EDUCATION, SCIENCE AND TRAINING

SENATE LEGISLATION COMMITTEE - QUESTIONS ON NOTICE
2006-07 BUDGET ESTIMATES HEARINGS

Outcome: All
Output Group: All

DEST Question No. E414-07

Senator Wong provided in writing.

Refers to DEST Question No. E999_04 and E852_05

Question:

Please provide an update to the following:

    d.   E852_05

Answer:

Question E414_07 seek a further update to questions E852_05 concerning details of DEST's administered programmes (see attached). The administered programme information is provided by Outcome and Output, mirroring Appendix 1, 2 and 3 (pages 115 to 117) of DEST's 2006-07 Portfolio Budget Statement.

The 2006-07 Budget and the forward year information will be as at the 2006-07 Budget and the actual outcome will be as at the end of the 2005-06 financial year as included in DEST's Financial Statements.

DEST does not attribute Departmental expenses to individual programmes so the financial figures provided by programmes are for Administered expenses only.

Explanations have been provided for major variances between 2005-06 Budget and Final outcome recognising that minor variations are common due to the cash limited nature of appropriations and flexibilities available through accrual based budgeting.

Australian Government

**Department of Education,
Science and Training**

Department of Education, Science & Training

Response to Senate Estimate Committee Question E414-07

Programmes

Administered Outcome 3
Output 3.1

Output 3.2

Output 3.3

Reportable Programme: *Schools General Recurrent Grants*

Programme description

The General Recurrent Grants programme provides supplementary funding to assist in the achievement of specific objectives agreed by the Commonwealth and the States/Territories.

Policy Objective

The specific objective for the General Recurrent Grants Programme is to help government and non-government schools with the recurrent costs of school education so that they can offer students educational programmes directed towards the achievement of the Australian Government's priorities for schooling.

Finishing Date

The programme is ongoing.

Evaluation

Evaluations of the GRG programme were conducted in 1996 and 1998.

A review was undertaken for the continuation of programs under the Schools Assistance Act during the Specific Purpose Payments (SPP) renegotiation process for the 2005-2008 quadrennium agreement.

Appropriation source

Schools Assistance (Learning Together - Achievement Through Choice and Opportunity) Act 2004

Funding and Forward Estimates

Government

	2005-06 $'000	2006-07 $'000	2007-08 $'000	2008-09 $'000	2009-10 $'000
Funding	1,693,642	1,835,286	1,960,259	2,081,155	2,207,292

Non Government

	2005-06 $'000	2006-07 $'000	2007-08 $'000	2008-09 $'000	2009-10 $'000
Funding	4,749,833	5,205,070	5,592,514	5,989,322	6,398,078

2005-06 Actual Outcomes

Government Schools

2005-06 Estimate $'000	2005-06 Actual Expense $'000	Variance $'000	%
1,693,642	1,687,741	-5,901	-0.3

Non Government Schools

2005-06 Estimate $'000	2005-06 Actual Expense $'000	Variance $'000	%
4,749,833	4,763,425	13,592	0.3

Reportable Programme: *Schools Capital Grants*

Programme description

The Capital Grants Programme provides supplementary funding to government and non government school authorities for the provision and upgrading of school facilities. Funds are not provided directly to schools. They are provided as block grants to the State and Territory Education Departments for state schools and to Block Grant Authorities (BGAs) for non-government schools.

Policy Objective

The objectives of the Capital Grants Programme are providing and improving school capital infrastructure, with particular emphasis on assisting schools serving the most educationally disadvantaged students.

Finishing Date

The programme is ongoing.

Evaluation

An evaluation occurred in 1999. The evaluation supported the administrative processes for the Capital Grants Programme.

An administrative review of the operations of Block Grant Authorities (BGAs) was completed in late 2005.

The report of the Review was accepted by the Minister for Education, Science and Training on 22 December 2005.

The Review found that the BGAs are providing an excellent service to both the Australian Government and schools in their management of the Capital Grants and Investing in Our Schools Programmes, well beyond mere grants allocation.

The Review judged the operation of the BGA process overall to be effective and efficient but found that there are opportunities for further strengthening the processes used, including parent involvement, through the adoption of identified best practices and some key recommendations.

Recommendation 1 of the Review is that 'Provision be made at the local school community level and BGA Board level for parents to be formally engaged as partners in the decision making process for the capital grants applications'

On 24 January 2006 the Minister for Education, Science and Training wrote to BGAs to distribute the final report of the Review and advise of the Minister's intention to implement Recommendation 1 immediately through Ministerial appointment of a suitable parent representative to each BGA Board.

The Review report was published on the DEST internet site in early February 2006.

The Department is working with BGAs to facilitate implementation of the other recommendations of the Administrative Review of the Operations of BGAs.

Appropriation source

Schools Assistance (Learning Together - Achievement Through Choice and Opportunity) Act 2004

Funding and Forward Estimates

Government

	2005-06 $'000	2006-07 $'000	2007-08 $'000	2008-09 $'000	2009-10 $'000
Funding	307,257	312,617	319,592	319,784	326,178

Non Government

	2005-06 $'000	2006-07 $'000	2007-08 $'000	2008-09 $'000	2009-10 $'000
Funding	125,667	127,857	130,711	125,812	128,228

2005-06 Actual Outcomes

Government Schools

2005-06 Estimate $'000	2005-06 Actual Expense $'000	Variance $'000	%
307,257	307,266	9	0.0

Non Government Schools

2005-06 Estimate $'000	2005-06 Actual Expense $'000	Variance $'000	%
125,667	125,667	0	0.0

Reportable Programme: *Investing in Our Schools (Schools Infrastructure)*

Programme Description

Investing in Our Schools aims to improve school infrastructure. The Australian Government recognises that schools often need new items that are beyond the school's budget and the fund-raising efforts of parents.

Funding is provided to government and non-government school communities to help repair, replace or install new items critical to their local school's needs.

Policy Objective

The objective of the Investing in Our Schools Programme is to deliver much needed school infrastructure projects through an injection of additional Australian Government funds.

Finishing Date

This programme will continue until the end of 2008.

Evaluation

An evaluation is due July 2007.

Appropriation source

Schools Assistance (Learning Together - Achievement Through Choice and Opportunity) Act 2004

Funding and Forward Estimates

	2005-06 $'000	2006-07 $'000	2007-08 $'000	2008-09 $'000	2009-10 $'000
Funding	369,998	456,666	173,334	0	0

2005-06 Actual Outcome

2005-06 Estimate $'000	2005-06 Actual Expense $'000	Variance $'000	%
369,998	400,805	30,807	8.3

Explanation of significant over expense

Demand has been much higher than anticipated for this programme hence the need for legislative amendment to bring forward funds from future years to 2006 to fund the programme. The expected demand when the programme was first announced was for an even flow of funds based on 7,000 applications over the life of the programme. In actuality over 8,500 applications were received in the first year of the programme which necessitated the bringing forward of funding into the 2006 financial year. This has resulted in a readjustment of the funding in the programme, with the majority of funds now in the first 2.5 years of the programme.

Reportable Programme: Australian Technical Colleges

Programme Description

Australian Technical Colleges (ATCs) will be established in 24 regions which have a strong industry base, trade skills needs and a high youth population. They will offer high quality teaching and facilities for Years 11 and 12 students who will undertake an integrated programme of academic studies relevant to a career in the trades, leading to the Year 12 certificate, and trades-related vocational training, leading to a national Training Package qualification. It is expected that all students will undertake an Australian School-Based Apprenticeship in a trade. The Colleges will be industry led, with a governing body chaired by a representative of local business and members from local industry and the community. This will ensure that students receive education and training relevant to industry skill needs. The Principal will have the autonomy to manage the day to day operations of the College and to attract and reward quality staff, by offering staff performance pay and the option of an Australian Workplace Agreement.

Funding provided under the programme is supplementary to other general recurrent funding that ATCs will receive from both Australian Government and State programmes.

Policy Objective

The Australian Technical Colleges initiative aims to:
- meet local industry needs through the teaching of trade skills for up to 7,500 students in years 11 and 12; and
- raise the profile of vocational pathways in schools and the trades, thus strengthening the vocational and technical training system, by attracting committed and capable students to undertake an integrated programme of vocational training and academic studies relevant to the trades.

Finishing Date

The Australian Technical Colleges appropriation is until the end of 2009.

Evaluation

No evaluation is planned until the programme is fully implemented in 2008.

Appropriation source

Australian Technical Colleges (Flexibility in Achieving Australia's Skills Needs) Act 2005

Funding and Forward Estimates

	2005-06 $'000	2006-07 $'000	2007-08 $'000	2008-09 $'000	2009-10 $'000
Funding	39,786	65,991	92,724	97,899	81,496

2005-06 Actual Outcome

2005-06 Estimate $'000	2005-06 Actual Expense $'000	Variance $'000	%
39,786	33,775	-6,011	15.1

Explanation of significant under expense

The expenditure estimate for financial year 2005-06 of $39.8 million reflects the commitments and timing of payments in the 13 funding agreements that have been signed to date. However, payments have been withheld in a number of cases due to lower than expected expenditure by ATCs. This reflects the delays and complexities in the start-up phase (particularly capital payments) by a number of ATCs. Where commitments exist in the Funding Agreements, payments will not be released where ATCs have significant unexpended funds, or where satisfactory evidence of forthcoming expenditure requirements is not provided.

The balance of unexpended funds from the $39.8 million budget will be expended in the second half of 2006.

Reportable Programme: *Literacy, Numeracy and Special Learning Needs – Schools Grants Element*

Programme description

The Schools Grants element contributes funding to government and non-government school education authorities in States and Territories to measurably improve the learning outcomes of educationally disadvantaged students. These students may include students with disabilities, students with learning difficulties, students with a language background other than English and low socioeconomic status students.

Schools Grants provides supplementary funding for additional assistance for the most educationally disadvantaged students to support activities such as literacy and numeracy intervention programmes; additional specialist learning assistance; teachers for students with disabilities and learning difficulties; and classroom resources and equipment for students who require extra help to achieve an appropriate standard of learning.

Policy Objective

The Literacy, Numeracy and Special Learning Needs Programme aims to improve the literacy, numeracy and other learning outcomes of students who are educationally disadvantaged and who require additional assistance.

Finishing Date

The programme is ongoing.

Evaluation

An evaluation occurred in 2002. The evaluation found that there is a significant commitment by education jurisdictions which places much greater emphasis on the achievement of measurable improvements in students learning outcomes.

A review was undertaken for the continuation of programs under the Schools Assistance Act during the Specific Purpose Payments (SPP) renegotiation process for the 2005-2008 quadrennium agreement.

Appropriation source

Schools Assistance (Learning Together - Achievement Through Choice and Opportunity) Act 2004

Funding and Forward Estimates

Government

	2005-06 $'000	2006-07 $'000	2007-08 $'000	2008-09 $'000	2009-10 $'000
Funding	289,372	307,698	323,852	344,124	363,461

Non Government

	2005-06 $'000	2006-07 $'000	2007-08 $'000	2008-09 $'000	2009-10 $'000
Funding	153,350	162,367	170,357	179,909	189,650

2005-06 Actual Outcomes

Government Schools

2005-06 Estimate $'000	2005-06 Actual Expense $'000	Variance $'000	%
289,372	288,034	-1,338	-0.5

Non Government Schools

2005-06 Estimate $'000	2005-06 Actual Expense $'000	Variance $'000	%
153,350	154,730	1,380	0.9

Reportable Programme: *Literacy, Numeracy and Special Learning Needs - National Projects Element (Grants to Foster Literacy and Numeracy)*

Programme description

The programme aims to support projects which identify, research and implement strategic national initiatives and developments in literacy and numeracy, early childhood education and information and communication technologies

Policy Objective

This initiative supports progress toward the achievement of the National Literacy and Numeracy Goal by supporting the implementation of the National Literacy and Numeracy Plan agreed to by all Ministers that calls for a co-ordinated approach at the national level to improving literacy and numeracy standards

Finishing Date

The Literacy, Numeracy and Special Learning Needs – National Projects Element lapses on 31 December 2007.

Evaluation

An evaluation occurred in 2002. The evaluation recommended that the programme be broadened from the previous Grants for National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies and Projects Programme to address emerging priority areas for educationally disadvantaged students beyond the scope of national strategic literacy and numeracy research development.

A review was undertaken for the continuation of programs under the *Schools Assistance Act* during the Specific Purpose Payments (SPP) renegotiation process for the 2005-2008 SPP agreement.

Appropriation source

Schools Assistance (Learning Together - Achievement Through Choice and Opportunity) Act 2004

Funding and Forward Estimates

	2005-06 $'000	2006-07 $'000	2007-08 $'000	2008-09 $'000	2009-10 $'000
Funding	18,616	12,228	11,342	11,830	12,151

2005-06 Actual Outcome

2005-06 Estimate $'000	2005-06 Actual Expense $'000	Variance $'000	%
18,616	19,275	659	3.5

Reportable Programme: *Literacy, Numeracy and Special Learning Needs Non-Government Centres Support Element (Special Education – Non-Government Centre Support)*

Programme description

The programme supports children with disabilities who receive services provided at, or in connection with, non-government centres.

Policy Objective

This programme aims to improve the educational opportunities, learning outcomes and personal development of children with disabilities.

Finishing Date

The programme is ongoing.

Evaluation

A review is planned for 2007.

A review was undertaken for the continuation of programs under the Schools Assistance Act during the Specific Purpose Payments (SPP) renegotiation process for the 2005-2008 quadrennium agreement.

Appropriation source

Schools Assistance (Learning Together - Achievement Through Choice and Opportunity) Act 2004

Funding and Forward Estimates

	2005-06 $'000	2006-07 $'000	2007-08 $'000	2008-09 $'000	2009-10 $'000
Funding	34,242	36,770	39,273	41,205	43,022

2005-06 Actual Outcome

2005-06 Estimate $'000	2005-06 Actual Expense $'000	Variance $'000	%
34,242	41,214	6,972	20.3

Explanation of significant over expense

The over expense was due to a delay in the signing of funding agreements for 2005. This delay resulted in the expense occurring in the second half of the 2005 calendar year (2005-06) rather than in the first half of the calendar year. Funds for this programme are appropriated on a calendar year basis and any funds not expensed in the first half of the calendar year are able to be expensed in the second half.

Reportable Programme: *Schools Country Areas Programme*

Programme description

The Country Areas Programme (CAP) aims to help schools and school communities improve the educational outcomes and opportunities of students who are educationally disadvantaged because of their geographical isolation so that their learning outcomes match those of other students.

Policy Objective

The policy objective of CAP is to provide funding to address the educational disadvantage caused by geographic isolation.

Finishing Date

The programme is ongoing.

Evaluation

The programme was evaluated between October 2002 and May 2003 by DEST in conjunction with KPA Consulting. The key findings of the evaluation were:
- CAP is working well and has broadened the educational opportunities and enhanced the literacy and numeracy learning of students who are educationally disadvantaged by geographical isolation;
- The government and non-government education authorities in each State and the Northern Territory value the flexibility in administrative arrangements that the programme allows and there is little support for major change;
- There is strong support from all stakeholders for CAP to continue as a stand alone funding stream managed by the Commonwealth in cooperation with the State and the Northern Territory education authorities; and
- The current CAP objectives are appropriate for addressing the current and future needs of students in rural and isolated communities.

A review was undertaken for the continuation of programs under the Schools Assistance Act during the Specific Purpose Payments (SPP) renegotiation process for the 2005-2008 SPP agreement.

Appropriation source

Schools Assistance (Learning Together - Achievement Through Choice and Opportunity) Act 2004

Funding and Forward Estimates

Government

	2005-06 $'000	2006-07 $'000	2007-08 $'000	2008-09 $'000	2009-10 $'000
Funding	22,805	24,372	25,691	27,077	28,542

Non Government

	2005-06 $'000	2006-07 $'000	2007-08 $'000	2008-09 $'000	2009-10 $'000
Funding	4,732	5,057	5,333	5,619	5,925

2005-06 Actual Outcomes

Government Schools

2005-06 Estimate $'000	2005-06 Actual Expense $'000	Variance $'000	%
22,805	22,813	8	0.0

Non Government Schools

2005-06 Estimate $'000	2005-06 Actual Expense $'000	Variance $'000	%
4,732	4,730	-2	0.0

Reportable Programme: *Schools English as a Second Language – New Arrivals*

Programme description

The English as a Second Language programme assists with the cost of delivering intensive English language tuition to eligible newly arrived migrant primary and secondary school students.

Policy Objective

To improve the educational opportunities and outcomes of newly arrived students from non-English speaking backgrounds by developing their English language competence and facilitating their participation in mainstream education activities.

Finishing Date

The programme is ongoing.

Evaluation

There is no evaluation currently being undertaken. This programme will be reviewed as part of the 2009-2012 quadrennium funding.

Appropriation source

Schools Assistance (Learning Together - Achievement Through Choice and Opportunity) Act 2004

Funding and Forward Estimates

Government

	2005-06 $'000	2006-07 $'000	2007-08 $'000	2008-09 $'000	2009-10 $'000
Funding	58,671	70,371	74,621	78,641	82,734

Non Government

	2005-06 $'000	2006-07 $'000	2007-08 $'000	2008-09 $'000	2009-10 $'000
Funding	5,917	7,095	7,524	7,930	8,341

2005-06 Actual Outcomes

Government Schools

2005-06 Estimate $'000	2005-06 Actual Expense $'000	Variance $'000	%
58,671	62,157	3,486	5.9

Non Government Schools

2005-06 Estimate $'000	2005-06 Actual Expense $'000	Variance $'000	%
5,917	6,206	289	4.9

Reportable Programme: *Non-Government School Term Hostels*

Programme Description

The Non-Government School Term Hostels (NGSTH) Programme is targeted at not-for-profit non-government school term hostels that operate principally to accommodate primary and secondary students from rural and remote areas of Australia.

Under the Non-Government School Term Hostels Programme, eligible hostels will attract a grant of $2,500 per eligible student in 2005. Programme funds are to be used for the maintenance and operational costs of the hostel and are not to be used to reduce hostel fees.

Policy Objective

The objective of this initiative is to assist non-government school term hostels to provide a high standard of care to rural primary and secondary school students residing at the hostels. This four year initiative will also support rural communities by providing an affordable alternative to boarding school or distance education for rural and remote families.

Finishing Date

The Programme will continue until the end of 2008.

Evaluation

An evaluation is currently underway.

Appropriation source

Schools Assistance (Learning Together - Achievement Through Choice and Opportunity) Act 2004

Funding and Forward Estimates

	2005-06 $'000	2006-07 $'000	2007-08 $'000	2008-09 $'000	2009-10 $'000
Funding	2,345	2,384	2,435	2,478	2,526

2005-06 Actual Outcome

2005-06 Estimate $'000	2005-06 Actual Expense $'000	Variance $'000	%
2,345	1,456	-889	-37.9

Reportable Programme: *Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Assistance Scheme (ABSTUDY)*

Programme description

ABSTUDY provides a means-tested living allowance and other supplementary benefits to eligible Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students studying accredited courses at the secondary and tertiary levels. Assistance is also available for a group of primary school students who live at home but cannot access secondary schooling. To be eligible for assistance a primary school student must live at home and be at least 14 years of age on 1 January in the year of study. ABSTUDY is administered and delivered by Centrelink.

Policy Objective

The main objectives of the ABSTUDY Scheme are to encourage Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people to take full advantage of the educational opportunities available, to promote equity of educational opportunity, and improve educational outcomes.

