

**Mr Roy:** We would have to understand what outcome they were trying to achieve and who was going to benefit from that outcome, and then we would have a discussion about where the value is created and who should share that value.

**Senator CANAVAN:** My understanding is that you used a lot of the NLIS data from the beef industry to build this model, and that was the intellectual property of the MLA or the data company of MLA. Have they got some equity in this? Do they have the ability to use this tool at no cost? How did that IP transfer—

**Mr Roy:** I do not have that information.

**Senator CANAVAN:** Could you take that on notice?

**Dr Marshall:** We will take it on notice.

## ANSWER

CSIRO will be using the TRANSIT tool to advise government and inform infrastructure investment decisions. CSIRO may also be approached to apply the TRANSIT tool to help build particular industry or community cases for government investment. As implementation arrangements for the Beef Roads initiative and the TRANSIT tool’s contribution to it are finalised, we will work to manage any potential conflict this might generate, whilst endeavouring to maintain maximum public access to the tool.

CSIRO owns the intellectual property (IP) embodied in the TRANSIT tool, but has granted a perpetual royalty free license to those that co-invested with CSIRO in its development (the Australian Government and northern jurisdictions). It is available for public use but, because it currently requires CSIRO expertise to run, CSIRO usually seeks to recover the variable costs of this task, which are not prohibitive. A user-friendly version is currently being developed for direct use by non-experts.

An earlier and now non-existent version of TRANSIT used NLIS data. The existing version of TRANSIT does not use NLIS data in any way, hence MLA have no equity or IP in TRANSIT and no IP transfer was required.