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PROGRAM 1.2 – INVESTING IN SCIENCE, TECHNOLOGY AND COMMERCIALISATION

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Section 22

Section 22



PARLIAMENT
OF AUSTRALIA

HEARING PROGRAM

Additional Estimates 2023–24 Economics Legislation Committee

Wednesday, 14 February and Thursday, 15 February
Committee Room 2R1, Parliament House, Canberra

Times listed are indicative only



Hearing location

Committee Room 2R1,

Parliament House, Canberra

Waiting room: Committee Room 2R2

Overflow waiting room: Committee Room 1S1



Committee members

Senator Jess Walsh (Chair)

Senator Andrew Bragg (Deputy Chair)

Senator Deborah O'Neill

Senator Jana Stewart

Senator Nick McKim

Senator Dean Smith



Broadcasts of proceedings

Television channel 109

Radio 98.3

[Watch, Read, Listen – Parliament of Australia \(aph.gov.au\)](https://aph.gov.au)

Ministers attending

Senator the Hon Katy Gallagher, Minister for Finance

Senator the Hon Tim Ayres, representing the Minister for Industry and Science and representing the Minister for Resources



Contact

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Secretariat

Mr Alan Raine, Committee Secretary

Mr Jai Maybury, Research Officer

Committee rooms

Committee Room 2R1: (02) 6277 2986

Committee Room 2R2: (02) 6277 2270

Wednesday, 14 February 2024

Treasury Portfolio

9.00am (120 mins)	<p>Department of the Treasury</p> <p>Including Dr Steven Kennedy PSM (until 11am)</p> <p>Macroeconomic Group</p> <p>International and Foreign Investment Group</p>
11.00am	Break (15)
11.15am (30 mins)	<p>Department of the Treasury</p> <p>Macroeconomic Group (Cont.)</p> <p>International and Foreign Investment Group (Cont.)</p>
11.45am (50 mins)	<p>Department of the Treasury</p> <p>Small Business, Housing, Corporate and Law Group</p>
12.35pm (50 mins)	<p>Department of the Treasury</p> <p>Fiscal Group</p>
1.25pm	Lunch (60)
2.25pm (120 mins)	<p>Department of the Treasury</p> <p>Revenue Group</p> <p>Australian Taxation Office</p> <p>Tax Practitioners Board</p> <p>Australian Charities and Not-for-Profit Commission</p>
4.25pm (50 mins)	<p>Department of the Treasury</p> <p>Markets Group</p>
5.15pm	Break (15)
5.30pm (60 mins)	Australian Prudential Regulation Authority
6.30pm (60 mins)	Australian Competition and Consumer Commission
7.30pm	Dinner (60)
8.30pm (30 mins)	Housing Australia
9.00pm (15 mins)	Australian Reinsurance Pool Corporation
9.15pm	Break (15)

9.30pm (30 mins)	Productivity Commission
10.00pm (30 mins)	Australian Bureau of Statistics
10.30pm (30 mins)	Australian Accounting Standards Board (AASB) and Auditing and Assurance Standards Board (AUASB)
11.00pm	<i>Adjournment</i>

Thursday, 15 February 2024

Treasury Portfolio

9.00am (90 mins)	Reserve Bank of Australia
10.30am	Break (15)
10.45am (15 mins)	Australian Financial Complaints Authority
11.00am (90 mins)	Australian Securities and Investments Commission

Industry, Science, and Resources Portfolio

12.30pm (30 mins)	Department of Industry, Science and Resources Corporate, Enabling and Business Services
1.00pm (30 mins)	<p>Department of Industry, Science and Resources</p> <p>Outcome 1: Support economic growth, productivity, and job creation for all Australians by investing in science, technology and commercialisation, growing innovative and competitive businesses, industries and regions, and supporting resources.</p> <p>Program 1.3: Supporting a strong resources sector</p> <p><u>Topics and entities</u></p> <p>Minerals and Resources</p> <p>Oil and Gas</p>
1.30pm	Lunch (60)
2.30pm (60 mins)	<p>Department of Industry, Science and Resources</p> <p>Outcome 1: (Cont.)</p> <p>Program 1.3: Supporting a strong resources sector (Cont.)</p> <p><u>Topics and entities</u></p> <p>Minerals and Resources</p> <p>Oil and Gas</p>
3:30pm (45 mins)	<p>Department of Industry, Science and Resources</p> <p>Outcome 1: (Cont.)</p>