Finishing Date

The programme is ongoing.

Evaluation

ABSTUDY was reviewed in 1997-98 in the context of the introduction of the Youth Allowance. As a result of this review the Government maintained ABSTUDY as a separate scheme with closer alignment with mainstream provisions.

Appropriation source

Student Assistance Act 1973

Funding and Forward Estimates

ABSTUDY Secondary

	2005-06 $'000	2006-07 $'000	2007-08 $'000	2008-09 $'000	2009-10 $'000
Funding	93,250	99,106	98,126	106,154	106,246

ABSTUDY Tertiary

	2005-06 $'000	2006-07 $'000	2007-08 $'000	2008-09 $'000	2009-10 $'000
Funding	59,880	61,131	52,735	54,472	54,232

2005-06 Actual Outcomes

ABSTUDY Secondary

2005-06 Estimate $'000	2005-06 Actual Expense $'000	Variance $'000	%
93,250	102,040	8,790	9.4

ABSTUDY Tertiary

2005-06 Estimate $'000	2005-06 Actual Expense $'000	Variance $'000	%
59,880	52,933	-6,947	-11.6

Explanation for the significant under expense

This is a demand driven programme and the estimates were based on projected student numbers and the expense pattern for the last two financial years.

Reportable Programme: *Assistance for Isolated Children*

Programme description

The Assistance for Isolated Children (AIC) Scheme helps the families of primary, secondary and under 16 year old tertiary students who are unable to attend an appropriate government school on a daily basis because of geographic isolation. An appropriate government school is one that offers the student's level of study or, if the student has special health-related or educational needs, one that provides access to the facilities, programmes, and/or environment required for those needs. AIC is a demand driven Scheme.

Policy Objective

The underlying principle of the AIC Scheme is that all Australian children should have reasonable daily access to an appropriate government school without regard to parents' income. Families living in areas without access to such a school incur additional costs in educating their children. The purpose of the AIC Scheme is to provide financial assistance in recognition of the additional expenditure incurred by mainly geographically isolated families for the education of their children.

Finishing Date

The programme is ongoing.

Evaluation

AIC Customer Satisfaction Surveys were conducted in 2000, 2001 and 2003 which found very high levels of client satisfaction with the Scheme. There have been no further evaluations since then.

Appropriation source

Student Assistance Act 1973

Funding and Forward Estimates

	2005-06 $'000	2006-07 $'000	2007-08 $'000	2008-09 $'000	2009-10 $'000
Funding	56,191	57,903	59,643	61,209	62,791

2005-06 Actual Outcome

2005-06 Estimate $'000	2005-06 Actual Expense $'000	Variance $'000	%
56,191	53,482	-2,709	-4.8

Reportable Programme: *Indigenous Education Targeted Assistance*

Programme description

Indigenous Education Targeted Assistance (IETA) refers to the suite of programmes previously known as the Indigenous Education Strategic Initiatives Programme (IESIP) and the Indigenous Education Direct Assistance (IEDA) programme. From 1 January 2005 funding for all these programmes has been appropriated under the *Indigenous Education (Targeted Assistance) Act 2000.* Prior to 1 January 2005 funding for IEDA had been through the annual appropriations.

The major IETA programme element is Supplementary Recurrent Assistance (SRA) which provides funding on a per capita basis to education providers in respect of their Indigenous students.

Funding is also provided for a range of targeted initiatives and projects to accelerate improvements in educational outcomes for Indigenous students such as:
- National Accelerated Literacy Programme;
- Dare to Lead;
- What Works; and
- Clontarf Foundation.

Policy objective

Supplementary funding under IETA underpins implementation of the National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Education Policy (AEP) which came into effect in 1990 following endorsement by all Australian governments. The four major goals of the AEP are to achieve:
- involvement of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in educational decision-making;
- equality of access to education services;
- equity of educational participation; and
- equitable and appropriate educational outcomes for Indigenous students.

Finishing date

The programme is ongoing.

Evaluation

The 2001-2004 quadrennium focused on closing the educational divide between Indigenous and non-Indigenous students and accelerating improved educational outcomes for Indigenous students. IESIP outcomes were reviewed during the 2001-2004 quadrennium, in the context of developing the Australian Government's Indigenous education arrangements for the period 2005-2008. This review resulted in some changes to funding arrangements commencing in January 2005.

Phase One of a review of the IEDA programme was completed in August 2002. It examined the administrative practices of the programme and made 60 recommendations to improve administration and delivery.

Phase Two of the IEDA Review was completed in 2003, and the report was published in 2004. As a result, significant programme changes were made and the programme was brought under the *Indigenous Education (Targeted Assistance) Act 2000*, commencing in January 2005.

The refocused elements of the former IEDA programme now under IETA will be reviewed in 2007.

Appropriation source

Indigenous Education (Targeted Assistance) Act 2000

Funding and Forward Estimates

	2005-06 $'000	2006-07 $'000	2007-08 $'000	2008-09 $'000	2009-10 $'000
Funding	341,738	333,059	295,531	294,324	294,955

2005-06 Actual Outcome

2005-06 Estimate $'000	2005-06 Actual Expense $'000	Variance $'000	%
341,738	329,546	-12,192	-3.6

Explanation for the significant under expense

The under expense is primarily due to the actual expense for Supplementary Recurrent Assistance (SRA) in 2005-06 being lower than the estimate.

The *Act* appropriates funding on a calendar year basis and allows for payments to be made over an 18 month period. Funding appropriated under the *Act* for 2005 has been fully expended and 2006 funding will be fully expended within the period allowed by the legislation.

Reportable Programme: *Tiwi Islands Secondary College*

Programme description

The Programme will contribute to the establishment of the Tiwi College that will provide the education provision for some 200 Indigenous students from the Tiwi Islands who currently have limited access to secondary education.

The Australian Government provided $10 million to the Northern Territory Block Grant Authority to support improved educational and training outcomes for the Indigenous peoples of the Tiwi Islands through the construction of a community managed boarding school for secondary school aged children. The boarding school will be located at Pickertaranmoor, Melville Island.

Policy Objective

To improve educational outcomes for all Australians by assisting in the provision of school facilities, particularly in ways that contribute most to raising the overall level of educational achievement of Australian school students.

Finishing Date

December 2009.

Evaluation

As this was a single payment there has been no evaluation.

Appropriation source

Annual Appropriation Acts

Funding and Forward Estimates

	2005-06 $'000	2006-07 $'000	2007-08 $'000	2008-09 $'000	2009-10 $'000
Funding	10,000	0	0	0	0

2005-06 Actual Outcome

2005-06 Estimate $'000	2005-06 Actual Expense $'000	Variance $'000	%
10,000	10,000	0	0

Reportable Programme: *Projects to Enhance Literacy and Numeracy Outcomes*

Programme description

The Projects to Enhance Literacy and Numeracy Outcomes (PELNO) programme aims to support projects which identify, research and implement strategic national initiatives and developments in literacy and numeracy.

Policy Objective

The programme supports progress toward the achievement of the National Literacy and Numeracy Goal by supporting the implementation of the National Literacy and Numeracy Plan agreed to by all Ministers that calls for a co-ordinated approach at the national level to improving literacy and numeracy standards.

Finishing Date

The programme is ongoing.

Evaluation

An evaluation was conducted in 2002. The evaluation found that there is a significant commitment by education jurisdictions which places much greater emphasis on the achievement of measurable improvements in students learning outcomes.

Appropriation source

Annual Appropriation Acts

Funding and Forward Estimates

	2005-06 $'000	2006-07 $'000	2007-08 $'000	2008-09 $'000	2009-10 $'000
Funding	645	9,434	9,447	683	696

2005-06 Actual Outcome

2005-06 Estimate $'000	2005-06 Actual Expense $'000	Variance $'000	%
645	607	-38	-5.9

Reportable Programme: School Languages Programme

Programme description

The objective of the School Languages Programme (formerly known as the Language Other than English (LOTE) Programme) is to help schools and school communities to improve the learning outcomes of students learning Asian, European and Indigenous languages, at all levels of schooling, Kindergarten to Year 12.

Policy Objective

To support languages education generally in Australian schools.

Finishing Date

The programme is ongoing.

Evaluation

A review of the *Languages Other Than English (LOTE) Programme was conducted in 2002.* The Review is available on DEST's web site at www.dest.gov.au/sectors/school_education/publications_resources/profiles/review_lote.

The Review investigated the Australian Government's role in languages education in Australia and included discussion on the implementation and provision of language programmes in States and Territories. The review found that Languages other than English is still a 'fledgling' key learning area and that it was essential for the Australian Government to continue and strengthen its leadership in promoting and fostering Languages education. The Government has adopted a number of the Review's recommendations and this fed into the renegotiation process of 2005-08 Special Purpose Payments (SSP) associated with the *Schools Assistance Act 2004.*

Appropriation source

Schools Assistance (Learning Together - Achievement Through Choice and Opportunity) Act 2004

Funding and Forward Estimates

Government

	2005-06 $'000	2006-07 $'000	2007-08 $'000	2008-09 $'000	2009-10 $'000
Funding	15,082	16,798	17,707	18,664	19,673

Non Government

	2005-06 $'000	2006-07 $'000	2007-08 $'000	2008-09 $'000	2009-10 $'000
Funding	11,148	11,894	12,537	13,213	13,927

2005-06 Actual Outcomes

Government Schools

2005-06 Estimate $'000	2005-06 Actual Expense $'000	Variance $'000	%
15,082	14,395	-687	-4.6

Non Government Schools

2005-06 Estimate $'000	2005-06 Actual Expense $'000	Variance $'000	%
11,148	11,643	495	4.4

Reportable Programme: *Australian Government Quality Teacher Programme*

Programme Description

The Australian Government Quality Teacher Programme (AGQTP) programme comprises the following programme elements:
- State and Territory professional learning projects;
- National Initiatives; and
- the National Institute for Quality Teaching and School Leadership (NIQTSL).

The major focus of the programme has been the provision of professional learning activities for teachers. The major part of the funding under this programme is provided to states and territories for teacher professional learning, and to the NIQTSL. Funds are not paid directly to individual people or schools, except as part of their involvement in national projects.

Policy Objective

The objectives of the programme are to:
- improve the professional standing of school teachers and leaders;
- equip teachers with the skills and knowledge needed for teaching in the 21st Century; and
- provide national leadership in high priority areas of teacher professional learning need.

Finishing Date

Lapsing December 2009. (The programme was extended in the 2005-06 Budget to the end of 2009.)

Evaluation

A full evaluation was undertaken in 2004. The evaluation found that
- The programme has been very successful in updating teachers' skills and understandings in the priority areas.
- The programme has led to significant improvements in the quality of professional learning delivered to teachers, and has played an important role in the development of a strengthened infrastructure to support professional learning.
- AGQTP activities have made a contribution to enhancing the status of teaching, but this objective is so complex as to be beyond the scope and capacity of the Programme.
- The programme's main deficiencies are in the area of data collection – in particular performance measurement and reporting. This area will be improved in the new phase of the programme.

The programme will be evaluated again in 2008.

Appropriation source

Annual Appropriation Acts

Funding and Forward Estimates

	2005-06 $'000	2006-07 $'000	2007-08 $'000	2008-09 $'000	2009-10 $'000
Funding	18,580	36,048	34,950	35,615	36,494

2005-06 Actual Outcome

2005-06 Estimate $'000	2005-06 Actual Expense $'000	Variance $'000	%
18,580	18,314	-266	-1.4

Reportable Programme: *Quality Outcomes Other*

Programme Description

The Quality Outcomes Programme Other (QOP – Other) - supports improved learning outcomes of Australian school students through strategic and collaborative initiatives.

Policy Objective

The objectives of QOP - Other are to improve the learning outcomes for Australian school students by improving quality of teaching and learning, promoting national collaboration on curriculum, assessment and reporting outcomes, enhancing the professional role of school principals and teachers and to support national initiatives in school education that promote good practice in school organisation and leadership and other specific Commonwealth initiatives.

Finishing Date

The programme is ongoing.

Evaluation

An evaluation of is planned for the 2007-08 financial year.

Appropriation source

Annual Appropriation Acts

Finding and Forward Estimates

	2005-06 $'000	2006-07 $'000	2007-08 $'000	2008-09 $'000	2009-10 $'000
Funding	16,310	23,673	19,505	19,459	18,075

2005-06 Actual Outcome

2005-06 Estimate $'000	2005-06 Actual Expense $'000	Variance $'000	%
16,310	14,429	-1,881	-11.5

Reportable Programme: *Values Education & Civics & Citizenship Education*

Programme Description

Values education funding is provided for clusters of champion schools implementing best practice approaches, values education and drug education forums in every school in Australia, curriculum and assessment resources, and national activities with parents, school principals and teacher educators. Continued civics and citizenship education funding is provided for curriculum resources (including a continued civics and citizenship education website) and national activities including the National Schools Constitutional Convention and the Simpson Anzac Prize and *Celebrating Democracy Week* in schools.

Policy Objective

The objective of the values eduction funding is to help make values a core part of Australian schooling and to support implementation of the National Framework for Values Education in Australian Schools.

The objective of civics and citizenship education funding is to help students to learn about Australia's democratic heritage, the values underpinning our democracy, and how the Australian system of government and law operates, and explore what it means to be an Australian today.

Finishing Date

This programmes lapses at the end of 2007-08.

Evaluation

An evaluation will be required to inform the consideration of the lapsing programme in the 2008-09 Budget context.

Appropriation source

Annual Appropriation Acts

Funding and Forward Estimates

	2005-06 $'000	2006-07 $'000	2007-08 $'000	2008-09 $'000	2009-10 $'000
Funding	9,939	8,305	7,935	8,086	8,240

2005-06 Actual Outcome

2005-06 Estimate $'000	2005-06 Actual Expense $'000	Variance $'000	%
9,939	9,860	79	0.8

Reportable Programme: *Boosting Innovation, Science, Technology and Mathematics Teaching*

Programme description

The Boosting Innovation, Science, Technology and Mathematics Programme is intended to raise the scientific, mathematical and technological literacy and the innovative capacity of Australian school students, to create learning environments from which more world-class Australian scientists and innovators will emerge, and to provide impetus for the development of a new generation of excellent teachers of science, technology and mathematics

Policy Objective

To encourage innovation in Australian schools and extend the innovative capacity of students; promote world-class teaching and learning of science, technology and mathematics in Australian schools; and assist in attracting to and retaining in the teaching profession sufficient numbers of high quality graduates in the fields of science, technology and mathematics.

Finishing Date

The programme is terminating in 2010-11.

Evaluation

An evaluation has not been conducted at this stage but a mid-term evaluation is scheduled for 2007.

Appropriation source

Annual Appropriation Acts

Funding and Forward Estimates

	2005-06 $'000	2006-07 $'000	2007-08 $'000	2008-09 $'000	2009-10 $'000
Funding	10,202	5,085	5,245	3,999	2,845

2005-06 Actual Outcome

2005-06 Estimate $'000	2005-06 Actual Expense $'000	Variance $'000	%
10,202	10,202	0	0.0

Reportable Programme: *National School Drug Education Policy*

Programme Description

The National School Drug Education Strategy strengthens the provision of educational programmes and supportive environments which contribute to the goal of 'no illicit drugs in schools.'

Schools funding under legislated and annual appropriations are directed at programmes that enhance the educational outcomes of school students and are not paid directly to individual people

Policy Objective

The National School Drug Education Strategy strengthens the provision of educational programmes and supportive environments which contribute to the goal of 'no illicit drugs in schools'.

Finishing Date

Lapsing July 2008.

Evaluation

An Evaluation of the National Schools Drug Education Strategy and Council of Australian Governments' "Tough on Drugs" in schools measures (1999-2003) was completed in 2003. In 2004 a monitoring and evaluation of school drug education resources initiative commenced. Stage one was a review of the dissemination and implementation mechanisms for Australian Government school drug education resources. Stage two developed and trialled a range of qualitative and quantitative measures to guide Stage 3. Stage 3, which commenced in May 2006, is examining the knowledge and skills of teachers using the resources; improvements in teaching practice; changes in practice over time; improvements in student learning outcomes; and level of understanding of a resilience based approach by educators to school drug education. This project is scheduled for completion in October 2007.

Appropriation source

Annual Appropriation Acts

Funding and Forward Estimates

	2005-06 $'000	2006-07 $'000	2007-08 $'000	2008-09 $'000	2009-10 $'000
Funding	4,208	4,013	3,833	3,907	3,980

2005-06 Actual Outcome

2005-06 Estimate $'000	2005-06 Actual Expense $'000	Variance $'000	%
4,208	3,268	-940	-22.3

Reportable Programme: *Online Curriculum Content for Australian Schools*

Programme Description

This programme provides for the development and delivery of quality Australian online curriculum content to enhance teaching and learning in Australian schools.

Funding is not paid directly to individuals. Funding during 2005-06 was provided to two ministerially owned companies - Curriculum Corporation and *education.au limited*.

Policy Objective

In line with the National Goals for Schooling in the Twenty-First Century, the objective of this programme is to undertake a collaborative role with the States and Territories to ensure Australian teachers and students have access to quality online content to be confident, creative and productive users of new technologies, particularly information and communication technologies, and understand the impact of those technologies on society.

Finishing Date

Phase Two of this initiative was completed on 30 June 2006. The third phase commenced 1 July 2007 and is due for completion on 30 June 2009.

Evaluation

An evaluation carried out by TFG International in late 2005 (with the final report being released January 2006) found that The Le@rning Federation was widely seen to have added substantial value beyond its core mission. Stakeholders argued strongly that digital curriculum content is a powerful mechanism to achieve national consistency in core curriculum areas and improved teacher performance.

Appropriation source

Annual Appropriation Acts

Funding and Forward Estimates

	2005-06 $'000	2006-07 $'000	2007-08 $'000	2008-09 $'000	2009-10 $'000
Funding	7,113	7,600	7,600	7,700	0

2005-06 Actual Outcome

2005-06 Estimate $'000	2005-06 Actual Expense $'000	Variance $'000	%
7,113	7,113	0	0.0

Reportable Programme: *Grants and Awards*

Programme Description

The Grants and Awards Programme comprises the following programme elements:
- Asia Education Foundation (AEF) - The role of the AEF is to promote and support the study of Asia across all curriculum areas in Australian schools.
- Curriculum Corporation (CC) - CC works in the education sector and is owned by all Australian State, Territory and Commonwealth Ministers of Education. It provides curriculum support to schools and school systems.
- Australian Students Prize - An Australian Government initiative designed to give national recognition to academic excellence and achievement in secondary education, particularly in senior secondary years.
- Grants-in-Aid - The objective of this component is to assist in maintaining the operations of key national education research organisations or national parent organisations. Grant-In-Aid funding is provided to three parent organisations to assist with costs associated with the running of national and secretariats – the Australian Parents Council, Australian Council of State School Organisations and Isolated Children's Parents' Association. The current recipient of a grant for national educational research is the MCEETYA National Fund for Educational Research (NFER).

Policy Objective

To assist in maintaining the operations of key national educational research and representative organisations.

Finishing Date

The programme is ongoing.

Evaluation

The Grants-in-Aid component was evaluated in 1998.

The Review (a programme review of a discretionary grant programme) examined whether funding under the programme was directed to organisations whose activities most closely targeted the objectives of the programme and whether the funding provided to organisations was adequate to allow them to engage effectively in activities that closely target the objectives of the programme.

