



## The Hon Greg Hunt MP

Minister for Industry, Innovation and Science

Mr David Thodey  
Chairman  
Commonwealth Scientific and Industrial Research Organisation  
GPO Box 1700  
CANBERRA ACT 2600

Dear Mr Thodey

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads 'David'.

The Commonwealth Scientific and Industrial Research Organisation (CSIRO) is a world class organisation with a history of national achievement in science, celebrating its 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary this year.

CSIRO's researchers and scientists have collaborated with Australian universities and industry to develop the world's first Hendra vaccine, to feed millions through agricultural breakthroughs and to implement its discovery enabling fast and reliable Wi-Fi.

This is about working with existing industries and supporting new firms to become innovative.

The Government strongly believes in the fundamental role of CSIRO in facilitating the application and use of science and research to benefit Australia, including to address major national challenges. The Government will oversee an increase in CSIRO funding and staff over the next four years. Through this Statement of Expectations we express our commitment to the long-term future of CSIRO as a global scientific research leader and to enhance its research and standing even further.

One of CSIRO's greatest strengths is, and should continue to be, to operate at scale to tackle problems of national significance.

I am writing to outline my expectations of CSIRO to assist with the Government's commitment to the effective governance and performance of its agencies, guided by the *Public Governance, Performance and Accountability Act 2013* (PGPA Act).

### VISION

The Government and CSIRO share a vision of CSIRO building on its current standing and capabilities to become the world's premier public research organisation. This will be a decade long task but should be guided by a unifying vision involving the Government, the organisation, its staff and the Australian community.

During this decade, I expect CSIRO to cement its position as a world leader in scientific excellence, to be an employer of choice which will attract the highest calibre researchers in Australia and from around the world. In addition CSIRO should be a preferred industry research and commercialisation collaborator and a trusted advisor to government and industry.

## **MISSION**

CSIRO's longstanding mission is to create benefit for Australia through impactful science and innovation. In short, this is about CSIRO progressing science for public benefit.

This mission is about the great task of pursuing pure public good science as a foundation stone for our national benefit, knowledge and capabilities. It is equally about translating that knowledge to outcomes that will improve our health, food production and quality, environmental resilience and national economic capability.

## **PRIORITIES**

In outlining the following priorities for CSIRO, I reaffirm that across the breadth of its functions a fundamental requirement for the organisation is the delivery of societal and national benefits through striving for excellence of its scientific endeavour, including in the conduct of public benefit research.

The National Science and Research Priorities outline the areas of immediate and critical importance to Australia and its place in the world. CSIRO should conduct its activities recognising the framework of these and other sector specific priorities, as well as the Industry Knowledge Priorities identified by the Industry Growth Centres. This should include:

- pioneering in plant biology and agriculture.
- enabling development of new research and technologies for human health, food and nutrition, and biosecurity.
- leading climate change science, mitigation and adaptation research, including decadal forecasting as part of the work of the Climate Science Centre.
- developing new environmental research and technologies for air, land, water and oceans.
- collaborating with industry to help sustainably manage our resources, mining equipment and energy sectors.
- collaborating across the research community to maintain and build our astronomy capability.
- collaborating with industry to help develop our advanced manufacturing capabilities.
- collaborating with industry to improve Australia's digital and data management capabilities.

I encourage CSIRO to develop additional priorities based on its engagement with staff and the broader community, including industry and academia.

## **FUNCTIONS**

CSIRO should encourage its researchers to assist in addressing and solving the great challenges facing Australia as well as to assist in research translation. This will be achieved by driving scientific excellence throughout CSIRO, providing training and appropriate incentives, and providing an intellectual property and research translation framework to support realisation of commercial and industry impacts.

This includes both creating new or significantly transforming industries and assisting with innovation for existing industries. In particular, consistent with CSIRO's rich history in this regard, priority should be given to sub-sectors where there is clear evidence of both a growing global opportunity and both our existing and potential Australian advantage.

I endorse CSIRO's emphasis in its strategic plan to become Australia's innovation catalyst. This ambition will need to be reflected in the engagement model with Australian industry and the broader community.

CSIRO should aim to be an international employer of choice, promote careers in science and provide a career path for research and technical staff, and be an exemplar in cultivating a diverse workforce. In particular CSIRO should invest in quality research training, encourage engagement between researchers and business (particularly SMEs) and facilitate mobility between CSIRO, businesses and other research organisations. CSIRO should continue to be custodian of national collections, data sets and major research infrastructure.

Together with delivering the AcceleratiON program under NISA, I encourage CSIRO to seek for its researchers to be entrepreneurial by providing training and appropriate incentives, including an intellectual property and research translation framework to support realisation of commercial and industry impacts. A fundamental purpose is translating the work of CSIRO scientists and researchers to the benefit of both Australia and the rest of the world. I expect that CSIRO will identify and take, where practicable, opportunities to create and support new companies to commercialise CSIRO discoveries and expertise to the benefit of Australia.

I encourage CSIRO to support risk-taking as part of resilient strategies to solve the big problems facing Australia, within the context of maintaining good governance and learning from failure.

