

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

AGENCY/DEPARTMENT: COMMONWEALTH SCIENTIFIC AND INDUSTRIAL RESEARCH ORGANISATION

TOPIC: Bee Research

REFERENCE: Question on Notice (Hansard 26 February 2009, E125)

QUESTION No.: AI-63

Senator ABETZ—...What about bee health?

Mr Whelan—We are doing research on that issue.

Senator ABETZ—Any research on the possibility of importing queen bees into Australia?

Dr Daly—We certainly do work on bee health. I am not aware of research about importation of queen bees. I would have to take that on notice.

Senator ABETZ—If you could, and if you could give me a summary as to the sort of work that is being done in that area.

ANSWER

CSIRO is not engaging in any research on the possibility of importing queen bees into Australia.

CSIRO focuses on honey bee health and biosecurity, linked to Australia's pollination services.

CSIRO has engaged closely with both the Rural Industries Research and Development Corporation and Horticulture Australia Limited to help characterise the threat and shape the development of Australia's response to biosecurity threats to pollination.

CSIRO is working closely with the Australian Centre for International Agricultural Research and the Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry in developing a response to the recent detection of a new Varroa mite in Papua New Guinea. The plan under development seeks to identify the critical issues that need addressing and to identify the key areas of research and the key researchers best placed to respond. This planning has so far seen the establishment of two research activities.