The Review, undertaken by KPMG Consulting, found that funding was being directed towards appropriate organisations and that the current recipients were considered to offer independent and national parent representation and research services.

Appropriation source

Annual Appropriation Acts

Funding and Forward Estimates

	2005-06 $'000	2006-07 $'000	2007-08 $'000	2008-09 $'000	2009-10 $'000
Funding	3,706	3,762	3,816	3,868	3,925

2005-06 Actual Outcome

2005-06 Estimate $'000	2005-06 Actual Expense $'000	Variance $'000	%
3,706	3,455	-251	-6.8

Reportable Programme: Careers, Transitions and Partnerships

Programme description

The Careers, Transitions and Partnerships Programme comprises the following programme elements:
- Career Advice Australia
- Enterprise and Career Education
- Youth Pathways
- Partnership Outreach Education Model

Career Advice Australia

The Career Advice Australia (CAA) initiative draws on and complements current programmes and services resulting in a more comprehensive national career and transition support network for young people. The CAA initiative was announced as the Australian Network of Industry Career Advisers (ANICA) in the 2005-06 Budget with funds of $143.2 million for the period 2005-06 to 2008-09. There are three elements under the CAA initiative:

1. Expanding the role of Local Community Partnerships (LCPs) to facilitate the delivery of three career and transition programmes:
   - Structured Workplace Learning (SWL);
   - Career and Transition Support (CTS); and
   - Adopt a School Programme (ASP).
2. Extending industry leadership through the establishment of two industry-led networks, National Industry Career Specialists (NICS) and Regional Industry Career Advisers (RICAs);
3. Improving the standards for, and status of, career advisers through
   - the new national professional standards for career development practitioners; and
   - expanding professional development opportunities for career advisers through the:
     - Australian Career Development Studies (ACDS) and Certificate IV in Career Development;
     - scholarships for career advisers to undertake study and industry placements;
     - School and Industry Leaders Forums; and
     - Career Education Lighthouse Schools projects.

CAA Policy Objective

The CAA initiative aims to support all young people from 13 to 19 years of age to assist them to achieve a successful transition through school, and from school to further education, training and employment. There are six key outcomes for the initiative:

1. improved career choices by young people;
2. increased school engagement in school by young people, supported by parents, industry and community;
3. increased industry and employer engagement in schools and career development;
4. increased awareness of the range of vocational education and training opportunities;
5. improved quality and availability of career and transitions education across Australia; and
6. effective local community partnerships providing coordinated career and transition support.

Enterprise and Career Education

Enterprise and Career Education (ECEP) funds national strategic projects which support schools and organisations working in partnership with schools to develop in young people enterprising capabilities and the knowledge, skills and attitudes to assist them make informed decisions about their life, study and/or work options. These national strategic projects are funded primarily on the basis of open and competitive purchasing principles.

Youth Pathways

Youth Pathways is targeted at young people aged 13 to 19 who are the most at risk of not making a successful transition through school to further education, training, employment and active participation in the community.

Youth Pathways aims to reduce the number of early school leavers who are not employed or in education in the 12 months after leaving school. Specifically, it aims to increase the number of young people completing year 12 or its equivalent. The expected outcomes for young people assisted through the programme in preferred order are:

- remain or re-engage participants in the school environment through to completion of year 12 or its equivalent;
- engage or re-engage participants in non school-based education, vocational learning and training; and
- prepare participants for effective engagement in Job Network activities.

The assistance provided to each participant is specific to their individual needs. Each participant receives an assessment that determines their individual needs, followed by the appropriate assistance which may include: personal development; support to remain in or return to school; transition planning; preparation for participation in Job Network activities; referral to vocational education and training programmes and providers of other support services; as well as ongoing support throughout the service period.

Youth Pathways is available in all areas of Australia with current funding of around $24 million in 2006 to assist at least 17,000 young people. From 2007 extra funding of $46 million (over four years) will be allocated to Youth Pathways under the COAG Mental Health Measure. This expansion will allow for assistance under Youth Pathways to be provided to at least 25,500 young people every year. This will make a total of $37 million for each calendar year until 2010, an increase of about $13 million each year over what was available in 2006.

Partnership Outreach Education Model

The Partnership Outreach Education Model (POEM) pilot (concluding 31 December 2006) and the soon to commence POEM Programme (2007) assist disconnected young people aged 13 to 19 years to re-engage with education in a supportive environment and provide them with the ability to participate in further education, training or employment. The strength of POEM services is in their ability to provide a flexible, individualised and self-paced education (including accredited) and personal development programme for young people who are disconnected from mainstream schooling in alternative setting conducive to their learning. These young people usually experience a range of challenges including homelessness, abuse,

drug and/or alcohol dependency, disabilities, family breakdown, or are incarcerated in juvenile detention.

The POEM projects are trialling new methods of engaging marginalised young people aged 13-19 years into flexible and accredited education in community settings. POEM projects provide disconnected youth with an individually tailored accredited education, with courses including Years 9 through 12, TAFE certificates, First Aid certificates, social/life skills, and career support/advice. Fundamental to the success of the POEM projects are partnerships with local community organisations and agencies who work together to provide an integrated and holistic approach to educational and supporting disconnected youth. The POEM partnerships also reflect the local community circumstances and assist with working across agencies to deliver assistance to the disconnected youths. As many of the POEM participants suffer from complex issues, the education they receive requires intensive and sustained support. Consequently POEM projects do not have a maximum time limit. Once a POEM participant is ready to exit the project, the staff assist them in re-engaging with mainstream education (eg school, TAFE, university), gaining appropriate employment, and/or participating in community activities.

Policy Objective

The policy objective of POEM services is to address the gap in the national career and transitions framework by providing opportunities to disconnected young people to re-engage with education and training in settings conducive to their learning.

Finishing Dates

The programme is ongoing.

Evaluations

Career Advice Australia

The CAA Evaluation Strategy aims to assess the effectiveness, appropriateness and efficiency of the CAA initiative from October 2006 until March 2009. The Evaluation has been staged to report to government as part of the 2007 Senior Ministers Review (SMR) processes as a lapsing programme.

Enterprise and Career Education

It is planned that the Enterprise and Career Education Programme (ECEP) will be reviewed in conjunction with the review of the Career Advice Australia initiative in late 2007.

POEM

The Department of Education, Science and Training contracted Miles Morgan Australia Pty Ltd to independently evaluate the POEM Pilot. The report for the evaluation is now available at www.dest.gov.au.

The Miles Morgan evaluation asserted that youth valued education, regardless of their issues. Furthermore, the Report established that effective support is when individual issues and assistance in focussing on youths achieving their learning is provided, and ultimately life goals were essential to the success of POEM. Miles Morgan deemed POEM to be successful in re-engaging disconnected youth to education, and providing an integrated cross-agency approach to education, life skills and personal support. The evaluation asserted that the partnership approach successfully leveraged a further 40 per cent of funding from financial and/or in-kind contributions from community partners.

The youth assisted by the POEM project have numerous complex and compounding issues (eg homelessness, abuse, drug and/or alcohol dependency, disabilities, family breakdown, incarceration), and on-third of the POEM participants are usually Indigenous Australians. Through POEM these disconnected youths have made significant progress towards improving their education levels, life and employability skills. The Miles Morgan report established that approximately 40 per cent of POEM participants went on to further education and training, and a further 19 per cent of POEM participants entered employment.

Job Pathway

A post implementation review of JPP, which has ceased, was conducted in 1996-97 by Miles Morgan.

The Research and Evaluation Branch of the Department conducted an evaluation of the JPP in 1999-2000. It was an internal review that did address the issue of programme effectiveness. Findings of the report were:
- JPP provides assistance to a large number of young people;
- Good relationships exist between providers and schools;
- Participants and stakeholders have highly positive views of the programme;
- Among JPP participants, education stayers outnumber education leavers;
- Most participants receive a relatively limited amount of assistance;
- The focus of assistance may need to be reconsidered;
- There is scope to simplify and focus targeting arrangements; and
- JPP may not be reaching a particularly disadvantaged clientele.

Career and Transition (CAT) Pilot

The Department of Education, Science and Training contracted Miles Morgan Australia Pty Ltd to independently evaluate the CAT Pilot. The CAT evaluation was finalised in February 2004.

The CAT Evaluation points to the successes of the CAT Pilot between April 2002 and April 2003 and the positive impact they have had on many of the 37,000 participants:
- 24,000 young people developed Learning Pathways Plans;
- schools incorporated the development of Learning Pathways Plans into their school activities and the curriculum;
- schools have adapted curriculum to put a greater emphasis on career and transition learning opportunities; and
- they have facilitated greater involvement of community agencies and industry in the lives of young people.

Appropriation source

Annual Appropriation Acts

Funding and Forward Estimates

	2005-06 $'000	2006-07 $'000	2007-08 $'000	2008-09 $'000	2009-10 $'000
Funding	77,325	98,057	110,657	112,593	114,546

2005-06 Actual Outcome

2005-06 Estimate $'000	2005-06 Actual Expense $'000	Variance $'000	%
77,325	75,877	-1,448	-1.9

Reportable Programme: *Community Festivals for Education Engagement*

Programme description

Community Festivals for Education Engagement is one of two elements of the national community festivals initiative which is aimed at engaging youth in education and drug prevention. The aim of the Rock Eisteddfod, and the Community Festivals for Education Engagement – previously known as Croc Festivals, is to communicate healthy lifestyle messages to participating Australian teenagers in a manner that resonates with contemporary youth culture. The Community Festivals for Education Engagement have a similar objective for Indigenous young people in remote communities, with the additional goals of increasing school retention, broadening career and employment options and reducing crime.

Policy objective

The underlying principle of the national community festivals is the promotion of healthy, positive lifestyles for young people, particularly Indigenous youth, with the aim of improving participation in education, increasing vocational planning and reducing drug abuse.

Finishing date

The programme is ongoing.

Evaluation

Community Festivals for Education Engagement will be evaluated over the funding period ending in 2010.

Appropriation source

Indigenous Education (Targeted Assistance) Act 2000 (included in funding for the Indigenous Education Targeted Assistance Programme) and Annual Appropriation Acts.

Funding and Forward Estimates

	2006-07 $'000	2007-08 $'000	2008-09 $'000	2009-10 $'000
Funding from Annual Appropriations	0.7	0.7	0.7	0.7

Reportable Programme: *Vocational Education and Training*

Programme description

Funds are available to States and Territories for recurrent and capital expenditure for vocational and technical education. In accordance with the *Skilling Australia's Workforce Act (SAW) 2005 Act*, funds are provided under the 2005-2008 Commonwealth-State Agreement for Skilling Australia's Workforce. In addition, Strategic National Initiatives funds are provided for specified projects which support the National Training System. All funding is approved by the Ministerial Council for Vocational and Technical Education (MCVTE).

The *SAW Act* is a special appropriation and payments to the States and Territories are specific purpose payments.

Policy Objective

The policy objectives of this funding programme is to support States and Territories in meeting the outcomes of the Commonwealth –State Agreement for Skilling Australia's Workforce and through it achieve the objectives of the *SAW Act* in:
(a) strengthening Australia's economic base through providing a highly skilled workforce that will meet the future needs of Australian businesses, industries, communities and individuals;
(b) promoting a national approach to the delivery of vocational education and training through collaboration between the Commonwealth, the States and industry; and
(c) supporting a national training system which is responsive to the needs of industry and employers, provides flexible training delivery and promotes vocational education and training options to the Australian community.

Finishing Date

Under the *Skilling Australia's Workforce Act 2005* a new 2005-2008 Commonwealth – State Agreement for Skilling Australia's Workforce commenced on 1 July 2005. The Act and the Agreement both expire on 31 December 2008.

Evaluation

This programme was reviewed as part of the development of the SAW Act legislation in 2004.

Appropriation source

Skilling Australia's Workforce Act 2005

Funding and Forward Estimates

	2005-06 $'000	2006-07 $'000	2007-08 $'000	2008-09 $'000	2009-10 $'000
Funding	1,242,132	1,269,776	1,279,956	1,295,647	1,320,771

2005-06 Actual Outcome

2005-06 Estimate $'000	2005-06 Actual Expense $'000	Variance $'000	%
1,242,132	1,327,590	85,458	6.9

Explanation of significant over expense

The programme was over expensed in 2005-06 due to the recognition of expenses from ANTA during 2005-06 which related to the 2004-05 financial year. This delay in recognising an expense related to the timing of the transfer of functions from ANTA to DEST.

Reportable Programme: *Vocational Education and Training - National Programmes*

Programme description

The Vocational Education and Training (VET) National Programme funding provides support for national and emerging priorities in vocational and technical education. In 2005-06 the following four programme elements were funded:
- Training Package Development;
- Industry Skills Councils;
- Group Training; and
- Equity Development and Training Innovation.

Funding is allocated on a financial year basis, from an annual Administered appropriation. Projects which are staged or on-going need to apply for funds in each funding round.

The annual allocation reflects the priority of particular activities, and emerging or priority projects within the VET sector.

Policy Objective

The VET National Programme is aimed at supporting the implementation of the National Priorities contained in the VET National Strategy document *'Shaping our future: Australia's National Strategy for VET 2004 – 2010'* and the related National Priorities. Projects funded through VET National Programmes support a range of activities which strengthen the National Training System.

The VET National Programme funds activities which support a range of projects and functions which are not funded through the *Skilling Australia's Workforce Act 2005* or its agreement framework. The activities support the national training system through improving national consistency in the VET sector, the involvement of industry in setting VET priorities and enhancing/promoting training to individuals who may otherwise not have access to VET. Funds may also be used for any activity which addresses emerging issues in the VET sector.

Finishing Date

The programme is ongoing.

Evaluation

There have been no evaluations undertaken since DEST took over the programme from ANTA in August 2005.

Appropriation source

Annual Appropriation Acts

Funding and Forward Estimates

	2005-06 $'000	2006-07 $'000	2007-08 $'000	2008-09 $'000	2009-10 $'000
Funding	33,900	40,524	38,033	38,756	39,493

2005-06 Actual Outcome

2005-06 Estimate $'000	2005-06 Actual Expense $'000	Variance $'000	%
33,900	33,616	-284	-0.8

Reportable Programme: *National Centre for Vocational Education Research*

Programme description

The National Centre for Vocational Education Research (NCVER) is a not-for-profit company limited by guarantee. Its owners are the Australian Government and the State and Territory Ministers responsible for vocational education and training (VET). The Australian Government contributes half of the total core funding to the NCVER, with the States and Territories contributing the balance.

NCVER has responsibility for the collection of national VET statistics (including student outcomes and employer attitude surveys) and for managing a strategic programme of VET research and development. It disseminates and publishes research results, and acts as a clearing house for information relevant to the VET sector.

Policy Objective

To meet information and research needs of the VET system.

Finishing Date

The programme is ongoing.

Evaluation

An evaluation of the National Research and Evaluation programme in 2003 found that the programme was effective in contributing significantly to the growth of knowledge in VET, although the need for better coordination across the VET research effort and stronger interaction of decision making on policy and research directions was identified.

A review of NCVER's statistical and research services contracts funded under the Strategic National Initiatives element of the Commonwealth-State Agreement for Skilling Australia's Workforce was under taken in early 2006. The review examined:
- the range of services provided under the contracts;
- value for money for the research and statistical contracts;
- the impact of research and statistical work completed by NCVER; and
- the responsiveness of NCVER to shareholder and stakeholder priorities for research and statistical services.

The review made 29 recommendations. Outcomes of the review were published in April 2006. In June 2006, Ministers agreed to establish an action group to work through the recommendations and develop an implementation plan for reporting to Ministers by November 2006.

Appropriation source

Annual Appropriation Acts

Funding and Forward Estimates

	2005-06 $'000	2006-07 $'000	2007-08 $'000	2008-09 $'000	2009-10 $'000
Funding	589	602	614	625	637

2005-06 Actual Outcome

2005-06 Estimate $'000	2005-06 Actual Expense $'000	Variance $'000	%
589	589	0	0.0

Reportable Programme: *Australian Apprenticeships Centres*

Programme description

Australian Apprenticeships Centres provide Australian Apprenticeships information and services to employers and people interested in becoming an Australian Apprentice. Australian Apprenticeships Centres manage the Australian Government's Australian Apprenticeships Incentives Programme.

Policy Objective

The Australian Apprenticeships Centres, along with Support for Australian Apprenticeships Programme, aim to develop a more skilled Australian workforce that delivers long-term benefits for our nation and our international competitiveness.

Finishing Date

The programme is ongoing.

Evaluation

Leading into the 2002-03 financial year the Government announced a review of the Australian Apprenticeships Incentives Programme (formerly known as the New Apprenticeships Incentives programme). As a result of this review, new incentive arrangements have been in place since July 2003. In the context of this review there was also the intention to evaluate broader aspects of Australian Apprenticeships, but this was held over until the Australian Apprenticeships Support Services 2003-2006 contracts were in place to allow enough time for Australian Apprenticeships Centres to generate outcome patterns of sufficient magnitude to be validly included in the evaluation.

The 'Skills at work' evaluation, which was overseen by a Steering Committee with representation from the Departments of Prime Minister and Cabinet, Treasury, Finance and Administration, Employment and Workplace Relations and chaired by the Department Education, Science and Training, was undertaken during 2004 and has now been completed.

Although Australian Apprenticeships is a national policy involving the Australian Government, State and Territory Governments and Registered Training Organisations, the evaluation focussed on those elements of the policy which are the responsibility of the Australian Government.

The evaluation found that Australian Apprenticeships were working well, but made some suggestions to improve the system further.

Appropriation source

Annual Appropriation Acts

Funding and Forward Estimates

	2005-06 $'000	2006-07 $'000	2007-08 $'000	2008-09 $'000	2009-10 $'000
Funding	130,826	156,771	172,091	178,487	184,754

2005-06 Actual Outcome

2005-06 Estimate $'000	2005-06 Actual Expense $'000	Variance $'000	%
130,826	137,896	7,070	5.4

Reportable Programme: *Support for Australian Apprenticeships*

Programme description

The Support for Australian Apprenticeships Programme encourages employers to open up genuine opportunities for skills-based training of their employees, through provision by the Australian Government of financial incentives to employers who employ and train an Australian Apprentice. The Programme also encourages people, especially young people, through financial incentives, to enter in to skills-based training through Australian Apprenticeships.

Policy Objective

The Support for Australian Apprenticeships Programme, along with the Australian Apprenticeships Centres Programme, aims to develop a more skilled Australian workforce that delivers long-term benefits for our nation and our international competitiveness.

Finishing Date

The programme is ongoing.

Evaluation

Leading into the 2002-03 financial year the Government announced a review of the Australian Apprenticeships Incentives Programme. As a result of this review, new incentive arrangements have been in place since July 2003. In the context of this review there was also the intention to evaluate broader aspects of Australian Apprenticeships, but this was held over until the Australian Apprenticeships Support Services 2003-2006 contracts were in place to allow enough time for Australian Apprenticeships Centres to generate outcome patterns of sufficient magnitude to be validly included in the evaluation.

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Although Australian Apprenticeships is a national policy involving the Australian Government, State and Territory Governments and Registered Training Organisations, the evaluation focussed on those elements of the policy which are the responsibility of the Commonwealth.

The evaluation found that Australian Apprenticeships were working well, but made some suggestions to improve the system still further.