	<p>Program 1.3: Supporting a strong resources sector (Cont.) <u>Topics and entities</u> Radioactive Waste Management Maralinga Waste Management Rum Jungle Mine Site – Environmental Rehabilitation Australian Radioactive Waste Agency</p> <p>Program 1.4: Nuclear Powered Submarine Program Australian Nuclear Science and Technology Organisation</p>
4.15pm	Break (15)
4.30pm (45 mins)	National Offshore Petroleum Safety and Environmental Management Authority
5.15pm (120mins)	<p>Department of Industry, Science and Resources</p> <p>Outcome 1: (Cont.) Program 1.1: Growing innovative and competitive businesses, industries and regions</p>
7.15pm	Dinner (60)
8.15pm (45 mins)	National Reconstruction Fund Corporation
9.00pm (45 mins)	<p>Department of Industry, Science and Resources</p> <p>Outcome 1: (Cont.) Program 1.2: Investing in science, technology and commercialisation <u>Topics and entities</u> Office of the Chief Scientist Technology and Investment Taskforce Science</p>
9.45pm	Break (15)
10.00pm (30 mins)	Commonwealth Scientific and Industrial Research Organisation
10.30pm (30 mins)	Geoscience Australia
11.00pm	Adjournment

ADDITIONAL BUDGET ESTIMATES 2023-2024
WITNESS LIST – 15 FEBRUARY 2024

Department of Industry, Science and Resources

Secretary - Meghan Quinn PSM

DISR Corporate

Name and title	Attendance
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Outcome 1 (cont'd)

Program 1.2: Investing in science, technology, and commercialisation

Name and title	Attendance
Helen Wilson, Deputy Secretary	In person
National Measurement Institute	
Dr Bruce Warrington, Chief Executive Officer and Chief Metrologist, National Measurement Institute	In person
Office of the Chief Scientist (OCS)	
Dr Cathy Foley, AO PSM Chief Scientist	In person
Questacon	
Ms Jo White, Director, Questacon	In person
Science	
Ms Janean Richards, Head of Division, Science	In person
Ms Hayley Arbaut-Zaalen, General Manager, Science Strategy and Priorities Taskforce	In person
Ms Natalie Weddell, General Manager, Science Policy and Governance	In person
Ms Paula Perrett, Executive Director, Office of the Chief Scientist	In person
Technology and Digital	
Mr Anthony Murfett, Head of Division, Technology and Digital	In person
Mr Dan Quinn, General Manager, Enabling Technologies	In person
Mr Lucas Rutherford, General Manager, Technology Strategy	In person
Technology Investment Task force	
Michele Graham, General Manager, Quantum Branch	In person
Commercialisation	
Mr Nick Purtell, Head of Division	In person
Ms Sandra Roussel, General Manager Venture Capital and Entrepreneurship Branch	In person

Australian Nuclear Science and Technology Organisation

Name and title	Attendance
Mr Shaun Jenkinson, Chief Executive Officer	In person
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Commonwealth Scientific and Industrial Research Organisation

Name and title	Attendance
Dr Doug Hilton, Chief Executive	In person
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Economics Legislation Committee Membership

