

1D. GENERAL RESEARCH

NATURE OF OUTLAYS

Outlays under General Research fund research directed towards the increase in scientific knowledge and its application. Outlays provide funding for the Commonwealth research agencies, elements of the national research infrastructure and general research programmes. Programmes supporting research in specific sectors are generally included under the relevant function, e.g. health research is included in 5. *Health*.

The research agencies, the Commonwealth Scientific and Industrial Research Organisation (CSIRO), the Australian Nuclear Science and Technology Organisation (ANSTO) and the Australian Institute of Marine Science (AIMS) receive most of their funding directly from the Budget. Additional research funding is received from the private sector and from a variety of Commonwealth assisted grant schemes.

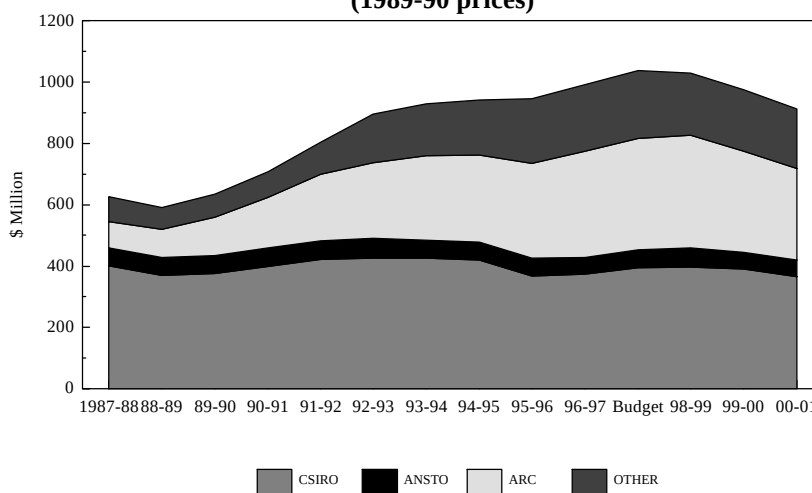
Australia maintains several Antarctic research stations and supports associated research through the Antarctic Division of the Department of the Environment, Sport and Territories (DEST).

Commonwealth grants are provided for higher education research on the advice of the Australian Research Council (ARC) and through the Cooperative Research Centres (CRC) Programme to supplement contributions from CRC partner organisations.

This function includes outlays of the following portfolios:

- Industry, Science and Tourism;
- Employment, Education, Training and Youth Affairs;
- Environment, Sport and Territories;
- Communications and the Arts; and
- Administrative Services.

Chart 1. Overview of Commonwealth Outlays on General Research (1989-90 prices)



TRENDS IN GENERAL RESEARCH OUTLAYS

The growth in outlays from 1988-89 reflects a significant real increase in funding for the ARC, the provision of \$30 million of equity to the Australian Technology Group in 1992-93, and the establishment of the CRC and Major National Research Facilities programmes. Outlays are expected to decline, in real terms, over 1997-98 to 2000-01 due to a reduction in ARC funding and the phase down of some programmes in the 'Other' category.

1997-98 AND FORWARD ESTIMATES

		1996-97 Estimate	1997-98 Budget	1998-99 Estimate	1999-00 Estimate	2000-01 Estimate
1D.1 Commonwealth Scientific and Industrial Research Organisation	\$m	433.1	466.8	480.7	484.1	465.3
	%		7.8	3.0	0.7	-3.9
1D.2 Australian Nuclear Science and Technology Organisation	\$m	63.7	70.4	74.6	67.8	68.3
	%		10.5	6.0	-9.1	0.7
1D.3 Australian Research Council	\$m	401.2	429.2	445.3	410.9	381.2
	%		7.0	3.8	-7.7	-7.2
1D.4 Other General Research, nec	\$m	251.0	260.8	245.4	247.2	247.0
	%		3.9	-5.9	0.7	-0.1
TOTAL	\$m	1148.9	1227.2	1246.0	1209.9	1161.8
	%		6.8	1.5	-2.9	-4.0