Appropriation source

Annual Appropriation Acts

Funding and Forward Estimates

	2005-06 $'000	2006-07 $'000	2007-08 $'000	2008-09 $'000	2009-10 $'000
Funding	567,974	615,350	654,859	690,347	720,017

2005-06 Actual Outcome

2005-06 Estimate $'000	2005-06 Actual Expense $'000	Variance $'000	%
567,974	561,555	-6,419	-1.1

Reportable Programme: Australian Apprenticeship Workforce Skills Development

Programme description

Australian Apprenticeship Workforce Skills Development Programme consists of a number of programme elements being:
- Group Training Australian Apprenticeships Targeted Initiatives;
- Group Training in the Trades;
- Institute for Trade Skills Excellence;
- Industry Training Strategies;
- Strategic Intervention;
- COAG Skills Package;
- Australian Surf Lifesaver Training Academy; and
- Tools for Your Trade.

Group Training Australian Apprenticeships Targeted Initiatives programme

Group training is an employment and training arrangement whereby an organisation employs Australian Apprentices under an Apprenticeship/Traineeship Training Contract and places them with host employers. The Group Training Organisation (GTO) undertakes the employer responsibilities for the quality and continuity of the Australian Apprentices' employment and training. The GTO also manages the additional care and support necessary to achieve the successful completion of the Apprenticeship/Traineeship Training Contract.

The Group Training Australian Apprenticeships Targeted Initiatives Programme (TIP) funds projects which contribute to the establishment of a sustainable Australian Apprenticeships market in critical, challenging or under-serviced areas.

Critical areas are those of national, State or regional importance. Challenging areas are those where the achievement of successful Australian Apprenticeship outcomes requires additional time, resources and development. Under-serviced areas are those where there are identified gaps in coverage by Australian Apprenticeships and/or group training arrangements. TIP funding rounds are usually targeted to specific funding priorities that have emerged within these areas.

Group Training in the Trades programme

The Group Training in the Trades Programme (GTTP) provides funding to Group Training Organisations (GTOs) through brokered organisations to provide Australian Apprenticeship opportunities in the trade areas.

These Australian Apprenticeship opportunities must focus on providing:
- Pre-vocational training in the trades with articulation into an Australian Apprenticeship; and
- Australian School-based Apprenticeships in the trades.

Particular focus is given to trade areas which are experiencing skill shortages or where Australian Apprenticeships in the trades are being under-serviced in particular areas, especially through Australian School-based Apprenticeships.

The programme commenced on 1 July 2005, and over four years will provide an additional 7,000 Australian School-based Apprenticeships in the trades and up to 4,500 pre-vocational training places for people preparing to take up an Australian Apprenticeship in the Trades.

Institute for Trade Skills Excellence

The Institute for Trade Skills Excellence ("the Institute") will promote and advance learning, teaching and training in Australian trades education and elevate the status of traditional trades and trades education as career choices by:
- developing strategies to improve the profile and status of trades and encourage the recognition of the importance of trades in the general community;
- recognising high performing Registered Training Organisations with preferred provider status;
- fostering and recognising excellent standards and teaching in trades education and training.

The Institute's Board of Directors are employers in key areas of skill shortage. The Industry Reference Groups will be established and will represent skill shortage areas in the automotive, building and construction, electrical, manufacturing, metals and engineering, hospitality and personal services, rural and mineral resources industries.

Industry Training Strategies programme (ITSP)

ITSP funds projects and organisations to facilitate increased take up of Australian Apprenticeships and their flexibilities by employers. The Department funds a range of stakeholders to work with identified client groups to achieve this objective.

Examples of stakeholders funded are: Industry Skills Councils; Industry Associations; and Indigenous Service Providers.

Examples of identified client groups include employers, Australian Apprenticeship Centres, Registered Training Organisations, and Indigenous Communities.

Strategic Intervention programme (SIP)

The Strategic Intervention programme funds projects which facilitate the participation and/or increase the take up of Australian Apprenticeships.

COAG Skills Package – Regional Initiatives

In February 2006 the Council of Australian Government agreed to establish a new Commonwealth regional programme, in collaboration with States and Territories, to address the supply of skilled labour to industries and regions. Integrated strategies for selected regions to identify and progress solutions to labour market needs of industries in regions of strategic importance to the Australian economy will be supported.

COAG Skills Package – Recognition of Prior Learning

The Council of Australian Governments agreed in February 2006 to key initiatives on Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) to underpin a more flexible and responsive training system. These initiatives, which will target improved practice and take-up of RPL, include:

- the introduction of a contractual obligation for all Registered Training Organisations and assessment centres in receipt of public funding from 1 January 2007 to offer a quick and simple process to recognise the existing skills of all workers entering training; and
- the establishment of a joint three year Australian Government, State and Territory programme to be agreed on a bilateral basis to build the training system's capacity to deliver quality Recognition of Prior Learning and drive good practice.

These initiatives will benefit existing workers as they will no longer need to undertake unnecessary training to gain a qualification. Their work and life skills will be recognised, thus improving their employment prospects. The initiatives will also assist RTOs to provide streamlined and simplified recognition processes.

COAG Skills Package – Skills Specialisation Development and Certification

Support for Skills Specialisation development and certification initiatives to meet workplace needs without requiring the completion of a full apprenticeship programme or qualification.

Australian Surf Lifesaver Training Academy

This Programme is a funding agreement with Surf Life Saving Australia to establish the Lifesaver Training Academy. The purpose of the project is to centralise the educational resource development of Surf Life Saving Australia into the Academy, and deliver nationally recognised and consistent training to Surf Life Saving Australia members and the general public.

Tools for Your Trade

The Tools For Your Trade initiative helps to alleviate the financial burden faced by eligible Australian Apprentices in the first year of the Australian Apprenticeship by providing a tool kit worth up to $800 (including GST). The initiative applies to eligible Australian Apprentices in a trade experiencing skills needs after 1 July 2005.

Policy Objective

The objective of the Australian Apprenticeship Workforce Skills Development Programme is to:

- enable Group Training Organisations to generate quality Australian Apprenticeship opportunities in priority areas that would not otherwise happen;
- increase the number and range of Australian Apprentices in training, and to improve the balance between supply and demand for training by ensuring that employers are offered the full range of current training options to make the right choice for their needs;
- provide assistance to support and expand the participation of Indigenous people in formal and nationally recognised training programmes.
- enable flexible responses to emerging issues related to the provision of skills training particularly through Australian Apprenticeships; and

- provide a wide range of activities in order to address impediments and create new options to support the development of a nationally consistent, industry-led vocational education and training system.

Finishing Date

The programme is ongoing.

Evaluation

Evaluations were conducted in 2002 and 2003 in the following areas.

Group Training Australian Apprenticeships Targeted Initiatives Programme (TIP) - has been reviewed with an objective of informing the Department of the appropriateness, effectiveness and efficiency of the Programme. The review found that TIP continues as an appropriate mechanism for its intended target markets, and has distinct differences and advantages over other programmes targeting similar markets. The Programme is being revised in line with review recommendations and will complete the next funding round by the middle of the 2006-07 financial year.

ITSP – Industry Experts (now known as Industry Pathfinders) - the review concluded that industry expert contractors performed an important function in the Australian Apprenticeships marketplace and recommended continuation of the programme, with a change in emphasis:
- a one-stop shop approach for ongoing support; and
- a more targeted problem solving approach.

The Department has responded to those recommendations and the "industry expert" stream has become "pathfinders" and the "integrated information service".

ITSP – Indigenous - DEST, DEWR, ATSIC and AITAC contributed to the review in 2002-03, which recommended the programme be refocussed to:
- identify the support needs of Registered Training Organisations (RTOs) and Australian Apprenticeship Centres (AACs) if they are to improve Indigenous participation in Australian Apprenticeships;
- promote strategies and information to RTOs and AACs;
- provide feedback to the Department on impediments to Indigenous participation in training; and
- undertake identified regional projects where there is the opportunity to support projects that have the potential to improve Indigenous participation in Australian Apprenticeships.

These recommendations are reflected in the Department's revised approach to ITSP – Indigenous.

Appropriation source

Annual Appropriation Acts

Funding and Forward Estimates

	2005-06 $'000	2006-07 $'000	2007-08 $'000	2008-09 $'000	2009-10 $'000
Funding	37,467	80,876	85,901	83,138	77,598

2005-06 Actual Outcome

2005-06 Estimate $'000	2005-06 Actual Expense $'000	Variance $'000	%
37,467	39,721	2,254	6.0

Reportable Programme: *Australian Apprenticeship Access Programme*

Programme description

The Australian Apprenticeship Access Programme (Access Programme) assists job seekers who experience barriers to skilled employment to obtain and maintain an Australian Apprenticeship. Other successful outcomes are employment and further education and training. Participants receive nationally recognised vocational training that is linked to an Australian Apprenticeship pathway, job search assistance and general support.

Policy Objective

The Access Programme aims to assist disadvantaged jobseekers access Australian Apprenticeships.

Finishing Date

The programme is ongoing.

Evaluation

The programme was reviewed in June 2000. The key recommendations of the review included the reinforcement of the pastoral care aspect of the programme to drive outcomes, and the implementation of a broker model to outsource the management of the programme. The review also recommended the development of better information management systems and a re-branding of the programme.

As a result of the review, the market was tested in 2002 through an open tender process to broker the delivery of Access services. Tenderers were assessed against a number of criteria, including their ability to deliver the programme with the pastoral care focus as recommended by the review. Ten organisations were awarded two-year contracts as a result of this process. In June 2004, six of these organisations had their contracts extended for a further two years. As a result of an election commitment the number of places in the programme was doubled commencing from July 2005. The tender for the additional places resulted in an additional five brokers operating the access Programme. A further tender was carried out in 2006 for the base places bring the number of brokers to fifteen. The programme offers places for 9,500 participants yearly.

Appropriation source

Annual Appropriation Acts

Funding and Forward Estimates

	2005-06 $'000	2006-07 $'000	2007-08 $'000	2008-09 $'000	2009-10 $'000
Funding	15,882	27,587	26,939	26,006	24,199

2005-06 Actual Outcome

2005-06 Estimate $'000	2005-06 Actual Expense $'000	Variance $'000	%
15,882	14,734	-1,148	-7.2

Reportable Programme: *Workplace English Language and Literacy*

Programme description

The main aim of the Workplace English Language and Literacy (WELL) Programme is to provide workers with English language, literacy and numeracy skills. Funding is available for language, literacy and numeracy projects integrated with vocational training to help workers meet their employment and training needs. Funding is available across all industry sectors.

Funding is available for three types of projects:
- training activities - jointly funded by Commonwealth and employer;
- resource projects - Commonwealth funded;
- strategic projects – Commonwealth funded.

Policy Objective

The policy objective is to improve the language, literacy and numeracy skills of the Australian workforce.

Finishing Date

The programme is ongoing.

Evaluation

An evaluation of the WELL Programme is currently being conducted.

Appropriation source

Annual Appropriation Acts

Funding and Forward Estimates

	2005-06 $'000	2006-07 $'000	2007-08 $'000	2008-09 $'000	2009-10 $'000
Funding	14,259	14,502	14,778	15,057	15,344

2005-06 Actual Outcome

2005-06 Estimate $'000	2005-06 Actual Expense $'000	Variance $'000	%
14,259	14,006	-253	-1.8

Reportable Programme: *Language, Literacy and Numeracy*

Programme description

The Language, Literacy and Numeracy Programme (LLNP) provides language, literacy and numeracy training to assist job seekers in searching for employment or to gain access to further education and training. Training is available in Initial, Basic and Advanced language and Basic and Advanced Literacy/Numeracy courses.

Policy Objective

The objective of the LLNP is to improve job seekers' English language, literacy and numeracy skills to assist them in securing sustainable employment or to participate in further education and training. It is recognised that gains in language, literacy and numeracy skills will also improve the quality of participants' daily lives.

Finishing Date

The programme is ongoing.

Evaluation

The LLNP was reviewed in late 2004 and early 2005. Key findings include that the LLNP:
- results in improved language and/or literacy and numeracy skills;
- plays an important role in supporting key Australian government policies such as the *Australians Working Together* initiative and the migration programme; and
- has very high levels of client satisfaction with the quality of assistance and services being rated as satisfactory by over 85% of clients.

The Department implemented recommendations from the review and re-focussed crucial areas in the programme in order to improve educational outcomes, streamline administration and improve financial management from 1 July 2006.

Appropriation source

Annual Appropriation Acts

Funding and Forward Estimates

	2005-06 $'000	2006-07 $'000	2007-08 $'000	2008-09 $'000	2009-10 $'000
Funding	49,741	56,073	57,776	56,656	57,732

2005-06 Actual Outcome

2005-06 Estimate $'000	2005-06 Actual Expense $'000	Variance $'000	%
49,741	46,261	-3,480	-7.0

Reportable Programme: *Career Planning*

Programme description

The Career Planning Programme helps over 12,000 unemployed people of all ages each year to make appropriate and realistic career choices. Job seekers who are having trouble deciding what they want in a career and needing direction, whether it is deciding on a course of study, upgrading their existing skills or just finding the right job, can receive assistance through the programme.

Those eligible for the Career Planning Programme include any job seeker on an activity tested support payment such as Newstart and Youth allowance as well as parents and carers returning to work and young people aged 15-20 years registered as a jobseeker who are not eligible for income support.

Currently the programme is provided in over 160 locations throughout Australia by CRS Australia.

Policy Objective

The objective is to help unemployed people to establish or develop their employment, training and education goals and develop career management, research and decision making skills.

Finishing Date

December 2007

Evaluation

An evaluation was conducted in 2005.

Appropriation source

Annual Appropriation Acts

Funding and Forward Estimates

	2005-06 $'000	2006-07 $'000	2007-08 $'000	2008-09 $'000	2009-10 $'000
Funding	3,319	3,701	1,883	0	0

2005-06 Actual Outcome

2005-06 Estimate $'000	2005-06 Actual Expense $'000	Variance $'000	%
3,319	3,747	428	12.9

Reportable Programme: *Basic IT Enabling Skills for Older Workers (BITES)*

Programme description

BITES provided 11,500 older workers per year with the opportunity to undergo nationally recognised training in information technology. It was designed to help low-income, mature age (45 and over) job seekers gain nationally recognised skills in information and communication technology, in order for them to operate personal computers effectively at a basic level in the workforce.

Policy Objective

BITES was established to address the 'digital divide' for those workers who received no computer training whilst at school. It aimed to make these workers more competitive in the employment market.

Finishing Date

Funding for this Programme terminated on 30 June 2006.

Evaluation

An evaluation of the BITES programme was completed in October 2005. The evaluation of BITES found the programme to be successful and cost effective in providing basic IT skills to mature age low income earners.

Appropriation source

Annual Appropriation Acts

Funding and Forward Estimates

	2005-06 $'000	2006-07 $'000	2007-08 $'000	2008-09 $'000	2009-10 $'000
Funding	5,750	0	0	0	0

2005-06 Actual Outcome

2005-06 Estimate $'000	2005-06 Actual Expense $'000	Variance $'000	%
5,750	5,591	-159	-2.8

Reportable Programme: *Disability Co-ordination Officer Programme*

Programme description

The Disability Coordination Officer (DCO) Programme provides funds to organisations to employ Disability Coordination Officers (DCOs) to work across vocational and technical education and higher education providers to better coordinate information and assistance to people with a disability to undertake post-school education and training.

Policy Objective

The DCO Programme is part of the *Australians Working Together* package which seeks to discourage long-term welfare dependency by improving the engagement and contribution to the community. The Programme aims to increase the job readiness of people with a disability who have work capacity by improving their transitions between school, vocational and technical education, higher education and employment. In particular, it helps people with a disability to access and participate in post-school education. The initiative is designed to overcome the lack of information and knowledge that can prevent people with a disability successfully participating in post-school education.

Finishing Date

The programme is ongoing.

Evaluation

The DCO Programme has recently been evaluated, along with the Regional Disability Liaison Officer programme. The findings of the evaluation are largely positive about the work being done in the sector to improve the transitions of people with a disability from school to tertiary education and then on to employment.

Appropriation source

Annual Appropriation Acts

Funding and Forward Estimates

	2005-06 $'000	2006-07 $'000	2007-08 $'000	2008-09 $'000	2009-10 $'000
Funding	1,304	2,176	1,357	1,382	1,408

2005-06 Actual Outcome

2005-06 Estimate $'000	2005-06 Actual Expense $'000	Variance $'000	%
1,304	1,188	-116	-8.9

Reportable Programme: Targeted Training Initiatives

Programme description

The Targeted Training Initiatives programme consists of the following two programme elements:
- School of Fine Furniture; and
- Tasmanian Community Forest Agreement.

School of Fine Furniture

Up to 20 fee-paying students are admitted each year from Australia for a two-year full time course that teaches modern and traditional craft techniques of the highest international standard. The school has an excellent reputation for teaching students the skills required to make fine furniture.

To help the School of Fine Furniture continue its successful programme, the Government committed in 2004-05 to provide two student scholarships of $7,500 per year and $400,000 over three years to assist with the necessary capital upgrade of the school's facilities and plant and equipment. The total cost is $541,000 over five years

Policy Objective

Additional funding was provided to the School to strengthen its reputation and capacity to provide training to new graduates. It would also enable the school to be in a stronger position to enhance its already strong partnerships with the Tasmanian forest industry.

The School was placed into Voluntary Administration on 31 May 2005. The Australian Government has provided funding so that responsibility for the operation of the School could pass to the University of Tasmania from 1 August 2005.

Tasmanian Community Forest Agreement

The Tasmanian Forest and Forest Products Training Skills and Training Enhancement Project has been developed in response to needs identified under the Tasmanian Community Forest Agreement (Supplementary Tasmanian Regional Forest Agreement). The total cost is $4 million over four years.

Policy Objective

The aims of the Project are to:
- facilitate an increase in the skill levels of workers in the industry to address changed forest management, harvesting procedures and production processes to enable the industry to achieve greater yields from the forest resource;
- establish a culture of continual skill development and improvement by encouraging and providing support and information to potential new industry entrants in order to assist in reducing industry skills shortages; and
- ensure that FAFPESC, National Skills Company for the Forestry and Forest Products, Furnishing and Pulp and Paper Industries Limited join an Industry Skills Council.

Finishing Date

2009

Evaluation

No evaluation of this programme has been undertaken.

Appropriation source

Annual Appropriation Acts

Funding and Forward Estimates

	2005-06 $'000	2006-07 $'000	2007-08 $'000	2008-09 $'000	2009-10 $'000
Funding	655	1,574	991	992	993

2005-06 Actual Outcome

2005-06 Estimate $'000	2005-06 Actual Expense $'000	Variance $'000	%
655	610	-45	-0.8

Reportable Programme: *Commonwealth Grant Scheme*

Programme description

The Commonwealth Grant Scheme (CGS) supports the provision of undergraduate and non-research postgraduate student places.

To receive a grant under the CGS, a higher education provider must enter into an annual funding agreement with the Commonwealth. The agreement sets out the number of Commonwealth supported places the provider plans to offer in each of 12 funding (or discipline) clusters, as well as any conditions attached to the grant. Each funding cluster attracts a different Commonwealth contribution rate, also specified in the funding agreement.

Funding cluster rates are increased by 2.5 per cent in 2005, 5 per cent in 2006, and 7.5 per cent in 2007, for providers that meet the National Governance Protocols and the Higher Education Workplace Relations Requirements.