Committee Members



Chair
Senator Jess Walsh
 Australian Labor Party, VIC



Senator Deborah O'Neill
 Australian Labor Party, NSW



Deputy Chair
Senator Andrew Bragg
 Liberal Party of Australia, NSW



Senator Dean Smith
 Liberal Party of Australia, WA



Senator Nick McKim
 Australian Greens, TAS



Senator Jana Stewart
 Australian Labor Party, VIC

Participating Members

Senators Penny Allman-Payne, Alex Antic, Wendy Askew, Ralph Babet, Catryna Bilyk, Simon Birmingham, Slade Brockman, Ross Cadell, Matthew Canavan, Michaelia Cash, Claire Chandler, Raff Ciccone, Richard Colbeck, Dorinda Cox, Perin Davey, Patrick Dodson, Jonathon Duniam, Mehreen Faruqi, David Fawcett, Nita Green, Karen Grogan, Pauline Hanson, Sarah Hanson-Young, Sarah Henderson, Hollie Hughes, Jane Hume, Maria Kovacic, Jacqui Lambie, Kerryne Liddle, Susan McDonald, James McGrath, Bridget McKenzie, Nick McKim, Andrew McLachlan, Jacinta Nampijinpa Price, Matt O'Sullivan, James Paterson, Fatima Payman, Marise Payne, Barbara Pocock, David Pocock, Helen Polley, Louise Pratt, Gerard Rennick, Linda Reynolds, Janet Rice, Malcolm Roberts, Anne Ruston, Paul Scarr, Dave Sharma, Tony Sheldon, David Shoebridge, Arthur Sinodinos, Marielle Smith, Jordon Steele-John, Glenn Sterle, Lidia Thorpe, Tammy Tyrrell, Anne Urquhart, David Van, Larissa Waters, Peter Whish-Wilson, Linda White

Updated 11 January 2024

DEPARTMENT OF INDUSTRY, SCIENCE AND RESOURCES
Organisation Structure | effective 5 February 2024

Ministers

Minister for Resources and Minister for Northern Australia
 The Hon Madeleine King MP

Minister for Industry and Science
 The Hon Ed Husic MP

Assistant Minister for Manufacturing and Assistant Minister for Trade
 Senator the Hon Tim Ayres

Secretary

Secretary
 Meghan Quinn PSM

Chief of Staff
 Judith Blake

Groups

Resources & Strategy
 Jane Urquhart

Industry & Commercialisation
 Julia Pickworth

Science & Technology
 Helen Wilson

Enabling & Business Services
 Neal Mason

Divisions

Strategic Policy	International, Trade & National Security	Analysis & Insights	Minerals & Resources	Oil & Gas
Head of Division Camille de Burgh	Head of Division Dr Carolyn Patteson	Chief Economist Michelle Dowdell	Head of Division Peter Chesworth	Head of Division Robert Jeremenko

Industry & Manufacturing	Sovereign Capability & Supply Chains	Commercialisation	AusIndustry
Head of Division Tara Oliver	Head of Division Donna Looney	Head of Division Nick Partell	Head of Division David Luchetti

National Measurement Institute	Science	Technology & Digital	Technology Investment Taskforce	Questacon
CEO & Chief Metrologist Dr Bruce Warrington	Head of Division Janean Richards	Head of Division Anthony Murfett	Head of Division Anthony McGregor	Head of Division Jo White

Chief Finance Officer	Chief Operating Officer	Chief Information Officer	Business Grants Hub & Integrity
Head of Division Gavin McCosker	Head of Division Leanne Yannopoulos	Head of Division Rebecca Lee	Head of Division Sam Chard

Branches

Budget & Portfolio Policy Matt Crawshaw	Trade & International Alison Drury	Economic & Industry Analysis Kate Penney	Resources Strategy Damien Dunn	Offshore Resources Cliff Weeks
Ministerial & Executive Enabling James Pitman (n/g)	National Security Engagement Ray Marcelo	Data & Evaluation Scott Clouder (n/g)	Mining Kym Moore (n/g)	Offshore Strategy Norelle Laucher
Whole of Government Policy & Priorities Naomi Perdomo	International Science & Resources Richard Samuels	Resources & Energy Insights Crystal Ossolinski	Critical Minerals Office Victoria Pullen	Northern Endeavour Shane McWhinney
				National Offshore Petroleum Titles Administrator Graeme Waters
				Gas David Lawrence
				Decommissioning Taskforce William Tan

Sector Development Louise Talbot	Office of Supply Chain Resilience Tim Wong	Research & Development Tax Incentive Elizabeth Minogue (n/g)	Business Outreach & Engagement Sarah Howard
Industrial Net Zero Transformation Kurt Hockey	Industry Participation & Major Project Facilitation John Kibaleki	Venture Capital & Entrepreneurship Sandra Rousset	Industry Growth Program Rebecca Lannen
Industrial Net Zero Policy James Flick	Batteries Jacelyn Cooper	Office of Industry Innovation & Science Australia Tanya Blight	Industry Growth Executive Director David Chuter
Future Transport & Infrastructure Policy Maxine Loynd	NRF Policy & Liaison Jasinder Higgins		
National Rail Manufacturing Advocate Jacqui Walters			

