



COMMONWEALTH OF AUSTRALIA

PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES



THE SENATE

COMMITTEES

Economics Legislation Committee

Government Response to Report

SPEECH

Thursday, 14 March 2013

BY AUTHORITY OF THE SENATE

SPEECH

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Questioner
Speaker McLucas, Sen Jan

Source Senate
Proof No
Responder
Question No.

Senator McLUCAS (Queensland—Parliamentary Secretary for Disabilities and Carers and Parliamentary Secretary to the Prime Minister) (15:36): I present the government's response to the report of the Economics Legislation Committee on its examination on annual reports, No. 2 of 2011, and seek leave to have the document incorporated in *Hansard*.

Leave granted.

The document read as follows—

GOVERNMENT RESPONSE TO THE SENATE ECONOMICS LEGISLATION COMMITTEE REPORT

ANNUAL REPORTS (No. 2 of 2011)

NOVEMBER 2012

RESPONSE TO RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE SENATE ECONOMICS LEGISLATION COMMITTEE REPORT

ANNUAL REPORTS (No. 2 OF 2011)

Recommendation 1

The committee recommends that the government, in consultation with the Joint Committee of Public Accounts and Audit, amend the annual reporting requirements for government entities to include for the provision of a register of compliance with Senate Orders in each annual report.

Response

Not agreed. While agencies should endeavour to meet all requirements of Senate Orders, the Government considers that the question whether or not an agency has complied with a Senate Order is primarily a matter for the Senate and that monitoring compliance would best be undertaken by the Department of the Senate. In addition, the need for agencies to establish systems to monitor compliance with Senate Orders throughout the year would impose an additional and unnecessary burden on agencies.

Recommendation 2

The committee notes that while the ARC mentioned the strongest performing fields (under the *Discovery Projects* scheme, Agricultural, Veterinary and Environmental Sciences, Earth Sciences and Physical Sciences), it did not mention the weaker areas of research or the broad field that did not meet international benchmarks. In the future, the inclusion of the weaker performing areas would be useful as it would provide guidance for future improvements and the possible allocation of funding and/or resources.

Response

The ARC accepts this recommendation.

It should be noted that the recommendation refers to the results of a bibliometric study that is not conducted annually and that, therefore, this data will not be reported in every ARC annual report. The ARC will ensure that reporting on the results of any future bibliometric studies is balanced.

The recommendation refers specifically to information published in the Australian Research Council Annual Report 2009–10 about the relative citation impact of journal articles that resulted from ARC-funded research and were published between 2001 and 2005. The broad field in which the relative citation impact was below the world benchmark was Information, Computing and Communication Science. It should be noted that in this field, refereed conference proceedings rather than journal articles are the predominant research outputs; therefore the data in this study does not provide a complete view of the impact of the outputs of ARC-funded research.

Among the more specific subfields of research, the relative citation impact of journal publications arising from ARC-funded research (across all schemes) was relatively the weakest in Statistics, Nanoscience and Technology, and Atmospheric Sciences.

The findings of the study, *ARC-supported research: the impact of journal publication 2001–05* by Bev Biglia and Linda Butler of the Research Evaluation and Policy Project at The Australian National University, were released in October 2009 and are available on the ARC website at www.arc.gov.au/general/arc_publications.

Recommendation 3

This committee recommends that Innovation table their grants as an appendix and take care to comply with the *Industry Research and Development Act 1986*.

Response

Innovation Australia accepts this recommendation.

Information on agreements entered into for programs subject to the *Industry Research and Development Act 1986* (the Act) is contained in the appendices in the Innovation Australia Annual Report. This information is also available at www.innovation.gov.au.

Appendices for relevant programs include a list of all companies (researchers) paid during the year and the amount paid, in compliance with sub-paragraphs 46(2)(c)(i) and (ii) of the Act (see for example Table K4, Appendix K of the Innovation Australia Annual Report 2009-10 for a breakdown of Climate Ready program grant payments by company 2009-10).