In addition to the funding cluster rate, some places attract loadings:

- a regional loading, payable for Commonwealth supported places at eligible regional campuses;
- an enabling loading, payable for Commonwealth supported places in enabling courses; and
- a medical loading, payable for Commonwealth supported places in a medicine course of study, completion of which would allow provisional registration as a medical practitioner.

Policy Objective

The CGS commenced in 2005 as part of the *Backing Australia's Future* reform package announced by the Australian Government in 2003.

The block grants it replaces were determined largely on an historical basis. By funding providers according to the discipline mix they actually deliver, at rates set out in legislation, the CGS ensures that all providers are funded on the same, transparent basis.

Funding agreements are negotiated annually in the context of each provider's mission and strategic direction for course provision, Commonwealth/State consultation (in relation to new places) and consideration of labour market needs. This encourages greater flexibility and diversity across the sector, while ensuring an adequate supply of graduates in areas of national importance.

Finishing Date

The programme is ongoing.

Evaluation

Subject to review by October 2009.

Appropriation source

Higher Education Support Act 2003

Funding and Forward Estimates

	2005-06 $'000	2006-07 $'000	2007-08 $'000	2008-09 $'000	2009-10 $'000
Funding	3,210,570	3,489,230	3,627,371	3,743,417	3,853,567

2005-06 Actual Outcome

2005-06 Estimate $'000	2005-06 Actual Expense $'000	Variance $'000	%
3,210,574	3,210,570	4	0

Reportable Programme: *Transition Funding*

Programme description

The programme provides additional funding to higher education providers to ensure that they do not receive less funding under the Commonwealth Grants Scheme in 2005, 2006 and 2007 than they would have received under the previous Operating Grant programme.

Policy Objective

The objective of the programme is to ensure that no higher education provider is worse off in the transition from the previous funding system to funding under the *Higher Education Support Act 2003.*

Finishing Date

The programme terminates at the end of 2007.

Evaluation

No evaluation is planned.

Appropriation source

Higher Education Support Act 2003

Funding and Forward Estimates

	2005-06 $'000	2006-07 $'000	2007-08 $'000	2008-09 $'000	2009-10 $'000
Funding	11,025	7,845	0	0	0

2005-06 Actual Outcome

2005-06 Estimate $'000	2005-06 Actual Expense $'000	Variance $'000	%
11,025	11,025	0	0.00

Reportable Programme: *Workplace Reform Programme*

Programme description

The Workplace Reform Programme (WRP) commenced in 2000 and offered higher education institutions additional funding equivalent to 2 per cent of the salary component of the operating grant, conditional on reforms being implemented in management, administration and workplace practices. In December 2003, the programme was discontinued. Universities whose application for second round funding was received by DEST before the 31 December 2003, and which were subsequently successful in obtaining that funding, received the funding on a permanent basis. This removed the potential need for universities to reapply for funding under WRP in future years, as previously envisaged under the programme. Part of the funding for this programme has been rolled into the Commonwealth Grants Scheme (CGS). The remaining portion will continue to be paid as a supplement to the CGS.

Policy Objective

The programme aims to foster workplace arrangements which:
*   reflect the needs of individual institutions;
*   result in more direct relations between institutions and their employees; and
*   improve the efficiency of management and administration processes.

Finishing Date

This programme is ongoing.

Evaluation

Subject to review by October 2009

Appropriation source

Higher Education Support Act 2003

Funding and Forward Estimates

	2005-06 $'000	2006-07 $'000	2007-08 $'000	2008-09 $'000	2009-10 $'000
Funding	45,620	49,717	49,054	49,986	50,936

2005-06 Actual Outcome

2005-06 Estimate $'000	2005-06 Actual Expense $'000	Variance $'000	%
45,620	45,501	120	0.3

Reportable Programme: *Workplace Productivity Programme*

Programme Description

The Workplace Productivity Programme (WPP) was announced as part of the *Our Universities: Backing Australia's Future* package in May 2003 to encourage institutions to pursue workplace reform. The programme commenced in 2006 and aims to improve the efficiency, productivity and performance of universities through strengthened management, leadership and governance, the review or reform of human resource practices, and the development of flexible working relationships and direct relationships with employees. Eligible institutions are those listed in Table A of the *Higher Education Support Act 2003*.

The priority for round 1 of the WPP in 2006 was the review or reform of the efficiency of universities, including of financial arrangements and operational management. Forty seven projects were funded in round one at a cost of around $53 million.

Policy Objective

The programme encourages institutions to pursue a broader workplace reform agenda by assisting them to strengthen their capability to manage and implement workplace change.

Finishing date

The programme is ongoing.

Evaluation

Subject to review by October 2009.

Appropriation source

Higher Education Support Act 2003

Funding and Forward Estimates

	2005-06 $'000	2006-07 $'000	2007-08 $'000	2008-09 $'000	2009-10 $'000
Funding	0	55,041	28,321	28,859	29,408

2005-06 Actual Outcome

2005-06 Estimate $'000	2005-06 Actual Expense $'000	Variance $'000	%
0	0	0	0

Reportable Programme: *Commonwealth Grants Scheme - Regional Loading*

Programme description

Regional loading provides additional funding under the Commonwealth Grant Scheme to higher education providers for students enrolled at eligible regional campuses. For this programme, regional campuses are defined as those located outside a mainland state capital city area and in a population centre of fewer than 250,000 people (plus Darwin and Wollongong).

Eligible campuses are allocated to one of five funding bands on the basis of the size of the higher education provider and the distance of the campus from the nearest mainland capital city.

Policy Objective

The objective of the programme is to assist higher education providers with regional campuses to meet the higher costs that they face as a result of location, size and history of these campuses, and to recognise their limited potential to diversify revenue sources, their lesser capacity to compete for fee-paying students and fewer opportunities for commercial partnerships due to the narrower regional industrial base.

Finishing Date

The programme is ongoing.

Evaluation

Subject to review by October 2009.

Appropriation source

Higher Education Support Act 2003

Funding and Forward Estimates

	2005-06 $'000	2006-07 $'000	2007-08 $'000	2008-09 $'000	2009-10 $'000
Funding	29,187	29,927	30,483	31,374	32,298

2005-06 Actual Outcome

2005-06 Estimate $'000	2005-06 Actual Expense $'000	Variance $'000	%
29,187	29,239	-52	0.2

Reportable Programme: *Superannuation Programme*

Programme description

The Commonwealth provides supplementary financial assistance to meet additional superannuation expenses over and above the standard level of funding provided for this purpose in the Commonwealth Grant Scheme.

Higher education institutions are eligible for supplementary financial assistance in respect of approved State emerging cost schemes.

Policy Objective

The objective of the Higher Education Superannuation Programme is to provide Commonwealth assistance to Table A providers to meet certain superannuation expenses associated with programmes funded under the Act. The Commonwealth meets expenses incurred by Table A Providers that have staff who are members in relevant emerging cost superannuation schemes.

Finishing Date

The programme is ongoing.

Evaluation

No evaluation is planned.

Appropriation source

Higher Education Support Act 2003

Funding and Forward Estimates

	2005-06 $'000	2006-07 $'000	2007-08 $'000	2008-09 $'000	2009-10 $'000
Funding	351,459	0	0	0	0

2005-06 Actual Outcome

2005-06 Estimate $'000	2005-06 Actual Expense $'000	Variance $'000	%
351,459	596,372	244,913	69.7

Explanation for the significant over expense

The over expense was cause by a change in the accounting treatment (AASB119) that is used to measure the liability for employee superannuation benefits with the introduction of the International Accounting Standards. The major change was a reduction in the interest rate used to discount future benefits with the interest rate being the same as yields available under Government bonds. The effect of this reduction is that the Commonwealth superannuation liability under this programme increased, increasing the expense. The changed accounting treatment only applies from 2005-06 and the full impact was not known until the end of the financial year.

Reportable Programme: *Capital Development Pool*

Programme description

The Capital Development Pool (CDP) provides funding for special capital projects.

Policy Objective

The objective of the CDP programme is to support capital development projects of eligible higher education providers.

The focus of the programme is to encourage:
- development of, or on, new campuses in suburban growth corridors and regional centres;
- capital developments that assist higher education providers to establish or expand provision of courses identified by the government as discipline areas of national importance;
- communications and information technology infrastructure projects which improve the cost-effectiveness and quality of educational delivery;
- the rebuilding or restoration of campus facilities in circumstances which are, in the view of the Minister, special and extraordinary; and
- capital developments which the Minister considers are priorities for particular higher education providers.

Finishing Date

The programme is ongoing.

Evaluation

The CDP programme was evaluated in 2000 for the funding period 1994-99.

The main conclusions were:

- The evidence suggested that the CDP had been generally effective in meeting its objectives.
- The evidence that the CDP was and remains an appropriate response to the needs of the higher education sector and Government objectives for the sector.
- CDP funding expressed Commonwealth support for projects that assisted in engaging the commitment of other funding partners; without the CDP it was arguable that some projects would not have happened.

Appropriation source

Higher Education Support Act 2003.

Funding and Forward Estimates

	2005-06 $'000	2006-07 $'000	2007-08 $'000	2008-09 $'000	2009-10 $'000
Funding	81,444	85,223	80,024	71,355	72,711

2005-06 Actual Outcome

2005-06 Estimate $'000	2005-06 Actual Expense $'000	Variance $'000	%
81,444	81,444	0	0.0

Reportable Programme: *Collaboration and Structural Reform Fund*

Programme description

The Collaboration and Structural Reform Fund (CASR) provides catalytic funding for projects that will improve the quality of higher education in Australia by facilitating structural reform in the higher education sector and by fostering collaboration between higher education and other education and training providers, business, industry, professional associations, and local communities and reform of course structures and delivery modes.

Policy Objective

The objective of the Collaboration and Structural Reform Fund (CASR) is to achieve better higher education outcomes in teaching, learning, research and innovation by promoting structural reform and collaboration in the sector.

Finishing Date

This programme is ongoing.

Evaluation

Subject to review by October 2009.

Appropriation source

Higher Education Support Act 2003.

Funding and Forward Estimates

	2005-06 $'000	2006-07 $'000	2007-08 $'000	2008-09 $'000	2009-10 $'000
Funding	9,475	27,136	5,158	4,760	4,851

2005-06 Actual Outcome

2005-06 Estimate $'000	2005-06 Actual Expense $'000	Variance $'000	%
9,475	8,510	-965	-10.2

Reportable Programme: *Quality Initiatives*

Programme description

The Quality Initiatives programme provides funding for:

- the Australian Universities Quality Agency (AUQA), to conduct audits of self-accrediting institutions and State and Territory accreditation authorities on a five yearly basis, and from 2005, to increase the number of offshore quality audit visits undertaken during the quality audit of Australian higher education institutions;
- Graduate Careers Australia (GCA), to conduct surveys of graduate outcomes and course experience using the Graduate Destination Survey (GDS), the Course Experience Questionnaire (CEQ) and the Postgraduate Research Experience Questionnaire (PREQ); and
- the Australian Council for Educational Research (ACER), to conduct the Graduate Skills Assessment (GSA) test of the generic skills of graduates in the domains of problem solving, critical thinking, interpersonal understandings and written communication.

Policy Objective

The policy objectives of the fund include:

- to effectively assure the continued quality of Australian higher education, including in the international higher education market, through audits which have publicly reported outcomes;
- to survey course experience and graduate destinations and publish data to inform institutional and sectoral performance and student choice; and
- to test the generic skills of graduates, for their own use and use by employers in selection processes.

Finishing Date

This programme is ongoing.

Evaluation

An evaluation of the effectiveness of AUQA was commissioned by AUQA after the first cycle of audits had been completed. The report of the independent review was released on 9 June 2006. The overall conclusion of the review was that AUQA is considered to be a sound, efficient organisation that has successfully delivered a demanding audit schedule since it was established in 2001. The findings of the review were considered by MCEETYA Ministers and will inform AUQA's future role and activities, including the approach to the next cycle of quality audits.

DEST provided funding to GCA in 2005 for a Graduate Destination Enhancement Project. The aim of the project was to facilitate an examination of critical factors leading to enhancements to the survey instrument, methodology and processes. The project was completed on 31 March 2006 and the report will be published, as appropriate. DEST will work with GCA and the sector to further recommendations.

The most recent evaluation of the GSA, a validity study by ACER which also asked various stakeholders and experts to evaluate the GSA, was published in July 2002, following the first two GSA tests in semester two 2000 and semester one 2001. In general, the test received a positive response from content experts, graduate recruiters and students.

Appropriation source

Higher Education Support Act 2003.

Funding and Forward Estimates

	2005-06 $'000	2006-07 $'000	2007-08 $'000	2008-09 $'000	2009-10 $'000
Funding	28,927	29,236	29,792	30,357	30,934

2005-06 Actual Outcome

2005-06 Estimate $'000	2005-06 Actual Expense $'000	Variance $'000	%
28,927	27,785	-1,142	-3.5

Reportable Programme: *Higher Education Open Learning Initiative*

Programme description

The Australian Government provides financial assistance to Open Universities Australia (OUA) for administration costs relating to the FEE-HELP programme under Part 3-3 of the *Higher Education Support Act 2003.*

Students who access units of study through OUA may be eligible to defer part of their tuition fee through FEE-HELP. The Australian Government provides OUA with a grant to assist with the costs of administering FEE-HELP for these students. This continues an arrangement under the Open Learning Deferred Payment Scheme (which has been subsumed in FEE-HELP). The amount paid to OUA is based on a formula using the number of units for which the tuition fee is deferred through FEE-HELP. The components of the formula are indexed each year.

Policy Objective

To support open access to higher education across Australia by assisting OUA to administer FEE-HELP assistance for students.

Finishing Date

The programme is ongoing.

Evaluation

No evaluations have been undertaken at this stage.

Appropriation source:

Higher Education Support Act 2003.

Funding and Forward Estimates

	2005-06 $'000	2006-07 $'000	2007-08 $'000	2008-09 $'000	2009-10 $'000
Funding	130	257	263	268	272

2005-06 Actual Outcome

2005-06 Estimate $'000	2005-06 Actual Expense $'000	Variance $'000	%
130	154	24	18.5

Reportable Programme: *Learning and Teaching Performance Fund*

Programme description

The Learning and Teaching Performance Fund was announced as part of *Our Universities: Backing Australia's Future.* The fund rewards institutions that best demonstrate excellence in learning and teaching. Allocation of the fund is determined in two stages. The focus of the first stage is evidence of institutional commitment to teaching and learning: institutions are required to establish their eligibility to participate in the fund by demonstrating that they have appropriate policies and processes in place and that these are publicly available on their websites. The focus of the second stage is learning and teaching outcomes: universities are assessed on the basis of a quantitative model that takes into account measures of student satisfaction, graduate outcomes and student success.

Policy objective

The objective of the programme is reward universities that achieve excellence in undergraduate teaching and learning.

Finishing Date

This is an ongoing programme.

Evaluation

Subject to review by October 2009.

Appropriation source

Higher Education Support Act 2003

Funding and Forward Estimates

	2005-06 $'000	2006-07 $'000	2007-08 $'000	2008-09 $'000	2009-10 $'000
Funding	54,471	83,379	113,284	115,436	117,630

2005-06 Actual Outcome

2005-06 Estimate $'000	2005-06 Actual Expense $'000	Variance $'000	%
54,471	54,436	-35	-0.1

Reportable Programme: National Institutes

Programme description

The programme provides funding in addition to the Commonwealth Grants Scheme to the Australian National University, the Australian Maritime College and the Batchelor Institute of Indigenous Tertiary Education, in recognition of their national role in particular areas of higher education.

Policy Objective   •

The programme supports the unique contributions of the following providers:

The Australian National University (ANU)

The ANU is the only university to have been established as a completely research-oriented university. It was established by the Commonwealth Government in 1946 and in 1960 it merged with Canberra University College and began providing both undergraduate and postgraduate courses. At that time the Commonwealth continued to pay the University a block funding amount as part of its operating grant, so that it would continue to provide research schools (which combined are the Institute of Advanced Studies) with research and postgraduate training responsibilities.

Batchelor Institute of Indigenous Tertiary Education (BIITE)

BIITE is Australia's only Indigenous institution of higher education. It serves students from rural and remote communities, with a particular focus on health and other courses relevant to and needed by the students' communities.

Australian Maritime College (AMC)

AMC, established under the *Maritime College Act 1978*, provides Australia's only specialist training for people entering the maritime industry.

Finishing Date

The programme is ongoing.

Evaluation

Subject to review by October 2009.

Appropriation source

Higher Education Support Act 2003

Funding and Forward Estimates

	2005-06 $'000	2006-07 $'000	2007-08 $'000	2008-09 $'000	2009-10 $'000
Funding	173,099	176,442	171,188	174,441	177,755

2005-06 Actual Outcome

2005-06 Estimate $'000	2005-06 Actual Expense $'000	Variance $'000	%
173,099	173,218	119	0.0

Reportable Programme: *Higher Education Equity Programme*

Programme descriptions

The Higher Education equity Programme consists of two programme elements that are:
- Higher Education Equity Support Programme (ESP); and
- Higher Education Disability Support Programme (DSP).

The Higher Education Equity Support Programme promotes equity objectives in higher education as an integral part of institutional planning and education provision. ESP funding is determined under the *Higher Education Support Act 2003* (HESA).

The Higher Education Disability Support Programme consists of three components:

- Additional Support for Students with Disabilities (ASSD), which partially reimburses higher education providers for the costs they incur in providing educational support and/or equipment to students with disabilities with high cost needs;
- Regional Disability Liaison Officers (RDLO), who carry out activities to help people with a disability make the transition from school to vocational education and training or higher education, and then onto employment; and
- performance based disability support funding, which provides funding to higher education providers to undertake initiatives to improve the access and educational experiences of students with a disability.

Policy Objectives

The Higher Education Equity Support Programme aims to increase the access and participation in higher education of students from low socio-economic/low income backgrounds, students from rural and isolated areas, students with a disability and students from non-English speaking backgrounds. The Higher Education Equity Support Programme also aims to assist in overcoming educational disadvantage associated with gender.

The objective of the Higher Education Disability Support Programme is to improve the access and educational experience of students with a disability in the Australian higher education sector.

Finishing Dates

The programme is ongoing.

Evaluation

Subject to review by October 2009.

The RDLO component of the DSP has recently been evaluated separately by the department along with the Disability Coordination Officer (DCO) programme. The findings of the evaluation are largely positive about the work being done in the sector to improve the transitions of people with a disability from school to tertiary education and then on to employment.

Appropriation source

Higher Education Support Act 2003

Funding and Forward Estimates

	2005-06 $'000	2006-07 $'000	2007-08 $'000	2008-09 $'000	2009-10 $'000
Funding	20,701	17,984	18,326	18,673	19,027

2005-06 Actual Outcome

2005-06 Estimate $'000	2005-06 Actual Expense $'000	Variance $'000	%
20,701	19,373	-1,328	-6.4

Reportable Programme: *Indigenous Support Programme (Indigenous Support Fund)*

Programme description

Under the Indigenous Support Programme (ISP) grants are allocated to higher education institutions to meet the needs of Indigenous students and to achieve the 21 goals of the National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Education Policy (AEP).
Activities supported under the ISP include the establishment of Indigenous Support Education Centres, assistance with study skills, personal counselling, and cultural awareness activities.

Policy Objective

The purpose of the ISP is to promote equality of opportunity for Indigenous Australians in the higher education sector. The objectives are to assist eligible higher education providers meet the special needs of Indigenous Australian students and to advance the goals of the AEP.

