

**Economics Legislation Committee**  
ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON NOTICE  
Industry, Innovation and Science Portfolio  
2015-16 Supplementary Budget Estimates Hearing  
22 October 2015

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**DEPARTMENT:** DEPARTMENT OF INDUSTRY, INNOVATION AND SCIENCE

**TOPIC:** Quadrennium agreement

**REFERENCE:** Question on Notice (Hansard, 22 October 2015, page 65)

**QUESTION No.:** SI-15

**Senator KIM CARR:** The quadrennium agreement is non-binding? The strategy agreement or the quadrennium agreement?

**Ms Beauchamp:** The quadrennium agreement.

**Senator KIM CARR:** It is non-binding?

**Ms Beauchamp:** We are waiting for finalisation of that plan.

**Senator KIM CARR:** The budget is non-binding?

**Ms Beauchamp:** The budget is binding, of course, through the budget process.

**Senator KIM CARR:** The funding agreement you are saying is non-binding?

**Ms Beauchamp:** It is a non-legally-binding document.

**Senator KIM CARR:** So it is not worth a dob of glue?

**Ms Beauchamp:** Sorry, Senator: the budget itself is binding and we are in the process of considering further agreements based on the outcomes of the strategic planning exercise that CSIRO has just been through.

**Senator KIM CARR:** Madam Secretary, that does not sound like a very specific line of inquiry. It is like trying to grab smoke with this government, is it not?

**Ms Beauchamp:** I think the budget provides a certainty in funding for CSIRO over the forward estimates and we are in the process of providing advice to the government and to the minister on the next quadrennium funding agreement.

**Senator KIM CARR:** So when will it be concluded?

**Ms Beauchamp:** I will have to take that on notice.

**ANSWER**

CSIRO's 2011-15 Quadrennial Funding Agreement (QFA) expired on 30 June 2015. In May 2015 the Hon Ian Macfarlane MP, former Minister for Industry and Science and CSIRO agreed to defer a new QFA for one year so that a new QFA could be aligned with and respond to CSIRO's new strategy which was released in late July 2015.

The Background of the 2011-15 QFA states: 'The parties do not intend this QFA to be legally enforceable.'

Discussions are ongoing between the Department of Industry, Innovation and Science and CSIRO regarding the development of a new QFA. It is envisaged that the new QFA would take effect in mid-2016.