Physical Metrology Dr Jan Herrmann	Science Policy & Governance Neale Weddell	AI Policy Dan Quinn	Technology Investment Dianne Gaetjens	Operations Steve Stirling
Analytical Services Tim Stobaes	Research & Collaboration Linda Lee	Critical Technology Strategy & Engagement Jessica Foote	Quantum Michele Graham	Science & Learning Dr Bobby Cerini
Chemical & Biological Metrology Dr Helen Selouros (n/g)	Office of the Chief Scientist Paula Perrett	AI Governance Lucas Rutherford		
Legal Metrology Bill Loizides	Astronomy Caroline Quan (n/g)			
Strategy & Operations Liza Hind	Science Strategy & Priorities Taskforce Hayley Arbuthnot-Zaiton			

Financial & Shared Services Kirsty Bunfield	Legal Deborah Miszczewski	ICT Operations Stewart McGill	Internal Programs Kimberley Shives
Financial Management Jane Childs	People Tanja Watson	Digital Strategy & Cyber Security Somers Bloomfield (n/g)	External Programs Noel Taloni
External Budgets & Procurement Erin Cochran	Communications Louise Wallensky	Digital Services for Business Simone Boudling	Integrity Derek Stiller
	Property Trent Brooks (n/g)		

Australian Radioactive Waste Agency (ARWA) CEO Sam Usher	
Social License & Operational Support Jodie Lindsay	Safety & Technical Support Amanda Fortanier
Policy, Governance & Strategy Mark Weaver	

ANTI DUMPING COMMISSION Dr Bradley Armstrong PSM	AUSTRALIAN BUILDING CODES BOARD Gary Rake CEO
Investigations Isolde Lueckenhausen	
Strategy and Legal Jessica Casben	

AUSTRALIAN SPACE AGENCY Enrico Palermo Agency Head Dara Williams Deputy Head of Agency	
Office of the Space Regulator Chris De Luis	Space Policy Chris Hewett
National Space Capability, Technology & Programs Arvind Ramana (n/g)	

Portfolio Entities

Geoscience Australia Dr James Johnson, Chief Executive Officer
National Offshore Petroleum Safety & Environmental Management Authority (NOPSEMA) Sue McCarrey, Chief Executive Officer

IP Australia Michael Schwager Director General	Industry Innovation and Science Australia Andrew Stevens, Chair
NRF Corporation Rebecca Manen, Chief Executive (n/g)	

Commonwealth Scientific & Industrial Research Organisation (CSIRO) Doug Hilton, Chief Executive	Australian Nuclear Science & Technology Organisation (ANSTO) Shaun Jenkinson, Chief Executive Officer
Chief Scientist Dr Cathy Foley	



THE HON ED HUSIC MP
MINISTER FOR INDUSTRY AND SCIENCE

MS23-001089

27 AUG 2023

Senator the Hon Sue Lines
President of the Senate
Parliament House
CANBERRA ACT 2600

Dear President *Sue*

Pursuant to the Senate Order for Entity Contracts, of 20 June 2001 (amended 1 July 2017), I wish to advise that entities I administer have placed a list of contracts at or above \$100,000 (GST inclusive), which have not been fully performed or which have been entered into in the 12 months prior to 30 June 2023, on their respective internet websites.

The location of the lists are as follows:

- IP Australia – www.ipaustralia.gov.au.
- Australian Nuclear Science and Technology Organisation (ANSTO) – www.ansto.gov.au.
- Commonwealth Scientific and Industrial Research Organisation (CSIRO) – www.csiro.au; and

The following entities' contract listings do not fully comply with the requirements of paragraph (2) of the Order for the reasons outlined below.

ANSTO:

- 148 contracts, all of which were confidential, have had information partly redacted on the basis that information regarding the name of the employee, start date, end date and salary or settlement information would disclose personal information subject to the *Privacy Act 1988 (Cth)*. This covers employment agreements and other agreements such as settlement agreements entered into with employees.
- 125 contracts have had information partly redacted on the basis that the information was commercially sensitive or would reveal ANSTO pricing or costing information. Disclosure of that information would cause detriment or harm to ANSTO and/or to third parties.