Finishing Date

The programme is ongoing.

Evaluation

The 2002 review of higher education in Australia found that Indigenous people are under-represented in higher education, despite improvements over the last decade.

In its report, *Backing Australia's Future 2003*, the Australian Government renewed its focus on equity and participation for Indigenous students in higher education. The Australian Government has increased funding for the ISP to ensure culturally appropriate and responsive policy, clear directives on equity programmes and performance-based rewards to remove barriers to access to higher education for Indigenous people.

Appropriation source

Higher Education Support Act 2003.

Funding and Forward Estimates

	2005-06 $'000	2006-07 $'000	2007-08 $'000	2008-09 $'000	2009-10 $'000
Funding	29,313	31,645	34,026	34,673	35,331

2005-06 Actual Outcome

2005-06 Estimate $'000	2005-06 Actual Expense $'000	Variance $'000	%
29,313	27,088	-2,225	-7.6

Reportable Programme: *Commonwealth Grants Scheme - Enabling Loading*

Programme description

The Commonwealth Grants Scheme - Enabling Loading programme provides additional funding towards the costs associated with offering a course of study which prepares a person to undertake a course that leads to a higher education award.

This loading is intended to compensate for providers not being able to charge student contributions for students in Commonwealth supported enabling courses.

Policy Objective

The objective of the enabling loading is to allow students in Commonwealth supported places in enabling courses to study without paying a student contribution.

Finishing Date

This programme is ongoing.

Evaluation

Subject to review by October 2009.

Appropriation source

Higher Education Support Act 2003

Funding and Forward Estimates

	2005-06 $'000	2006-07 $'000	2007-08 $'000	2008-09 $'000	2009-10 $'000
Funding	12,545	12,923	13,301	13,696	14,102

2005-06 Actual Outcome

2005-06 Estimate $'000	2005-06 Actual Expense $'000	Variance $'000	%
12,545	12,545	0	0.0

Reportable Programme: *Research Training*

Programme description

The Research Training Scheme (RTS) provides block grants on a calendar year basis, to eligible higher education providers (HEPs) to support research training for students undertaking Doctorate and Masters Degrees by research.

The Australian Postgraduate Awards (APA) Scholarships are awarded to students of exceptional research potential undertaking a higher degree by research. The Scholarships are provided to assist with general living costs. Scholarship holders receive an annual stipend which, in 2006, is $19,231 and may also be eligible for other allowances.

Policy objective

The objectives of the RTS are to:
- enhance the quality of research training provision in Australia;
- improve the responsiveness of institutions to the needs of their research students;
- encourage institutions to develop their own research training profiles;
- ensure the relevance of research degree programmes to labour market requirements; and
- improve the efficiency and effectiveness of research training.

The main objectives of the APA programme are to support postgraduate research training in the higher education sector and provide financial support to postgraduate students of exceptional research promise who undertake their higher degree by research at an eligible Australian higher education provider.

Finishing date

The programme is ongoing.

Evaluation

The 2003-04 evaluation of the Australian Government's *Knowledge and Innovation* reforms provided an assessment of the arrangements by which the government provides block funding to universities for research and research training, including the RTS. The evaluation led to changes to the RTS's operation to simplify its administration and to replace a five per cent funding cap with a five per cent safety net, meaning that no institution loses more than five per cent of RTS funds from one year to the next, while high performing institutions can increase their allocations by more than five per cent.

Information about the Evaluation of the *Knowledge and Innovation* reforms can be obtained from the following web site:

http://www.dest.gov.au/sectors/science_innovation/policy_issues_reviews/reviews/previous_revi ews/evaluation_knowlede_innovation_reforms

Appropriation source

Higher Education Support Act 2003

Funding and Forward Estimates

	2005-06 $'000	2006-07 $'000	2007-08 $'000	2008-09 $'000	2009-10 $'000
Funding	655,766	674,543	687,874	701,551	715,436

2005-06 Actual Outcome

2005-06 Estimate $'000	2005-06 Actual Expense $'000	Variance $'000	%
655,766	655,765	-1	0.0

Reportable Programme: *Endeavour International Postgraduate Research Scholarships*

Programme description

Under the Endeavour International Postgraduate Research Scholarships (IPRS) programme, students are offered the opportunity to obtain a postgraduate qualification and to gain experience with leading Australian researchers. Scholarships are open to international students, at either Doctorate by research or Masters by research level, who will undertake quality (fundamental or applied) research. An Endeavour IPRS covers tuition fees at the participating higher education provider and required health insurance premiums.

Policy Objective

The Endeavour IPRS programme was established to maintain and develop international research linkages and specifically aims to:

- attract top quality international postgraduate students to areas of research strength in Australian higher education institutions; and
- support Australia's research effort.

Finishing Date

This programme is ongoing.

Evaluation

No evaluations have been undertaken for this programme.

Appropriation source

Higher Education Support Act 2003

Funding and Forward Estimates

	2005-06 $'000	2006-07 $'000	2007-08 $'000	2008-09 $'000	2009-10 $'000
Funding	18,458	18,828	19,186	19,550	19,922

2005-06 Actual Outcome

2005-06 Estimate $'000	2005-06 Actual Expense $'000	Variance $'000	%
18,458	18,459	1	0.0

Reportable Programme: *Higher Education contribution to Australian Education International*

These funds are the higher education sector's contribution to Australian Educational International to fund offshore network posts.

Finishing Date

This programme is ongoing.

Evaluation

There has been no evaluations.

Appropriation source

Annual Appropriation Acts

Funding and Forward Estimates

	2005-06 $'000	2006-07 $'000	2007-08 $'000	2008-09 $'000	2009-10 $'000
Funding	5,750	5,847	5,957	6,070	6,184

2005-06 Actual Outcome

2005-06 Estimate $'000	2005-06 Actual Expense $'000	Variance $'000	%
5,750	5,749	-1	0.0

Reportable Programme: *Indigenous Higher Education Advisory Council*

Programme description

The Australian Government provided for the establishment of an Indigenous Higher Education Advisory Council (IHEAC) under the higher education reforms announced in 2003. The Council provides policy advice to the Minister on improving outcomes in higher education for Indigenous students.

Policy Objective

IHEAC was established to provide policy advice to the Minister for Education, Science and Training aimed at improving outcomes for Indigenous students and staff in relation to their participation and retention in both study and employment in higher education.

Finishing Date

IHEAC is funded annually. Its initial 16 members have been appointed for a period of two years.

Evaluation

Policy objectives and outcomes will be reviewed at the changeover of council members.

Appropriation source

Annual Appropriation Acts.

Funding and Forward Estimates

	2005-06 $'000	2006-07 $'000	2007-08 $'000	2008-09 $'000	2009-10 $'000
Funding	274	278	283	288	294

2005-06 Actual Outcome

2005-06 Estimate $'000	2005-06 Actual Expense $'000	Variance $'000	%
274	193	-81	-29.6

Reportable Programme: *Higher Education Special Projects*

Programme description

The Higher Education Special Projects Programme consists of a number of programme elements as listed below:
- Special Capital Projects;
- Support for Small Business on Regional University campuses; and
- Voluntary Student Unionism Transition Fund for Sporting and Recreational Facilities.

Special Capital Projects

Programme description

Six higher education providers received $171.5 million in special capital works in 2005-06. These capital grants contributed to the cost of new medical schools at Bond and Deakin Universities, a new branch to the medical school at Monash University, capital works at the Australian National University and the expansion of the centre for Transnational Crime Prevention at the University of Wollongong.

Policy Objective

To assist with the capital requirements of Universities.

Finishing Date

The special capital projects funding is scheduled to finish in 2007-08.

Evaluation

There has been no evaluation.

Support for Small Businesses on Regional University Campuses

Programme description

The Programme will provide grants to assist higher education providers to encourage and support small businesses to establish operations on regional campuses to provide services for students. Funding will be allocated on a competitive basis with a single application round to allocate funding for the duration of the programme.

Policy Objective

This initiative is to assist higher education providers or groups of higher education providers to encourage and support small businesses to establish operations on regional campuses to provide services to students as an alternative to those services being provided from compulsory fees that may no longer be collected under voluntary student unionism.

Finishing Date

This programme element terminates in 2009-10.

Evaluation

There has been no evaluation.

Voluntary Student Unionism (VSU) Transition Fund for Sporting and Recreational Facilities

Programme description

The transition fund will assist institutions listed in Tables A and B of the *Higher Education Support Act 2003* to adjust to the changed funding environment by facilitating a shift from reliance on compulsory fees for maintenance and construction of sporting and recreation infrastructure to other mechanisms, including: partnerships with the community; working with local businesses; expansion of membership to include other student bodies (e.g. Technical and Further Education students); and fee for service arrangements.

Funding will be allocated through two competitive selection rounds, with institutions submitting proposals for specific projects which address one or more of the funding priorities of the programme.

Policy objective

The *Higher Education Support Amendment (Abolition of Compulsory Up-front Student Union Fees) Act 2005* requires that higher education providers not compel a student to be a member of a student association, union or guild. It also requires that students not be compelled to pay any fees to a provider or any other entity for the provision of an amenity, facility or service that is not of an academic nature, unless the person has chosen to use the amenity, facility or service.

The voluntary student unionism legislation was passed by Parliament on 9 December 2005 and applies to students who commence studies on or after 1 July 2006. Students that enrolled for a full year in 2006 will continue under previous arrangements for the full year. The voluntary student unionism provisions will apply to all students from 2007.

Finishing Date

This programme element finishes in 2009-10.

Evaluation

An independent assessment of the economic and other consequences of voluntary student unionism will commence in 2008.

Appropriation source

Annual Appropriation Acts

Funding and Forward Estimates

	2005-06 $'000	2006-07 $'000	2007-08 $'000	2008-09 $'000	2009-10 $'000
Funding	196,750	28,807	39,941	21,941	5,940

2005-06 Actual Outcome

2005-06 Estimate $'000	2005-06 Actual Expense $'000	Variance $'000	%
196,750	196,500	-250	-0.1

Reportable Programme: *Superannuation Payments for former Commissioners*

Programme description

In April 1986, the Commonwealth entered into agreements with former commissioners of the Commonwealth Tertiary Education Commission which entitles contributors to receive superannuation benefits equivalent to those which they would have become entitled to under the university scheme.

Policy Objective

To provide superannuation payment to former commissioners.

Finishing Date

The programme is ongoing.

Evaluation

Not applicable

Appropriation source

Annual Appropriations

Funding and Forward Estimates

	2005-06 $'000	2006-07 $'000	2007-08 $'000	2008-09 $'000	2009-10 $'000
Funding	75	77	78	80	82

2005-06 Actual Outcome

2005-06 Estimate $'000	2005-06 Actual Expense $'000	Variance $'000	%
75	74	-1	-1.3

Reportable Programme: *Higher Education Loan Programme*

Programme description

The Higher Education Loan Programme (HELP) provides income contingent loans, consisting of:

- HECS-HELP, for eligible students enrolled in Commonwealth supported places. HECS-HELP provides students with a loan to cover their student contribution amount and/or a discount if they choose to pay all, or at least $500, of their student contribution amount up-front.
- FEE-HELP, for eligible fee-paying students enrolled at an approved higher education provider. FEE-HELP provides students with a loan to cover up to the full amount of their tuition fees, to a lifetime limit of $50,950 (in 2006 – to be increased in 2007). FEE-HELP subsumed the Postgraduate Education Loan Scheme (PELS), Open Learning Deferred Payment Scheme (OLDPS) and the Bridging for Overseas-Trained Professionals Loan Scheme (BOTPLS) on 1 January 2005.
- OS-HELP, for eligible Commonwealth supported students who wish to study overseas. OS-HELP provides students with a loan to cover expenses such as accommodation and travel.

Policy Objective

The objective of the HECS-HELP and FEE-HELP components of HELP are to increase access to higher education through the provision of a deferred payment facility. This ensures that students are not prevented or deterred from participating in higher education if they are unable to pay their student contribution or tuition fees up-front.

The objective of the OS-HELP component is to encourage more Australian students to undertake part of their study overseas. It aims to increase the accessibility of overseas study for Australian students who may not otherwise have sufficient financial means to undertake such opportunities.

Finishing Date

The programme is ongoing.

Evaluation

Subject to review by October 2009.

Appropriation source

Higher Education Support Act 2003

Funding and Forward Estimates

	2005-06 $'000	2006-07 $'000	2007-08 $'000	2008-09 $'000	2009-10 $'000
Funding	459,613	519,381	561,116	605,776	644,738

2005-06 Actual Outcome

2005-06 Estimate $'000	2005-06 Actual Expense $'000	Variance $'000	%
459,613	630,488	170,875	37.2

Explanation of significant over expense •

The significant over expense in 2005-06 was due to a change in the accounting treatment (AASB139) for the outstanding loans with the introduction of the International Accounting Standards. The new accounting treatment applies from 2005-06 and the impact was only confirmed at the end of the financial year. Under the new standard the loan is valued using 'fair value' rather than the outstanding loan amount which was used previously. This resulted in a reduction in the value of the asset and a corresponding increase in expenses.

Reportable Programme: *Commonwealth Learning Scholarships and Indigenous Staff Scholarships*

Programme description

The Commonwealth Learning Scholarships (CLS) programme, introduced in 2004 as part of the higher education reform package, *Our Universities: Backing Australia's Future (BAF)*, includes the Commonwealth Education Costs Scholarships (CECS) and Commonwealth Accommodation Scholarships (CAS). These scholarships assist students from low socio-economic backgrounds, particularly those from rural and regional areas and Indigenous students with education and accommodation costs associated with higher education. By 2009, around 43,000 scholarships will have been allocated to students in need.

The Indigenous Staff Scholarships (ISS) Programme was also established as part of the BAF reform package. The ISS Programme is for Indigenous staff (academic or general) who have actively encouraged Indigenous students to participate in higher education and complete their courses. The scholarships enable staff of eligible higher education providers to take one year of leave from their employment to undertake full-time higher education study in their chosen academic or professional area. This recognises their commitment to assisting students in higher education and enhance their own academic/professional standing.

Policy Objectives

The objective of the CLS programme is to facilitate choice in higher education and to increase participation in higher education by students from low socio-economic backgrounds, particularly indigenous students and students from rural and regional areas.

The objective of the ISS programme is to develop Indigenous leadership in the higher education sector through the provision of opportunities for professional development.

Finishing Dates

The programme is ongoing.

Evaluation

Subject to review by October 2009.

Appropriation source

Higher Education Support Act 2003

Funding and Forward Estimates

	2005-06 $'000	2006-07 $'000	2007-08 $'000	2008-09 $'000	2009-10 $'000
Funding	68,153	95,395	105,334	107,923	110,606

2005-06 Actual Outcome

2005-06 Estimate $'000	2005-06 Actual Expense $'000	Variance $'000	%
68,153	68,135	-18	0.0

Reportable Programme: *Student Financial Supplement Scheme – Austudy & ABSTUDY*

Programme description

The Student Financial Supplement Scheme (SFSS) was a voluntary loans scheme, which allows students undertaking approved tertiary studies and who are receiving Youth Allowance, Austudy payment, ABSTUDY or Pensioner Education Supplément the option of borrowing money to help cover their expenses while studying.

The student is given a five year moratoriurin on repayments which become payable on an income contingent basis through the Australian Taxation Office (ATO), although voluntary repayments can be made during the five year moratorium period.

In April 2003 the Government announced its intention to close the Student Financial Supplement Scheme (SFSS) from 1 January 2004.

On the advice of the Australian Government Solicitor, the Scheme was closed administratively by allowing the previous contract between the Commonwealth and the Commonwealth Bank of Australia (CBA) to expire at the end of its term (31 December 2003).

No new loans have been offered since 1 January 2004.

2005-06 Budget announced that the contractual arrangements with CBA were set to cease from 1 December 2005.

From 1 December 2005 the Government bought back all outstanding Student Finance Supplement Scheme (SFSS) loans held by the CBA. Centrelink has since then taken on the administration of remaining loans and the customers will make any voluntary repayments to Centrelink instead of the CBA. This will continue until June 2008 when any remaining loans will be transferred to the Australian Taxation Office for repayment action.

The Government expect savings in interest and management fees previously payable to the CBA.

Policy Objective

To assist students with the cost of education.

Finishing Date

The SFSS is already closed to students seeking new loans. The Australian Government's relationship with the CBA has been terminated. The SFSS will not terminate until the final loan is repaid to the Government or written off on the death of the final surviving recipient towards the end of the 21st century.

Evaluation

Not applicable as the Scheme ceased in December 2003.

Appropriation source

Austudy - *Social Security Act 1991*
ABSTUDY - *Student Assistance Act 1973*

Funding and Forward Estimates

SFSS Austudy

	2005-06 $'000	2006-07 $'000	2007-08 $'000	2008-09 $'000	2009-10 $'000
Funding	11,950	23,413	22,061	23,484	24,605

SFSS ABSTUDY

	2005-06 $'000	2006-07 $'000	2007-08 $'000	2008-09 $'000	2009-10 $'000
Funding	12,370	7,985	7,503	7,979	8,456

2005-06 Actual Outcomes

SFSS Austudy

2005-06 Estimate $'000	2005-06 Actual Expense $'000	Variance $'000	%
11,950	10,020	-1,930	-16.2

SFSS ABSTUDY

2005-06 Estimate $'000	2005-06 Actual Expense $'000	Variance $'000	%
12,370	2,940	-9,430	-76.2

Explanation of significant under expense

The variance is due to the reduction in doubtful debt provision based on advice provided by the Australian Government Actuary. The estimate did not include the change in the provision for doubtful debt for 2005-06.

Reportable Programme: *Youth Allowance*

Programme description

Youth Allowance (student) provides assistance to young people aged 16 to 24 who are full time students or Australian Apprentices, or who are temporarily incapacitated for study or a Australian Apprenticeship. It is also payable to students and Australian Apprentices aged 25 or over who were receiving Youth Allowance immediately before turning 25 and remain the same course of study or Australian Apprenticeship. Certain 15 year olds, including those who are homeless, may also qualify for the payment.

Youth Allowance is also available to unemployed young people aged under 21 who are looking for work, combining part-time study with job search, undertaking another approved activity, or who are temporarily incapacitated for work. Youth Allowance (other) recipients are the responsibility of the Department of Employment and Workplace Relations (DEWR).

Policy Objective

Youth Allowance seeks to:
- ensure eligible young people receive income while studying, looking for, or preparing for, paid employment;
- encourage young people to choose further education or training over job search if they do not have sufficient skills to obtain long-term employment; and
- encourage young people to undertake a range of activities that will promote entry into employment.

Finishing Date

The programme is ongoing.

Evaluation

No evaluation has been done since the Youth Allowance became the responsibility of DEST in October 2004.

Appropriation source

Social Security Act 1991

Funding and Forward Estimates

These figures refer to Youth Allowance (student) customers only.

	2005-06 $'000	2006-07 $'000	2007-08 $'000	2008-09 $'000	2009-10 $'000
Funding	1,657,626	1,690,478	1,679,465	1,664,515	1,653,990

2005-06 Actual Outcome

2005-06 Estimate $'000	2005-06 Actual Expense $'000	Variance $'000	%
1,657,626	1,565,670	-91,956	-5.5

Explanation of significant under expense

There are two reasons for the under expense:
- overall economic conditions and strong labour market; and
- lower than expected uptake of the allowance.