## **OUTCOMES**

CSIRO should play a significant role in implementing the Government's science and innovation policies, in particular through:

- improving science, technology, engineering and maths (STEM) education through brokering partnerships between STEM professionals and schools to help primary and secondary school students and teachers to understand how STEM is applied in the real world. This will include activities aimed at supporting women in STEM and closing the gap in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander achievement and employment in STEM.
- maximising use of its national scientific facilities by Australian and international researchers, including by encouraging industry access to relevant facilities and maintaining collections of national importance.
- communicating with and educating research institutions and businesses about the benefits that research and such facilities can provide.
- consistent with government policy as articulated in the ARC and NHMRC policies on Open Access, increasing public access to CSIRO research by ensuring that research publications produced by CSIRO researchers that arise from public funding are openly available. This provision is not intended to interfere with the commercial operations of CSIRO Publishing.
- supporting the nation's future science and research capability through ongoing horizon scanning or foresighting activities.
- examining opportunities for increasing collaboration with universities and industry through simplified contracting arrangements, including related to IP.
- using Australia's existing national and international collaborations as well as its own resources to increase the capacity and responsiveness of the nation's ability to translate research into outcomes.
- implementing the CSIRO ON Accelerator, an intensive education programme for researchers and their collaborators to develop and validate clear paths to impact and national benefit.

- delivering the \$200 million CSIRO Innovation Fund to commercialise breakthroughs from CSIRO, universities and publicly funded research for the national interest. This should include sharing of innovation and investment lessons with the investment community and with the government so as to be applied to other government priorities.
- improving Australia's data science research capability by CSIRO's Data61 partnering with private and public sector partners to capitalise on the data revolution. CSIRO's Data61 will have a range of benefits including to connect government datasets and publicly release them on an open data platform, increase industry cybersecurity, and build a Digital Research Network (D61+) to link business with data researchers; and to improve the data literacy of Australian businesses.
- developing transparent metrics and indicators to benchmark and measure its performance, progress and success against these outcomes.

## **FUTURE VISION**

In advancing the Government's policy priorities, I expect CSIRO to collaborate globally with universities, other publicly funded research agencies, medical research institutes and industry, to achieve common objectives that will benefit Australia.

I expect CSIRO to continue, and further foster, strong engagement with the university sector including strategies to increase the quantity and quality of training of science graduate students and higher degree research candidates. CSIRO should aspire to be a leader in training young Australian graduates who are capable of both pure academic research and applied collaboration and translation with industry, including Industrial PhDs with appropriate partners.

I expect CSIRO to work in partnership with business to identify and develop the science to address industry problems and to underpin Australia's aim of increased competitiveness. The knowledge and ideas of its researchers can substantially improve the productivity of industry and businesses. CSIRO and business should work together to continue growth in the knowledge-based sectors, with an emphasis on translating research into commercial outcomes to benefit Australia. I expect CSIRO to engage with those industries where CSIRO's capability and intellectual property can help these industries to become globally competitive and in particular, create new businesses.

## **OPERATIONS**

In writing this Statement of Expectations, I acknowledge the functions of CSIRO as set out under the *Science and Industry Research Act 1949*. In exercising its functions and meeting its legislated requirements, CSIRO must take into account the Government's broad and developing policy framework and its key priorities.

I expect CSIRO to comply with the principles of the Commonwealth Resource Management Framework as specified in the PGPA Act and to give effect to the governance, performance and accountability requirements covered by the Act applicable to a corporate entity.

Consistent with the *Science and Industry Research Act 1949*, CSIRO should prevent unnecessary overlap with existing activity across the system and promote the most effective use of available facilities and staff within its available resources.

I look forward to CSIRO supporting me in my role as Deputy Chair to the Prime Minister of the Commonwealth Science Council and I expect CSIRO to work with the Chief Scientist of Australia, including through its membership of the National Science, Technology and Research Committee, and working with Innovation and Science Australia.

I also look forward to CSIRO working closely with the department. I am keen to promote the scientific work of CSIRO and encourage you to work with my department in meeting this objective.

CSIRO should keep both myself and the Department of Industry, Innovation and Science informed, in a timely and accurate way, of significant issues relating to the health and work of the organisation. I also expect CSIRO to provide input and information to the department as required, to ensure that advice to my office and the Government canvasses relevant issues and sensitivities and reflects a portfolio response. I expect CSIRO to provide copies of ministerial briefings and correspondence to my office and the relevant areas of my department, in parallel. Further, I expect CSIRO to provide prior notice, to my office and my department, of significant announcements and events that are likely to attract media attention.

In accordance with the PGPA Act, I expect CSIRO to develop an annual report and corporate plan and to provide these to me, as the responsible portfolio Minister, and the Minister for Finance. In developing the annual report and corporate plan, I expect the Board to consult with me and my department, and to take into account the priorities and policies of the Government, especially as articulated in this Statement of Expectations.

I look forward to receiving your response outlining how the Board proposes to deliver on these expectations.

Ultimately, the paramount vision for CSIRO is to become the world's premier public research organisation over the coming decade and to apply its knowledge for the benefit of all Australians.

Yours sincerely



Greg Hunt

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