CSIRO:

- 18 contracts, all of which are confidential, were not included on the basis that disclosure may reveal trade secrets which are judged to have the potential to cause detriment to the contractor.
- The names of contractors for 325 contracts have not been included on the basis that the information is commercially sensitive to third parties and harm is likely to be caused by its disclosure.

Procurement contracts conducted by non-corporate Commonwealth entities (NCEs) are not included in the contract listing. All NCE procurement contracts can be found at AusTender, www.tenders.gov.au. The report is titled 'Entity Reports for complying with the Senate Order on Procurement Contracts and use of Confidentiality Provisions'.

The contact officer for the listings is Kiley Hamad who may be contacted on (02) 6213 6057.

Yours sincerely



Ed Husic MP



**SENATOR THE HON TIM AYRES
ASSISTANT MINISTER FOR MANUFACTURING
ASSISTANT MINISTER FOR TRADE**

MS23-002108

Senator the Hon Sue Lines
President of the Senate
Parliament House
CANBERRA ACT 2600

Dear President

On behalf of the Hon Ed Husic MP, Minister for Industry and Science, pursuant to Senate Procedural Order 15 on Portfolio Appointments and Vacancies, please find enclosed a report covering the Industry and Science portfolio for appointments made from 3 October 2023 to 22 January 2024, including existing vacancies that are intended to be filled.

You will note in this report that we have provided an edit to the information provided in the previous Senate Procedural Order on Portfolio Appointments and Vacancies for the period 2 May to 2 October 2023. This was an administrative error where the term end date provided for the Chair and 7 Members of the National Reconstruction Fund Corporation Board was incorrect, this has been amended in this report.

If you require further information, please contact Mr James Pitman, A/g General Manager, Ministerial and Executive Enabling Branch in the Department of Industry, Science and Resources on (02) 6213 6074 or by emailing appointments@industry.gov.au.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'T Ayres', written over a white background.

Tim Ayres

6/2/2024

CC: The Hon Ed Husic MP, Minister for Industry and Science



Senate Order 15 Portfolio Appointments and Vacancies Report

Minister for Industry and Science

3 October 2023 to 22 January 2024

Appointments

Commonwealth body	Appointee & Position Type	Term Start	Term End	Remuneration	State or Territory Residence
Commonwealth Scientific and Industrial Research Organisation Board	Professor Roy Green Member	07/12/2023	06/12/2028	\$80,160 (per annum)	NSW
Cooperative Research Centres Advisory Committee	Professor Neena Mitter Member	09/10/2023	08/10/2026	\$1,247 (per diem)	QLD
Cooperative Research Centres Advisory Committee	Mr Damien Manuel Member	09/10/2023	08/10/2026	\$1,247 (per diem)	VIC
Industry Innovation and Science Australia Board ^a	Dr Catherine Foley AO Deputy Chair	01/01/2024	31/12/2024	-	NSW
Industry Innovation and Science Australia Board	Ms Lauren Stafford Member	27/11/2023	26/11/2026	\$49,330 (per annum)	WA
Industry Innovation and Science Australia Board	Professor Fang Chen Member	27/11/2023	26/11/2026	\$49,330 (per annum)	NSW
Industry Innovation and Science Australia Board	Dr Cori Stewart Member	27/11/2023	26/11/2026	\$49,330 (per annum)	QLD
Industry Innovation and Science Australia Board	Ms Kate Glazebrook Member	27/11/2023	26/11/2026	\$49,330 (per annum)	NSW
National Reconstruction Fund Corporation Board	Mr Glenn Thompson Member	16/10/2023	15/10/2027	\$63,690 (per annum)	VIC
National Reconstruction Fund Corporation Board *	Mr Martijn Wilder AM Chair	18/09/2023	17/09/2027	\$128,120 (per annum)	NSW
National Reconstruction Fund Corporation Board *	Mr Ahmed Fahour AO Member	18/09/2023	17/09/2026	\$63,690 (per annum)	VIC
National Reconstruction Fund Corporation Board *	Dr Katharine Giles (McHenry) Member	18/09/2023	17/09/2027	\$63,690 (per annum)	WA
National Reconstruction Fund Corporation Board *	The Hon Kelly O'Dwyer Member	18/09/2023	17/09/2027	\$63,690 (per annum)	VIC
National Reconstruction Fund Corporation Board *	Mr Daniel Petre AO Member	18/09/2023	17/09/2026	\$63,690 (per annum)	NSW
National Reconstruction Fund Corporation Board *	Ms Kathryn Presser AM Member	18/09/2023	17/09/2026	\$63,690 (per annum)	SA
National Reconstruction Fund Corporation Board *	Ms Karen Smith-Pomeroy Member	18/09/2023	17/09/2026	\$63,690 (per annum)	QLD
National Reconstruction Fund Corporation Board *	Mr Daniel Walton Member	18/09/2023	17/09/2027	\$63,690 (per annum)	NSW