Reportable Programme: *Austudy Payment*

Programme description

Austudy payment provides income support for full-time students aged 25 and over who are undertaking qualified study or a full-time Australian Apprenticeship.

Policy Objective

To provide financial assistance to eligible students.

Finishing Date

The programme is ongoing.

Evaluation

No evaluation has been done since the Austudy payment became the responsibility of DEST in October 2004.

Appropriation source

Social Security Act 1991

Funding and Forward Estimates

	2005-06 $'000	2006-07 $'000	2007-08 $'000	2008-09 $'000	2009-10 $'000
Funding	225,922	239,606	261,688	281,388	299,463

2005-06 Actual Outcome

2005-06 Estimate $'000	2005-06 Actual Expense $'000	Variance $'000	%
225,922	217,765	-8,157	-3.6

Reportable Programme: *Fares Allowance*

Programme description

Fares Allowance is paid to tertiary students receiving Youth Allowance and Austudy who have to live away from their permanent home to study. It consists of reimbursement of the cost of the cheapest practicable form of public transport, regardless of the transport actually used. It is not payable for daily transport.

Policy Objective

To provide financial assistance to eligible students while they need to study away from a permanent home.

Finishing Date

The programme is ongoing.

Evaluation

No evaluation has been done since the Fares Allowance became the responsibility of DEST in October 2004.

Appropriation source

Social Security Act 1991

Funding and Forward Estimates

	2005-06 $'000	2006-07 $'000	2007-08 $'000	2008-09 $'000	2009-10 $'000
Funding	1,550	1,593	1,638	1,684	1,731

2005-06 Actual Outcome

2005-06 Estimate $'000	2005-06 Actual Expense $'000	Variance $'000	%
1,550	1,127	-423	-27.3

Reportable Programme: *Institutional Grants Scheme*

Programme description

The Institutional Grants Scheme (IGS) provides block grants, on a calendar year basis, to eligible higher education providers (HEPS) to support research and research training activities. HEPs have discretion in the way they spend their IGS grant. The IGS may be used to fund any activity related to the research.

Funding under the IGS is allocated on the basis of formula that takes into account each institution's success in attracting research students (30 percent of funding), in attracting research income (60 percent) and in the quality and output of its research publications (10 percent).

Policy objective

The purpose of the IGS is to maintain and strengthen Australia's knowledge base and research capabilities by developing an effective research and research training system in the higher education sector.

Finishing date

The programme is ongoing.

Evaluation

The 2003-04 evaluation of the Australian Government's *Knowledge and Innovation* reforms provided an assessment of the arrangements by which the government provides block funding to universities for research and research training, including the IGS. As a result, the IGS was retained with no changes to its funding formula; however, the evaluation led to a change to replace a five per cent funding cap with a five per cent safety net, meaning that no institution loses more than five per cent of IGS funds from one year to the next, while high performing institutions can increase their allocations by more than five per cent.

Further information about the Evaluation of the *Knowledge and Innovation* reforms can be obtained from the following web site:

http://www.dest.gov.au/sectors/science_innovation/policy_issues_reviews/reviews/previous_revi ews/evaluation_knowlede_innovation_reforms

Appropriation source

Higher Education Support Act 2003

Funding and Forward Estimates

	2005-06 $'000	2006-07 $'000	2007-08 $'000	2008-09 $'000	2009-10 $'000
Funding	296,113	302,035	307,774	313,621	319,580

2005-06 Actual Outcome

2005-06 Estimate $'000	2005-06 Actual Expense $'000	Variance $'000	%
296,113	296,113	0	0.0

Reportable Programme: *Systemic Infrastructure Initiative*

Programme Description

The Systemic Infrastructure Initiative provides funding for innovative approaches to meet demonstrated needs for infrastructure which link or expand access to shared facilities, such as libraries, national information technology frameworks and supporting infrastructure, specialised equipment, introduce new e-research initiatives, or further cooperative approaches based on international standards and specifications for the sector broadly or to support specialised requirements of national importance.

Policy Objective

The key objective of the Systemic Infrastructure Initiative is to provide additional funding to upgrade the systemic research infrastructure resources of universities on a system-wide basis to support world-class research and research training.

Finishing Date

The Systemic Infrastructure Initiative is a terminating programme that will finish at the end of 2006.

Evaluation

No formal evaluation has been carried out. However the programme was assessed by the National Research Infrastructure Taskforce and subsequently considered in the context of the Budget. The conclusions of the Taskforce are contained in its Final Report which can be found at http://www.dest.gov.au/highered/ri_taskforce/documents/pub.pdf.

Appropriation Source

Higher Education Support Act 2003

Funding and Forward Estimates

	2005-06 $'000	2006-07 $'000	2007-08 $'000	2008-09 $'000	2009-10 $'000
Funding	61,368	17,064	0	0	0

2005-06 Actual Outcome

2005-06 Estimate $'000	2005-06 Actual Expense $'000	Variance $'000	%
61,368	48,695	-12,673	-20.7

Explanation of significant under expense

Funding for the Systemic Infrastructure Initiative is appropriated on a calendar year basis and so there is no under-spend. The variance amount was originally estimated to be expensed in the first half of the 2006 calendar year (2005-06 financial year) but it was anticipated to be expensed in the second half of the 2006 calendar year (2006-07 financial year). This resulted in a reduction of the 2005-06 budget and an increase in the 2006-07 budget.

Reportable Programme: *Research Infrastructure Block Grants*

Programme description

Research Infrastructure Block Grants Scheme (RIBG) provides block grants on a calendar year basis, to eligible higher education providers (HEPs) to enhance the development and maintenance of research infrastructure. RIBG is allocated according to the relative success of each HEP in attracting research funds, as calculated from schemes in the Australian Competitive Grants Register.

Policy objective

The purpose of RIBG is to enhance the development and maintenance of research infrastructure in higher education institutions for the support of high quality research in all disciplines.

Other programme objectives are to:

- meet project- related infrastructure costs infrastructure costs associated with Australian Competitive Grants;
- remedy deficiencies in current research infrastructure;
- enhance support for areas of research strength; and
- ensure that areas of recognised research potential, in which institutions have taken steps to initiate high quality research activity, have access to the support necessary for development.

Finishing Date

The programme is ongoing.

Evaluation

The 2003-04 evaluation of the Australian Government's *Knowledge and Innovation* reforms provided an assessment of the arrangements by which the government provides block funding to universities for research and research training, including RIBG. There was no policy change to RIBG as a result; however, the Australian Government's *Backing Australia's Ability – Building our Future through Science and Innovation* statement in May 2004 provided additional funding for RIBG ($554.5 million between 2006-07 to 2010-11).

Further information about the Evaluation of the *Knowledge and Innovation* reforms can be obtained from the following web site:

http://www.dest.gov.au/sectors/science_innovation/policy_issues_reviews/reviews/previous_revi ews/evaluation_knowlede_innovation_reforms

Appropriation source

Higher Education Support Act 2003

Funding and Forward Estimates

	2005-06 $'000	2006-07 $'000	2007-08 $'000	2008-09 $'000	2009-10 $'000
Funding	199,908	203,907	207,781	211,729	215,752

2005-06 Actual Outcome

2005-06 Estimate $'000	2005-06 Actual Expense $'000	Variance $'000	%
199,908	199,908	0	0.0

Reportable Programme: *Regional Protection Scheme*

Programme description

This Regional Protection Scheme (RPS) helps to protect designated regional higher education providers (HEPs) from losses of income arising from the Government's 1999 Knowledge and Innovation reforms to the funding of university research and research training.

Policy objective

The RPS was established in 2001 to provide protection from 2002 to 2004. The RPS has been extended through to 2008.   Funding under this programme is limited to $3 million annually indexed to current prices. The available funding will be distributed to designated HEPs in proportion to their combined Research Training Scheme and Institutional Grants Scheme (IGS) loss against their indexed 2001 benchmark.

This scheme helps maintains and strengthen regional universities capabilities, so they can continue to conduct competitively funded research, which is of benefit to regional Australia and more broadly the whole Australian community.

Finishing date

This programme terminates at the end of 2008.

Evaluation

The 2003-04 evaluation of the Australian Government's *Knowledge and Innovation* reforms provided an assessment of the arrangements by which the government provides block funding to universities for research and research training, including the RPS. The government's response to the evaluation included the provision of $12.4 million over four years to extend the RPS.

Further information about the Evaluation of the *Knowledge and Innovation* reforms can be obtained from the following web site:

http://www.dest.gov.au/sectors/science_innovation/policy_issues_reviews/reviews/previous_revi ews/evaluation_knowlede_innovation_reforms

Appropriation source

Higher Education Support Act 2003

Funding and Forward Estimates

	2005-06 $'000	2006-07 $'000	2007-08 $'000	2008-09 $'000	2009-10 $'000
Funding	3,086	3,148	3,208	0	0

2005-06 Actual Outcome

2005-06 Estimate $'000	2005-06 Actual Expense $'000	Variance $'000	%
3,086	0	-3,086	-100

Reportable Programme: Higher Education Research Promotion

Programme description

The Higher Education Research Promotion Programme consists of a number of programme elements, each described below:

Australian New Zealand Association for the Advancement of Science (ANZAAS) Youth Conference Grant-In-Aid Scheme

The ANZAAS Youth Conference Grant-in-Aid Scheme provides promising young scientists with an opportunity to mix with peers and internationally acclaimed scientists. The grant-in-aid is provided to ANZAAS to cover students' transportation and accommodation costs to attend an annual conference organized by ANZAAS. Approximately five students from each Australian State and Territory are funded to attend the ANZAAS annual youth conference.

Learned Academies Grant-In-Aid Scheme

Grant-in-aid funding is provided to the Learned Academies and their overarching administrative body, the National Academies Forum, to assist them to:

- promote and undertake research and scholarship in the natural and applied sciences, technological development and applied technology, the social science and the humanities;
- provide focal points for contact with the communities represented by the Academies and as a source of advice for the Government relating to their fields of expertise; and
- maintain affiliations with appropriate international organisations.

Federation of Australian Scientific and Technological Societies (FASTS)

Funding is provided to support the activities of FASTS, including the Federation's role in policy formulation, raising public awareness and promoting the importance of science and technology in addressing important national issues.

Council for the Humanities, Arts and Social Sciences (CHASS)

Funding is provided to support CHASS including helping it build the contribution of the arts, humanities and social sciences to the national innovation system.

Chair in Child Protection

Funding for this programme will be used to promote research into child protection in Australia. The Chair will lead research into ways to combat child abuse in consultation with educational agencies, human services agencies and government departments.

Policy objective

The policy objectives of the ANZAAS Youth Conference Grant-In-Aid Scheme programme are to:

- foster public interest in science and technology, and awareness of their role in every day life; and
- encourage the curiosity of children about the natural and man made world around them.

Funding to the Learned Academies supports the objective of maintaining and strengthening Australia's knowledge base and research capabilities by developing an effective research and research training system.

Funding to FASTS and CHASS will promote the application of publicly funded research to the resolution of Australia's economic, social and environmental challenges, while strengthening collaboration within the academic community both domestically and internationally.

The objective of the funding for the Chair in Child Protection programme is to promote research in combating child abuse.

Finishing date

The programme is ongoing.

Evaluation

No formal evaluation has been carried out for the ANZAAS Youth Conference Grant-in Aid Scheme.

A Review of the Learned Academies Scheme is conducted every five years. The latest review was completed in 2005. The review report is available through the DEST Website.

A review of FASTS and CHASS will be completed by no later than October 2009.

No review of the Chair in Child Protection programme is planned.

Appropriation source

Higher Education Support Act 2003

Funding and forward Estimates

	2005-06 $'000	2006-07 $'000	2007-08 $'000	2008-09 $'000	2009-10 $'000
Funding	4,064	3,307	3,578	3,646	3,225

2005-06 Actual Outcome

2005-06 Estimate $'000	2005-06 Actual Expense $'000	Variance $'000	%
4,064	4,064	0	0.0

Reportable Programme: *Anglo-Australian Telescope Board*

Programme description

The Anglo-Australian Observatory (AAO) is overseen by the Anglo-Australian Telescope Board (AATB), which is an independent bi-nation body corporate authority, funded by the Governments of Australia and the United Kingdom. The Board operates under *The Anglo-Australian Telescope Agreement 1970* (the Agreement) which came into operation in February 1971 for an initial period of 25 years. This Agreement has been modified by a *Supplementary Agreement* which was signed on 3 November 2005 and which entered into force 29 June 2006. The Supplementary Agreement contains a clause having the effect of terminating both Agreements on 1 July 2010 and transferring sole ownership and control of the AAT to the Australian Government.

Policy Objective

The objective of funding is to support the operation and use of the Anglo-Australian Telescope and associated facilities as set out in the Anglo-Australian Telescope Agreement.

Finishing date

The programme is ongoing.

Evaluation

While the programme has not been the subject of a formal evaluation, it was the subject of a DEST-initiated and -funded review in 2006. A three-member panel, chaired by former Chief Defence Scientist Dr Ian Chessell, presented a report to the Minister on 30 June 2006. Informed by this report, the Minister is currently considering funding and governance options for the AAO.

Appropriation source

Annual Appropriation Acts

Funding and Forward Estimates

	2005-06 $'000	2006-07 $'000	2007-08 $'000	2008-09 $'000	2009-10 $'000
Funding	4,594	4,701	4,795	4,891	4,988

2005-06 Actual Outcome

2005-06 Estimate $'000	2005-06 Actual Expense $'000	Variance $'000	%
4,594	4,594	0	0.0

Reportable Programme: *National Collaborative Research Infrastructure Strategy*

Programme description

The National Collaborative Research Infrastructure Strategy is providing $542 million over seven years to provide researchers with major research facilities, supporting infrastructure and networks necessary for world-class research. It will follow the programme of investments provided under *Backing Australia's Ability* through the Systemic Infrastructure Initiative and Major National Research Facilities programme. NCRIS will provide a framework for making strategic decisions on major research infrastructure investments that is:

- national in scope and aware of the international context;
- collaborative and supportive of a collaborative research culture;
- aligned with broader research priorities;
- focussed on excellence; and
- able to broadly sustain the innovation system.

Policy Objective

The objectives of the National Collaborative Research Infrastructure Strategy are to provide researchers with continued access to major infrastructure, link infrastructure funding more directly to Australia's National Research Priorities and foster greater research collaboration and collaborative use of infrastructure. NCRIS is regarded as having a critical role to play in building support among stakeholders for a more strategic and collaborative approach to research infrastructure investment.

Finishing Date

This programme terminates on 30 June 2011.

Evaluation

An evaluation of the NCRIS programme is planned to take place in 2009.

Appropriation source

Annual Appropriation Acts

Funding and Forward Estimates

	2005-06 $'000	2006-07 $'000	2007-08 $'000	2008-09 $'000	2009-10 $'000
Funding	13,151	98,196	100,400	102,499	104,694

2005-06 Actual Outcome

2005-06 Estimate $'000	2005-06 Actual Expense $'000	Variance $'000	%
13,151	13,146	-5	0.0

Reportable Programme: *The Framework for Open Learning Programme*

Programme description

The Framework for Open Learning Programme (FOLP) supports collaboration between the Australian Government, states and territories in the use of information and communications technology (ICT) across all education and training sectors to meet the challenges of the 21st Century. The programme funds a number of ongoing initiatives which support national cross-sectoral collaboration and cooperation to ensure consistency, the sharing of good practice and to minimise duplication of effort.

FOLP supports:
- *education.au limited*, a company owned by all Australian education and training Ministers, to develop and manage nationally scoped, sustainable online web-based resources and tools that can be used by the whole of the Australian education and training sector which underpin key national education and training priorities;
- the Australian Information and Communications Technology in Education Committee (AITCEC) which represents the interests of government and non-government schools, the VTE and higher education sectors on cross sectoral ICT in education matters and reports to MCEETYA; and
- cross-sectoral ICT projects in education and training which support the priorities of the programme.

Policy objective

The policy objective of FOLP is to promote a cross-sectoral and collaborative approach to the effective and efficient use of ICT for education and training between the education sectors, systems and governments across Australia to meet the challenges of the 21st century. The priorities for the programme are guided by the *Joint Ministerial Statement on Education and Training in the Information Economy* and *Building a Knowledge Culture: An education and training action plan for the information economy 2005-2007* which was endorsed by MCEETYA.

Finishing Date

The programme is ongoing.

Evaluation

An evaluation of FOLP was completed in October 2005. The findings from the evaluation noted that programme is consistent with the over-arching government strategies related to the innovative use of ICT in education, has been successful in encouraging national collaboration and is unique in its cross-sectoral collaborative nature.

Appropriation source

Annual Appropriations

Funding and Forward Estimates

	2005-06 $'000	2006-07 $'000	2007-08 $'000	2008-09 $'000	2009-10 $'000
Funding	2,853	2,928	2,951	2,980	3,037

2005-06 Actual Outcome

2005-06 Estimate $'000	2005-06 Actual Expense $'000	Variance $'000	%
2,853	2,851	-2	-0.1

Reportable Programme: *Cooperative Research Centres*

Programme description

The Cooperative Research Centres (CRC) Programme, established in 1990, promotes long-term strategic links and collaborations between researchers and research users from universities, the public sector and business. The programme emphasises the importance of collaborative arrangements to maximise the benefits of research through an enhanced process of utilisation, commercialisation and technology transfer. It also has a strong education component with a focus on producing graduates with skills relevant to industry needs.

Policy Objective

The current CRC Programme objective is to enhance Australia's industrial, commercial and economic growth through the development of sustained, user-driven, cooperative public-private research centres that achieve high levels of outcomes in adoption and commercialisation.

Finishing Date

Additional funding provided under Backing Australia's Ability ends in 2010-11, otherwise this is an ongoing programme.

Evaluation

An evaluation of the CRC Programme was conducted in the first half of 2003 to determine whether the Programme has been effective in meeting its objectives and efficient in its administration. The evaluation found that the CRC Programme has made a substantial contribution to enhancing Australia's research and innovation capacity. The Report recommended the Programme continue with some modifications to strengthen its objectives and outcomes.

The evaluation report was released publicly in August 2003 and is available on the CRC Programme website www.crc.gov.au

Appropriation source

Annual Appropriation Acts.

Funding and Forward Estimates

	2005-06 $'000	2006-07 $'000	2007-08 $'000	2008-09 $'000	2009-10 $'000
Funding	208,197	189,382	211,047	181,182	196,518

2005-06 Actual Outcome

2005-06 Estimate $'000	2005-06 Actual Expense $'000	Variance $'000	%
208,197	208,097	-100	·0.0

Reportable Programme: *Major National Research Facilities*

Programme description

Major National Research Facilities (MNRF) are expensive, large equipment items or highly specialised laboratories that are vital for conducting leading-edge research in science, engineering and technology.

Through adding strategic capability to Australia's research infrastructure, these national facilities enhance the scope and opportunity to exploit Australian science and technology innovations.

Policy objective

The specific objectives for the MNRF Programme are to establish major research facilities that:

- improve Australia's capability in science, engineering and technology;
- maintain and enhance Australia's international scientific and industrial competitiveness; and
- support the rapid commercialisation of research results.

Finishing date

The MNRF Programme terminated in 2005-06.

Evaluation

An evaluation of the MNRF Programme has not been conducted. The programme will be replaced by the National Collaborative Research Infrastructure Strategy (NCRIS) and experience from the Programme was taken into account in design of the NCRIS.

