

Economics Legislation Committee
ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON NOTICE
Industry, Innovation and Science Portfolio
2016-17 Supplementary Budget Estimates
20 October 2016

AGENCY: GEOSCIENCE AUSTRALIA

TOPIC: Exploring for the Future programme:

REFERENCE: Written Question – Senator Ketter

QUESTION No.: SI-135

1. How much funding was cut from Geoscience Australia in the 2014-15 Budget?
2. What effect has this had on the delivery of Geoscience Australia's programs?
3. What has that reduction meant to the workload of the agency?
4. How much will Geoscience Australia receive under the Exploring for the Future program?
5. Is that \$100 million over four years from 2016-17?
6. Please provide a breakdown of much Geoscience Australia will receive each year over the forward estimates?
7. What can this allocated funding be used for?
8. The \$100 million allocated to the Exploring for the Future program over the next four years doesn't make up for the 2014 budget cut, does it?

ANSWER

1. The total reduction in funding for Geoscience Australia in the 2014-15 Budget was \$11.305 million over four years, reflecting whole of government savings measures.
2. The reduction has had some impact on the number of Commonwealth funded Geoscience Australia programs.
3. The reduction has had some impact on capacity in the agency.
4. \$100.5 million over 4 years (refer to page 149 of the 2016-17 Industry, Innovation and Science Portfolio Budget Statements).
5. Yes (refer to page 149 of the 2016-17 Industry, Innovation and Science Portfolio Budget Statements).
6. The breakdown is provided on page 149 of the 2016-17 Industry, Innovation and Science Portfolio Budget Statements.
7. The Australian Government is providing \$100 million over four years for the *Exploring for the Future* programme which can be used to fund data acquisition suppliers and a range of contract staff. It will be used to produce:

- new precompetitive geoscience information that will boost exploration investment by assisting industry to better target areas likely to contain the next major oil, gas and mineral deposits;
 - a thorough assessment of groundwater resources; and
 - an analysis of the salinity risk for potential agricultural areas.
8. The funding provided for the *Exploring for the Future* budget measure significantly exceeds the reduction in funding in the 2014-15 Budget as a result of whole of government savings measures.