^a Ex-officio position

*This was provided in the departments previous Senate Order 15 report: 2 May 2023 – 2 October 2023 with incorrect term end dates. These have been corrected in this report.

Single Appointments

Commonwealth body	Appointee & Position Type	Term Start	Term End	Remuneration	State or Territory Residence
Women in STEM Ambassador	Professor Lisa Harvey-Smith Ambassador	01/12/2023	31/05/2024	\$280,000 (per annum)	TAS

Current Vacancies (intended to be filled)

Commonwealth body	Vacant Position
Anti-Dumping Review Panel	1 x Member
Australian Nuclear Science and Technology Organisation Board	2 x Member
Australian Space Agency Advisory Board	1 x Chair, 1 x Deputy Chair, 3 x Member
Commonwealth Scientific and Industrial Research Organisation Board	1 x Deputy Chair, 1 x Member
Industry Innovation and Science Australia Board	7 x Member
Cooperative Research Centres Advisory Committee	1 x Member
Entrepreneurs' Programme Committee	2 x Member
Innovation Investment Committee	1 x Member
R&D Incentives Committee	1 x Member
International Trade Remedies Forum	24 x Member
Joint Accreditation System of Australia/New Zealand Governing Board	1 x Member
National Science Technology Council	2 x Member
Questacon Advisory Council	1 x Chair, 1 x Deputy Chair, 4 x Member
Trans-Tasman IP Attorneys Disciplinary Tribunal	1 x Member

REFRESH OF NATIONAL SCIENCE AND RESEARCH PRIORITIES

Headline Statement

- New National Science and Research Priorities (the priorities) and a new National Science Statement (the statement) are being finalised after extensive consultation led by Australia's Chief Scientist, Dr Cathy Foley, and the department in 2023.

Key Points

- The statement will outline the government's vision for science.
- The priorities will give clarity on the areas government considers important and help encourage activity and growth in these areas.
- Together they will set a long-term direction for Australia's science system, setting up science to support innovation, power new industries and strengthen international partnerships in the Asia Pacific region.
- The published priorities and statement will be based on extensive consultation, including roundtables in every state and territory, and close to 500 written submissions from two rounds of consultation.

Policy Commitments

- The Australian Government released Terms of Reference for the revitalisation of the priorities and statement on 24 November 2022.
- The Terms of Reference state that government has committed to develop a national policy framework that embeds science into government decision making and better align efforts and investment in science to deliver social, economic and environmental benefits for all Australians.
- The Terms of Reference also state that the statement will consider how to address areas such as the importance of scientific advice to inform decision making – ensuring appropriate mechanisms for providing government with independent, expert scientific advice.