Appropriation source

Annual Appropriation Acts

Funding and Forward Estimates

	2005-06 $'000	2006-07 $'000	2007-08 $'000	2008-09 $'000	2009-10 $'000
Funding	42,308	0	0	0	0

2005-06 Actual Outcome

2005-06 Estimate $'000	2005-06 Actual Expense $'000	Variance $'000	%
42,308	42,308	0	0.0

Reportable Programme: *Radioactive Waste Management*

Programme description

The Radioactive Waste Management programme provides for the safe and secure management of radioactive waste through the establishment of radioactive waste management facilities. The programme also includes the ongoing management of the former British atomic test site at Maralinga in South Australia until a hand back of the site to the traditional owners.

Policy objective

The programme's objectives are to provide facilities for the safe and responsible management of Commonwealth radioactive waste, and the management of contaminated lands at Maralinga in South Australia, to ensure the health and safety of the Australian public.

Finishing date

The programme is ongoing.

Evaluation

No evaluation of the overall programme has been undertaken. An independent report *Rehabilitation of Former Nuclear Test Sites at Emu and Maralinga (Australia) 2003 - Report by the Maralinga Rehabilitation Technical Advisory Committee* relating to the Maralinga project was tabled in Parliament on 25 March 2003.

The MARTAC Report concluded that the project achieved outcomes that led to a degree of risk that fell comfortably within the risk limit for the stated lifestyle and assumed administrative control as accepted by the stakeholders. Most of the former Maralinga test site (approximately 3,200 square kilometres) is now safe for unrestricted access. As a precautionary measure, approximately 120 square kilometres is considered safe for access but not permanent occupancy.

The report stated that the rehabilitation program was achieved within budget and on schedule.

Appropriation source

Annual Appropriation Acts

Funding and Forward Estimates

	2005-06 $'000	2006-07 $'000	2007-08 $'000	2008-09 $'000	2009-10 $'000
Funding	4,714	3,480	4,834	2,434	520

2005-06 Actual Outcome

2005-06 Estimate $'000	2005-06 Actual Expense $'000	Variance $'000	%
4,714	845	-3,869	-82.1

Explanation of significant under expenditure

The timing of the announcement of potential sites for the Commonwealth Radioactive Waste Management Facility and the passage of the *Commonwealth Radioactive Waste Management Act 2005* through Parliament did not allow for as much work to be completed by the consultant undertaking site characterisation studies as planned. Final costs resulting from the discontinued acquisition of land in South Australia for the former national repository project were less than anticipated.

Reportable Programme: *Defence of Common Law- Atomic Tests (RRWM)*

Programme description

This programme was established in order to pay for legal expenses related to common law actions instituted against the Commonwealth of Australia arising out of the British nuclear testing programme conducted in Australia in the 1950s and 1960s.

Policy Objective

To have funds available if required to settle common law actions instituted against the Commonwealth of Australia.

Finishing Date

The programme is ongoing.

Evaluation

Not applicable

Appropriation source

Annual Appropriation Acts

Funding and Forward Estimates

	2005-06 $'000	2006-07 $'000	2007-08 $'000	2008-09 $'000	2009-10 $'000
Funding	543	543	543	543	543

2005-06 Actual Outcome

2005-06 Estimate $'000	2005-06 Actual Expense $'000	Variance $'000	%
543	0	-543	-100.0

Explanation of significant under expenditure

There were no common law actions in the past year.

Reportable Programme: *International Science Linkages*

Programme description

The International Science Linkages (ISL) Programme supports Australian scientists, from both the public and private sectors, to collaborate with international partners on leading edge science and technology in order to contribute to Australia's economic, social and environmental wellbeing. The ISL Programme builds on and expands the funding provided through the former Innovation Access Programme – International Science and Technology (IAP-IST).

The ISL comprises three clearly different but complementary elements: Competitive Grants, Strategic Policy, and the Science Academies Programme.
- Competitive Grants provides funding on a competitive basis for Australian researchers to participate in strategically focussed, leading edge, international scientific research and technology collaborations.
- Strategic Policy promotes effective research collaboration by providing a vehicle for the Australian Government to establish, reinforce and leverage strategic links and relationships with overseas counterparts.
- The Science Academies Programme complements Competitive funding and Strategic Policy by providing targeted support for specific activities using the networks and expertise of the Australian Academy of Science and the Australian Academy of Technological Sciences and Engineering.

Policy objective

The objective of the ISL programme is to:
- Increase the uptake of leading edge science and technology through:
  o promoting access to and participation by Australian researchers in strategically focussed, leading edge, international scientific research and technology; and
  o increasing strategic alliances between Australian and overseas researchers.
- Facilitate Australia's access to the global S&T system by supporting bilateral and multilateral relations with other countries.

Finishing date

The programme is ongoing.

Evaluation

A review of the Innovation Access Programme – International S&T was completed in December 2003. The review concluded that the programme:
- objectives remain appropriate;
- has had substantial impact with an average of five new collaboration partners and four new strategic alliances already resulting from each project funded; and
- is delivered efficiently, relying upon a range of external expertise and relationships for the successful selection of activities and administration of funding.

Appropriation source

Annual Appropriation Acts

Funding and Forward Estimates

	2005-06 $'000	2006-07 $'000	2007-08 $'000	2008-09 $'000	2009-10 $'000
Funding	10,190	11,701	11,368	11,575	11,884

2005-06 Actual Outcome

2005-06 Estimate $'000	2005-06 Actual Expense $'000	Variance $'000	%
10,190	10,223	33	0.3

Reportable Programme: *Science Connections Programme*

Programme description

The Science Connections Programme (SCOPE) is funded under the Innovation Statement Backing Australia's Ability: Building our future through science and innovation.

SCOPE supports a range of initiatives encouraging interest and engagement in science, engineering, and technology.

Policy Objective

SCOPE's objectives are:
- to increase awareness of the roles that science, technology and innovation play in contributing to the well-being of our society and the environmentally sustainable growth of our economy;
- to highlight the outstanding contributions to science and science education made by our researchers and science teachers; and
- to encourage our young people to consider continuing studies in science, mathematics and engineering beyond the compulsory years of schooling, and to consider entry into science-based careers.

Finishing Date

This is an ongoing programme.

Evaluation

An evaluation is scheduled for 2010-11.

Appropriation source

Annual Appropriation Acts

Funding and Forward Estimates

	2005-06 $'000	2006-07 $'000	2007-08 $'000	2008-09 $'000	2009-10 $'000
Funding	593	4,016	4,111	4,193	4,336

2005-06 Actual Outcome

2005-06 Estimate $'000	2005-06 Actual Expense $'000	Variance $'000	%
593	593	0	0.0

Reportable Programme: *International Education and Training*

Programme description

The International Education and Training Programme is made up of the following programme elements:

International Centres of Excellence

The Australian Government has allocated seed funding of $35.5 million over four years for five International Centres of Excellence (ICE). The Centres will build an international profile for Australia's expertise and education excellence and enhance Australia's capacity and national skills base through strategic collaborations with domestic and international expert organisations. The Centres of Excellence are:

- ICE in Asia Pacific Studies and Asia-Pacific College of Diplomacy based at ANU ($8.8 million);
- ICE for Education in Mathematics established by the Australian Mathematical Sciences Institute and based at the University of Melbourne ($7.8 million);
- ICE in Tourism and Hospitality Education established by the Cooperative Research Centre in Sustainable Tourism based at Griffith University ($2 million);
- ICE in Sports Science and Management established by a partnership between the University of Sydney, the University of Technology Sydney and the Sydney Olympic Park Authority. The Centre is based at Sydney Olympic Park ($7.8 million); and
- ICE in Water Resources Management established by a consortium led by the University of Adelaide ($6.7 million) and is currently based at the University.

The Centres of Excellence will build upon the strengths and capacities of existing institutions or consortia of institutions with relevant expertise and adopt a collaborative approach with business enterprise where appropriate. *The Centres are now well established and pursuing the objectives of their respective Funding Agreements.*

National Centre for Language Training

As part of the 2003-04 Budget package, the Government has allocated seed funding of $4.6 million over two years to establish the National Centre for Language Training. The objective of the Centre is to equip Australians with practical language skills and cultural knowledge to operate effectively in international markets. The Centre will develop and offer customised training in key languages, cultural awareness and cross-cultural communication skills specifically targeted to the needs of Australian business. Clients of the Centre may include Australian exporting firms, government departments and the tourism and hospitality sectors. The Centre is run by a University-TAFE consortium established by New South Global Pty Ltd.

Endeavour Programme

The Endeavour Programme was established as part of the 2003 International Education Package, *Engaging the World Through Education*. All international education scholarships funded by the Department of Education, Science and Training (DEST) come under the Endeavour Programme.

In July 2005, the Prime Minister requested that the Minister for Foreign Affairs and the Minister for Education, Science and Training develop a proposal for an umbrella scholarship programme to advance foreign policy and development priorities in the Asia-Pacific region. The policy initiative, *Australian Scholarships*, represents a whole-of-Australian-Government approach to education cooperation between Australia and the countries of the Asia–Pacific region.

From July 2006 the Australian Government will provide nearly $1.4 billion over 5 years to support education cooperation in the Asia-Pacific under the banner of *Australian Scholarships*. This includes $442.5 million of new funding to provide over 19,000 scholarships over the five-year period from 1 July 2006.

The $7.9m Endeavour Programme (part of the 2003-04 budget package) has been significantly expanded under *Australian Scholarships* with $185.5 million of additional funding, and will offer approximately 9,700 awards between the 2007 and 2011 funding rounds.

The new funding for the Endeavour Programme under *Australian Scholarships* provides for a mix of postgraduate and postdoctoral research fellowships, postgraduate coursework scholarships, student exchange subsidies, vocational and technical education awards, professional development awards and also for Australians to study and undertake professional development abroad.

The objectives of the *Australian Scholarships* initiative are to:
- strengthen bilateral ties between Australia and countries in the Asia-Pacific region;
- create linkages between Australian and international academic institutions;
- strengthen mutual understanding, at an individual level, between Australians and the people of the region;
- further develop the capabilities of high-achieving award holders in their field of study/research/profession through an international education experience; and
- showcase excellence in Australia's education sector.

Australian University Mobility in Asia Pacific Programme

The Australian University Mobility in Asia Pacific (UMAP) Programme provides funding to Australian higher education institutions to subsidise the cost of their establishing and monitoring, and of Australian students' participation in UMAP student exchanges with counterpart higher education institutions in the Asia Pacific region. The student exchanges include provision for tuition fee waiver and credit transfer arrangements between the institutions. The Australian UMAP Programme receives $1.4m each year from International Awards and Exchanges (IAE) and $0.2 million from the *Australian Scholarships* package totalling $1.6m for the 2006-07 financial year.

Australian-American Fulbright Commission

The Fulbright Commission is a non-profit organisation in Australia, established through a treaty between the Australian and United States Governments in 1949. The Fulbright awards allow Australians and Americans to participate in an educational and cultural exchange.

Sir Robert Menzies Memorial Trust (UK)

The Australian Government provided AUD $2 million capital to the Sir Robert Menzies Memorial Trust (UK) in the 2005-06 financial year. This initiative was announced in the May 2006 budget. Funding was from the appropriation bill passed on 22 June 2006.

The Sir Robert Menzies Memorial Trust approached the Australian Government with a request for additional funding which was approved by the Prime Minister. This extra capital will enable the Trust to double the number of scholarships offered annually to Australians wishing to undertake post-graduate study in the United Kingdom. Minister Bishop marked the provision of the endowment at a function at Australia House in London on 26 June 2006.

The Sir Robert Menzies Memorial Trust was established in Australia and the UK in 1979 to communicate his life and work. It has awarded scholarships to highly talented Australian graduates who are judged to be most likely to benefit substantially from post graduate study in some of the leading universities and institutions in the world in their chosen field. At present the Trust awards up to three new scholarships annually which run concurrently with scholarships awarded in earlier years.

International Education – Increased Profile of Australia's International Education Sector

As part of the 2003-04 budget package, the Government has allocated $2.8 million (administered) over three years from 2004-05, to significantly increase the promotion of education and training and strengthen Australia's position within a competitive international education market.

The initiative aimed to diversify the markets to which Australia exports education and training services, and increase the reach and effectiveness of current activities through increased promotional activities and additional Counsellors to be deployed in regions of emerging importance.

Counsellor positions have been established in Santiago (Chile), Los Angeles and Washington (United States of America), Paris (France), Brussels (Belgium), Dubai (Middle East). These are currently ongoing positions.

International Education and Training Grants (IETG)

The International Education and Training Grants Programme provides financial support for: strategic bilateral education and training projects; developing and maintaining education and training relationships and maintaining an international presence for Australia in these fields; and Australian grants in support of multilateral and international collaborative activities. To this end, the Programme contributes to the development of an internationally competitive Australian education and training system and research culture, through:
- increasing the level and effectiveness of Australian participation in international study, training and research;

- supporting opportunities for Australian providers to benefit from the global trade in education and training services; and
- cementing international ties to ensure that Australians have:
  - the best possible access to international study, training and research opportunities; and
  - the strongest possible position in the marketplace for education and training services.

Pending a decision from the Department of Finance and Administration, the Endeavour Programme as a component of the 2003 International Education Package is to be reviewed in 2008. As an ongoing programme, Endeavour will receive $2.1m in administered funds each year from 2006-07 to 2010-11.

At present funding for *Australian Scholarships* will lapse in 2011. *Australian Scholarships* is to be reviewed in as part of the 2010-11 Budget process and based on the outcome of the review conducted; a decision will be made with regards to extending the programme.

International Awards and Exchanges (IAE)

The International Awards and Exchanges Programme is incorporated into the Endeavour Programme and provides financial support for:
- scholars and professionals from designated countries to undertake advanced study, training or research in Australia;
- Australian scholars or professionals to undertake advanced study, training or research activities in designated countries; and
- Australian higher education institutions, to set up and monitor student exchanges with eligible counterpart higher education institutions in Asia and the Pacific region, and to support Australian higher education awardees' participation in these exchanges.

International Education and Training Policy Objective

To strengthen and diversify national and international linkages and collaboration, and to raise international recognition of the quality of Australia's international engagement in education, research and training.

Finishing Dates

International Centres of Excellence	30 June 2007
National Centre for Language Training	30 June 2006
Endeavour Programme	Ongoing
International Awards and Exchanges (IAE)	Ongoing
Australian Scholarships	30 June 2011
International Education	
- Increased Profile of Australia's International Education Sector	Ongoing
International Education and Training Grants (IETG)	Ongoing

Evaluation

International Centres of Excellence

An evaluation of progress with individual Centres is conducted every 6 months. An overall programme evaluation is scheduled for 2007.

National Centre for Language Training

An evaluation of progress of the Centre is conducted every 6 months. An overall assessment of the Centre is scheduled for 2006.

International Education – Increased Profile of Australia's International Education Sector

The programme was initiated in 2004-05 and an evaluation of the programme's effectiveness has not been conducted. An evaluation of progress with individual projects is conducted on their completion. An overall programme evaluation is not scheduled at this stage as the programme is still in its early stages.

A review of the IAE and IETG Programme was undertaken in December 2001. The purpose of the review was to:
- consider the extent to which each program has met its stated objectives;
- recommend whether these objectives could be better achieved by some other means;
- investigate the scope for improving the efficiency and effectiveness of each program; and
- review existing administrative procedures to simplify and streamline them.

Appropriation source

Annual Appropriation Acts

Funding and Forward Estimates

	2005-06 $'000	2006-07 $'000	2007-08 $'000	2008-09 $'000	2009-10 $'000
Funding	25,810	32,625	39,036	48,968	51,500

2005-06 Actual Outcome

2005-06 Estimate $'000	2005-06 Actual Expense $'000	Variance $'000	%
23,810	23,382	428	1.8

Reportable Programme: *Assessment Subsidy for Overseas Trained professionals*

Programme description

The Assessment Subsidy for Overseas Trained professionals (ASDOT) programme assists financially disadvantaged, overseas-trained professionals, who are Australian citizens or permanent residents living in Australia, with the costs of qualifications recognition. The programme provides financial assistance to cover the costs of those assessments and/or examinations necessary to qualify for employment in professions that are self-regulated or regulated by law in Australia. Assistance is available for one attempt only at each examination stage or assessment. The programme does not cover licensing or registration fees. It is only available to low income applicants who hold or meet the low-income eligibility criteria for one of two Centrelink concession cards.

Policy Objective

The programme seeks to ensure the full and effective utilisation of professional skills and qualifications gained overseas in the Australian labour market.

Finishing Date

The programme is ongoing.

Evaluation

The 2005 review of ASDOT concluded that the programme was valuable and should continue. Changes to the programme guidelines have been made to areas that the review identified for improvement. These changes became effective on 31 August 2006.

Appropriation source

Annual Appropriation Acts

Funding and Forward Estimates

	2005-06 $'000	2006-07 $'000	2007-08 $'000	2008-09 $'000	2009-10 $'000
Funding	701	713	727	740	755

2005-06 Actual Outcome

2005-06 Estimate $'000	2005-06 Actual Expense $'000	Variance $'000	%
701	610	-91	-13.0

EDUCATION, SCIENCE AND TRAINING

SENATE LEGISLATION COMMITTEE - QUESTIONS ON NOTICE
2006-2007 ADDITIONAL ESTIMATES HEARING

Outcome: 1
Output Group: 1.1, 1.2, 1.3 and 1.4

DEST Question No. E850_07

Senator Carr provided in writing.

Question:

Increase in expenditure on government schools

1. In her speech to CEDA on 1 February, Minister Bishop claims Federal Government expenditure on public schools has increased by 118% over 10 years. Could you please explain how this figure is calculated? Could you also:

   a. Give the equivalent figure for non-government schools;

   b. For both figures, disaggregate the amount that is due the AGSRC indexation, enrolment increases, and changes in funding policy;

   c. Backdate this to 1996.

   d. Provide estimates of these figures through to the end of the current quadrennium.

Answer:

Increase in expenditure on government schools

1.
   a. In the 2006-07 Budget, the Australian Government provided an estimated $9.3 billion for Australian schools and students. Table 1 shows the estimated amounts provided for state government schools and non-government schools, together with the estimated increases since 1996.

Table 1: Australian Government Funding for schools

	Actual	Estimated		
	1996 [1]	2006-07	Increase over 1996	
	$b	$b	$b	%
State Government Schools	1.56	3.4	1.8	118%
Non-Government Schools	2.03	5.9	3.8	189%
Australia	**3.59**	**9.3**	**5.7**	**158%**

[1] 1995-96 Actual converted to accrual basis

The estimated 2006-07 Australian Government funding for Australian schools and students includes estimates of specific purpose payments to the states and territories appropriated under the *Schools Assistance (Learning Together-Achievement Through Choice and Opportunity) Act 2004* and *Indigenous Education (Targeted Assistance) Act 2000*; estimates of student assistance for ABSTUDY (Secondary) and Assistance for Isolated Children appropriated under the *Student Assistance Act 1973* as well as estimates of annual programmes such as the National School Drug Education Strategy and the Australian Government Quality Teacher Programme appropriated under the *Appropriations Act (No.1)*.

Where funding is not classified as a specific purpose payment, a notional allocation has been assumed for each sector based on enrolment share.

b-c. The information requested spans ten years of varying price bases and is not available.

d. The Forward estimates relating to Australian Government funding for Australia schools are published in the 2006-07 Portfolio Budget Statements.