

Senate Standing Committee on Economics
ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON NOTICE
Innovation, Industry, Science and Research Portfolio
Supplementary Budget Estimates 2011-2012
19 October 2011

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

TOPIC: INSPIRING AUSTRALIA PROGRAM

REFERENCE: Written Question – Senator Colbeck

QUESTION No.: SI-49

- a) When did the Government first provide funding to the Science and Engineering Challenge? And what has been the amount of funding to the Challenge over each of the past three financial years?
- b) How many schools and school students directly participated in each of the years of the Science and Engineering Challenge?
- c) When was information about the cut to funding for the program first made publicly available by the Government, and how?
- d) What is being done with the savings achieved from cutting this program – have they been returned to consolidated revenue, or are they being spent on alternative and/or replacement science programs and, if so, which ones?

ANSWER

- a) Government first provided funding for the Science and Engineering Challenge in 2004. The amount of funding for each of the last three financial years has been as follows:
 - o 2008-09 \$340,000;
 - o 2009-10 \$410,000; and
 - o 2010-11 \$600,000 (GST excl).

b)

Year	Students	Schools
2011 to 30 June	17,258	623
2010	21,539	792
2009	19,136	697
2008	17,400	640
2007	15,500	550
2006	12,500	400
2005	10,000	330
2004	6,000	200

- c) The Science and Engineering Challenge does not have ongoing funding. The funding agreement for the project provided \$1.1 million (GST incl) through the Science Connection program. All of this funding has been paid to the recipient. The funding agreement end date is 30 March 2012, with the final report due on 28 February 2012. The end date of the

funding agreement was made known and agreed by the Commonwealth and the recipient at the time of signing the funding agreement on 22 January 2010. The funding agreement has not been terminated and the project is proceeding as agreed by the parties. Therefore, as there has been no cut to funding, there was no official public announcement regarding this.

- d) The program does not have ongoing funding therefore there are no savings to be returned to consolidated revenue (SCOPE funding was fully allocated and spent in line with SCOPE funding guidelines).