

Senate Committee: Education and Employment

**QUESTION ON NOTICE
Budget Estimates 2015 - 2016**

Outcome: Higher Education Research and International

Department of Education and Training Question No. SQ15-000519

Senator Carr, Kim provided in writing

Australia Consensus Centre

Question

In regards to the Australian Consensus Centre program:

- (a) If the establishment of the program was a decision in the 2014-15 budget, why was its establishment not reported in the budget papers or the Departmental portfolio budget statement?
- (b) What is the rationale for Commonwealth funding for the Australian Consensus Centre
- (c) Has any of the allocated \$4.4 million been spent? If so, what on?
- (d) What milestones or outcomes will the department expect from the Australian Consensus Centre?
- (e) Are these milestones or outcomes reflected in the funding agreement with the University of Western Australia?
- (f) What is the form of the arrangement with the Copenhagen Consensus Centre - a funding agreement, MOU or other?

Answer

- (a) The Government's decision to establish a Consensus Centre in Australia was taken in the 2014-15 Budget process. The Portfolio Additional Estimate Statements (PAES) 2014-15 includes funding for the Australia Consensus (refer also SQ15-000347).
- (b) The Government is funding the Australia Consensus Centre to bring the Copenhagen Consensus Centre methodology to Australia.
- (c) No payments from the \$4 million (GST exclusive) allocation for the Australia Consensus Centre have yet been made by the Department of Education and Training (as at 29 June 2015).
- (d,e) The milestones/outcomes, as detailed in the funding agreement with the University of Western Australia, were the establishment of the Australia Consensus Centre and its advisory board and the delivery of reports to the Australian Government providing outcomes and recommendations from three activities: the Smarter UN Post-2015 Development Targets project; the Global Consensus 2016 project and the Australian Prosperity Consensus 2016 project (refer also SQ15-000358).
- (f) UWA and the Copenhagen Consensus Centre entered into a Memorandum of Understanding on 1 April 2015 for the purposes of establishing the Australia Consensus Centre at UWA. The Commonwealth of Australia is not a party to that agreement.