

Economics Legislation Committee
ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON NOTICE
Industry, Innovation, Science, Research and Tertiary Education Portfolio
Budget Estimates Hearing 2012-13
28 and 29 May 2012

AGENCY/DEPARTMENT: DEPARTMENT OF INDUSTRY, INNOVATION, SCIENCE, RESEARCH AND TERTIARY EDUCATION

TOPIC: Increasing maths and science participation in schools and universities

REFERENCE: Written Question – Senator Edwards

QUESTION No.: BI-114

With reference to mathematics and science – increasing participation in schools and universities (Budget Paper Number 2 p 230-231):

1. What measures of success does the Department have in place to assess whether the \$54 million has been effective?
2. How many additional students does the Department anticipate will get involved in mathematics and science as a result of these measures?
3. Of the \$54 million over four years, how much will be devoted to increasing enrolments in food and agricultural sciences and how exactly will this be spent?
4. How much is to be spent in South Australian schools and universities?
5. Is any funding being directed toward the University of Adelaide's Waite and Roseworthy institutions?
6. According to the Budget paper No. 2, page 230, \$4.3 million is to be spent over four years to create a National Mathematics and Science Education and Industry Adviser. Is the spending of that \$4.3 million to be spent at that Adviser's sole discretion?
7. What exactly is this Adviser's charter?
8. How many staff are to be employed with this money?

ANSWER

1. The \$54 million science and maths package provides for eight separate measures:
 - \$10.9 million for innovative delivery of maths and science teaching programs for prospective teachers;
 - \$3 million for national support and advice for teachers, including funding for a national advisory and linking service and online professional development and support material;
 - \$5 million for the Science Connections program;
 - \$20 million to establish the Australian Maths and Science Partnerships Program;
 - \$2 million for the Australian Mathematical Sciences Institute;
 - \$6.5 million for expanding the Science Partnerships: Scientists and Mathematicians in Schools program;
 - \$2.4 million to support Australian students' participation in the international Science and Mathematics Olympiads.
 - \$4.3 million for a National Mathematics and Science Education and Industry Adviser, within the Office of the Chief Scientist.

Separate performance indicators will be developed for each measure. The indicators will relate to the specific objectives of each measure.

In addition, the new National Mathematics and Science Education and Industry Adviser will be charged with providing advice and guidance on the implementation of the package. S/he will provide an annual report to Government, which is expected to include information about the outcomes of specific initiatives.

2. There is no overall target associated with the package, however, funding to the Australian Mathematical Sciences Institute for scholarships and a range of intensive short courses is expected to support around 300 students per year.

The *Australian Maths and Science Partnerships Program* and for the *Enhancing the quality of maths and science teacher training initiative* will also result in an increase in the number of students getting involved in maths and science, but it is difficult to give a precise estimate because of the nature of these initiatives. For example, the Australian Maths and Science Partnership Program will provide grants to support innovative partnerships between universities and schools. The nature of proposals supported, including their scope and reach, will ultimately influence students' decisions to study maths and science in Years 11 and 12 and beyond.

3. The measures do not specifically target enrolments in food and agricultural sciences. However, opportunities exist through a number of the measures for funding to be allocated to projects related to food and agricultural sciences.
4. South Australian schools and universities will be able to apply for funding along with schools and universities from other states and territories. There are no geographically-based allocations or targets.
5. The University of Adelaide will be able to apply for funding under the measures for which it is eligible.
6. The Adviser will work with the Chief Scientist in developing a forward work program to maximise the impact of available funds.
7. The Adviser's key role will be to champion the role of mathematics, science and statistics across education and industry. A more detailed role statement is being developed.
8. The allocated funding will be used to support the Adviser's activities, and may also be used for staffing. Staffing decisions will follow development of the forward work program.