

**Senate Standing Committee on Economics**  
**ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON NOTICE**  
Innovation, Industry, Science and Research Portfolio  
Additional Estimates Hearing  
26 February 2009

---

**AGENCY/DEPARTMENT:** INNOVATION, INDUSTRY, SCIENCE AND RESEARCH

**TOPIC:** ICT Industry

**REFERENCE:** Written Question – Senator Abetz

**QUESTION No.:** AI-36

Can you confirm for me that the IT policy section in the department is handled by the ICT Industry Development section of the Aerospace, Defence and ICT branch of the Manufacturing Division of the Department of Innovation, Industry, Science and Research?

How many staff and where in DIISR are dedicated to “information and communications technology industry development”?

Why is ICT section within the manufacturing division?

What new committees/reviews on ICT has the Government commissioned?

**ANSWER**

The ICT Industry Development Section is part of the Competitive Industries Branch of the Manufacturing Division.

The ICT Industry Development Section has six permanent staff members. The ICT Industry Development Section works closely with other areas within the Department, including the Science and Research Division, the Innovation Division, the Small Business and Industry Policy and e-Business Divisions as well as portfolio agencies such as the Australian Research Council (ARC) and the CSIRO. The Section also works with the Australian Government Information Management Office (AGIMO) and with areas of the Department of Broadband, Communications and the Digital Economy (DBCDE) for a joint approach on ICT matters within the Government. This includes working through the Online and Communications Council of CoAG on ICT industry development issues across jurisdictions.

Given that ICT is an enabler across the economy as well as an important industry in its own right the ICT Industry Development Section could have been located within a number of the Divisions of the Department. However, important issues in deciding the location included the Division's responsibility for Industry Innovation Councils and the Branch's expertise in industry development aspects of government procurement.

Because of its nature as an enabling technology and its role in innovation, a number of reviews have an impact on ICT, including the Review of the National Innovation System (Cutler Review); the Review of the Australian Government's Use of Information and Communication Technology (the Gershon Review); and the Review of National ICT Australia (NICTA Review). The Minister has also announced the Government's innovation council strategy. To date three innovation councils have been established. Under this initiative, the Minister is actively considering the establishment of an IT Innovation Council to provide him with strategic advice on innovation priorities for the sector and to champion IT-using innovation for economic, social and environmental objectives.