Background

- The revitalisation was announced by the Minister for Industry and Science on 27 September 2022 with an aim to finalise within 12 months.
- A taskforce was established within the department to deliver the revitalisation of the National Science and Research Priorities and National Science Statement (as well as the Pathway to Diversity in STEM Review).
- Australia's Chief Scientist, Dr Cathy Foley, led a national conversation during 2023 to inform the development of the priorities and statement.
- The first phase of public engagement ran from 23 February to 6 April 2023 and focused on identifying national challenges and opportunities that science has a role to address.
- This phase included 30 virtual and in-person roundtable events held around Australia with key stakeholders from science, research, government, higher education, industry, and community groups.
- It also included an online consultation, which received 312 submissions. Non confidential ones have been published.
- Following this first phase of engagement, the department developed a list of draft priorities in consultation with select stakeholders, including the learned academies, university groups, First Nations representatives, the National Science and Technology Council, state and territory chief scientists (Forum of Australian Chief Scientists), Australian government departments and agencies with science capability (Government Scientists Group).
- The draft priorities were published for consultation on 7 September and closed 29 September 2023. They included:
 - Ensuring a net zero future and protecting Australia's biodiversity
 - Supporting healthy and thriving communities
 - Enabling a productive and innovative economy
 - Building a stronger, more resilient nation.
- The consultation also invited input to inform development of the National Science Statement.
- The department received a total of 170 written submissions. Non confidential submissions will be published in due course.
- When published, the priorities and statement will replace the outdated 2015 priorities and 2017 statement.
- As at 31 Dec, the number of ASL in the taskforce is 11.80.

INDEPENDENT REVIEW INTO DIVERSITY IN STEM

Headline Statement

- The Minister for Industry and Science released the Pathway to Diversity in STEM Review Final Report on 13 February 2024.

Key Points

- The Final Report contains 11 recommendations, that together, aim to drive systemic and cultural change to make STEM education and careers more accessible for underrepresented cohorts. The recommendations cover four areas:
 - Government coordination and leadership to increase diversity in STEM in all sectors.
 - Creating safe and inclusive workplaces by eliminating bullying, harassment and discrimination, and meaningfully increasing diversity and inclusion efforts.
 - Improving lifelong learning opportunities in STEM, including through schools and higher education pathways, including VET.
 - Changing perceptions of STEM careers and valuing diverse knowledges, including elevating First Nations Knowledges.
- The report includes a strategy to improve design and delivery of programs that support diversity in STEM, and build on the current Women in STEM programs.
- The Independent Panel developed the recommendations by drawing on:
 - Twelve months of engagement, including interviews, workshops and three phases of national public consultation, and
 - An independent program evaluation and research commissioned by the Australian Government.
- The panel's recommendations include actions for industry and the academic sector to take, as well as actions for government (Australian, state and territory).
 - The report's Message from the Panel makes clear "industry and academia will benefit from a diverse STEM workforce, so they must play a role alongside governments."

Policy Commitments

- The Government is preparing its response, to be released in due course.

Contact Officer:

Name: s22
Division: Science Strategy and Priorities Taskforce, Science Division
Telephone: s22
Last updated: s22

Background

- On 24 November 2022, the government announced an independent expert panel for the review. Members included: Sally-Ann Williams, Mikaela Jade and Dr Parwinder Kaur.
- Over a 12-month period, the review examined how policies and programs help overcome barriers faced by historically underrepresented groups in STEM.
- The panel invited public conversation over three phases between March and September 2023. This included 251 participants contributing 510 hours to interviews, workshops and meetings, and 300 written submissions.
- The panel also drew on research commissioned for the review, including:
 - Australia’s Women in STEM Ambassador’s research on workplace initiatives to increase diversity in STEM.
 - The Big Mob: STEM it Up research project, led by Associate Professor Marnee Shay, on barriers and opportunities for First Nations people in STEM.
 - Research commissioned by the Office of the Chief Scientist for the National Science and Technology Council - Science and Technology Australia’s STEM Career Pathways Major Research Report and Australian Council of Learned Academies’ Modernising Research Metrics report.
- The review panel provided 11 detailed recommendations across 4 areas:
 - Government coordination and leadership:
 - : The government establishing a dedicated advisory council to increase diversity and inclusion in STEM, and a suite of impactful diversity in STEM programs.
 - Creating safe and inclusive workplaces:
 - : STEM organisations committing to eliminate workplace bullying, harassment and discrimination, and increasing attraction, retention and promotion of diverse STEM workers.
 - : The government changing grants and procurement processes to incentivise workplace actions, and addressing barriers faced by STEM migrants.
 - Lifelong learning:
 - : Governments working together to improve participation and achievement in STEM education and supporting educators to engage diverse cohorts in STEM.
 - : Governments working together to ensure national tertiary education reforms include a focus on underrepresented cohorts in STEM education.
 - Changing perceptions and valuing diverse knowledge:
 - : The government developing a strategy to increase visibility and importance of diversity in STEM careers, and developing better practices to elevate First Nations Knowledges, and support First Nations scientists and researchers.