1D.1 COMMONWEALTH SCIENTIFIC AND INDUSTRIAL RESEARCH ORGANISATION

The Commonwealth Scientific and Industrial Research Organisation (CSIRO), an independent statutory authority, is Australia's largest and most diverse scientific research organisation. Its primary role is to undertake scientific research which is of direct value to the community and industry generally. CSIRO has strong international links and maintains a substantial part of the national research infrastructure, including biological collections and some major national research facilities such as the Australia Telescope, the Australian Animal Health Laboratory, the National Measurement Laboratory and the Research Vessel *Franklin*. CSIRO contributes to Government policy formulation through the provision of expert advice on scientific and technological issues.

1D.2 AUSTRALIAN NUCLEAR SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY ORGANISATION

The Australian Nuclear Science and Technology Organisation (ANSTO) is Australia's major centre of nuclear science research and development. It contributes to the development of nuclear science and technology and its application in industries which include health, mining, environment and advanced materials. ANSTO also assists with the development of Australia's nuclear non-proliferation safeguards and wider technology policies and interests.

1D.3 AUSTRALIAN RESEARCH COUNCIL

The Australian Research Council (ARC) advises the Government on national research priorities and the coordination of research policy. It also makes recommendations to the Minister for Employment, Education, Training and Youth Affairs on the allocation of Commonwealth funding in a range of research schemes, including postgraduate

scholarships, fellowships, research centres, and infrastructure and research grants to higher education institutions.

The Government has foreshadowed a restructuring of the ARC with a wider range of functions including responsibility for allocating competitive research grants, liaising with industry, promoting the role and importance of research within the broader community and developing closer links between the universities, public research organisations and the private sector.

1D.4 OTHER GENERAL RESEARCH, NEC

		1996-97 Estimate	1997-98 Budget	1998-99 Estimate	1999-00 Estimate	2000-01 Estimate
Policy, Coordination and Promotion	\$m	7.8	6.5	6.5	6.6	6.7
	%		-16.7	-	1.5	1.5
Cooperative Research Centres	\$m	141.9	146.2	138.1	140.6	145.8
	%		3.0	-5.5	1.8	3.7
Antarctic Division	\$m	60.1	61.0	61.3	63.7	62.4
	%		1.5	0.5	3.9	-2.0
Australian Institute of Marine Science	\$m	16.4	16.4	16.8	16.8	17.0
	%		-	2.4	-	1.2
International and Other Research	\$m	24.8	30.8	22.7	19.4	15.1
	%		24.2	-26.3	-14.5	-22.2
TOTAL	\$m	251.0	260.8	245.4	247.2	247.0
	%		3.9	-5.9	0.7	-0.1

Cooperative Research Centres

The Cooperative Research Centres (CRC) Programme provides support for long-term collaborative research ventures between universities, public research organisations, Government agencies and private enterprises. It aims to promote high quality research, strengthen links between research and its commercial and other applications, and provide a training ground for Australia's future researchers.

Antarctic Division

The Antarctic Division (of the Department of the Environment, Sport and Territories) maintains an Australian presence at three stations on the Antarctic continent and one on Macquarie Island. The Division's main research effort is directed at building up a systematic knowledge of the Antarctic and its environment, and understanding the role that this region has in relation to global climate change.

Australian Institute of Marine Science

The Australian Institute of Marine Science (AIMS) undertakes research directed towards improving the understanding of the marine environment in the coastal and continental shelf regions of Australia and assists with the development, conservation and management of marine resources including the environmental sustainability of offshore resource industries and of Great Barrier Reef management plans.

International and Other Research

The significant programmes in this subgroup include: the Major National Research Facilities Programme; the International Science and Technology Cooperation Programme; the Anglo-Australian Telescope; and the Department of Administrative Services' Centre for Environmental Management.