SAFE AND RESPONSIBLE AI

Headline Statement

The Government is taking action to ensure the design, development and deployment of Artificial Intelligence (AI) in legitimate, but high-risk settings is safe and can be relied upon, while ensuring AI in low-risk settings can continue largely unimpeded.

Key Points

Safe and Responsible AI in Australia – Government response

- Responses to the *Safe and Responsible AI in Australia* highlighted that AI systems and applications are helping to improve wellbeing, quality of life and grow our economy.
- However the current regulatory framework likely does not sufficiently address known risks presented by AI systems, which enable actions and decisions to be taken at a speed and scale that hasn't previously been possible, particularly in high-risk settings.
- The government response, published 17 January 2024, outlines the work on AI is transformative, with the government's focus on ensuring the development and deployment of AI in high-risk settings is safe and reliable, and use in low-risk settings can continue to flourish unimpeded. It outlines work on:
 - Preventing harms from occurring through **testing, transparency, and accountability** measures (e.g. options for mandatory guardrails, development of safety standards)
 - Clarifying and strengthening laws to safeguard citizens (e.g. privacy, online safety)
 - Working internationally to support the safe development and deployment of AI
 - Maximising the benefits of AI (e.g. the need for an AI investment plan).
- Work has commenced with industry to address AI in high-risk settings through:
 - Developing a voluntary AI Safety Standard through the National AI Centre (NAIC);
 - Developing options for voluntary labelling and watermarking of AI-generated materials;
 - Establishing a temporary expert advisory group to provide advice on options for further AI guardrails in high-risk settings.

Contact Officer:

Name: Anthony Murfett

Division: Technology and Digital Division

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Last updated: 25/01/2024 9:48:00 AM

- Work is underway to develop options for mandatory guardrails, as well as laws that may need to be strengthened. ‘High-risk’ applications of AI will also be defined through this work. It will focus on AI in settings that are legitimate, with positive impact (e.g. in healthcare) but could also generate systemic harms.
- Outcomes from this initial tranche of work is expected in May 2024.

International engagement on AI

- Minister Husic represented Australia at the AI Safety Summit in the UK in November 2023, where Australia, alongside the EU and 27 countries including the US, UK and China, signed the Bletchley Declaration. This Declaration affirmed that AI should be designed, developed, deployed and used in a manner that is safe, human-centric, trustworthy and responsible. Global efforts are also accelerating to mandate accountability, transparency, and safety testing for AI development. Jurisdictions are doing this through AI-specific laws (e.g. Canada and EU), and expansion of existing laws (e.g. US).
- The signing of the Declaration and global efforts to mandate guardrails for AI reflect a seismic shift in the role of governments in shaping tech regulation.
- The Government response highlights we will support safe and responsible development and deployment of AI internationally, with a focus on high-risk settings, including by engaging in international governance activities.

Other Policy Commitments

AI Industry Support Programs

- The 2023-24 Budget contained \$75.7 million for AI initiatives including:
 - \$17 million for the AI Adopt Program to establish three to five centres to provide direct support to SMEs in an NRF priority areas. Applications for this program opened on 8 December 2023 and closed on 29 January 2024.
 - \$21.6 million to extend the NAIC to support initiatives like the Responsible AI Network to strengthen AI governance and industry capability. This is on top of its existing funding (\$2.7 million in 2023-24).
 - Funding of \$34.5 million continues for the Next Generation Artificial Intelligence and Emerging Technologies Graduates programs.

AI in Government Taskforce

- The department is co-leading, with the Digital Transformation Agency, the AI in Government Taskforce. The taskforce, comprises 22 secondees from 12 agencies, commenced operations on 7 August 2023 and will run until mid-2024.
- In November 2023, the taskforce updated the interim guidance on the use of publicly available generative AI platforms. The taskforce is also supporting the whole-of-government trial of Microsoft 365 Copilot.

