

**Supplementary written evidence submitted by
Research Councils UK (SR 02)**

Following the evidence session on 19 January 2011 the Committee wrote to Research Councils UK requesting:

- 1) A table providing details of international subscriptions (combined capital and resource elements) by facility/institution for each of the next four years and a comparison with 2010-11 (Q123);
- 2) Details and accompanying explanation of spending on astronomy for each of the next four years including a breakdown by capital and resource and a comparison with 2010-11. It would also be useful to have comparison with other STFC “themes” as laid out in Appendix D of its delivery plan (“Resource budgets by theme”) (Qq129-130).
- 3) The joint priority list of capital projects submitted by the Research Councils to the Department for Business, Innovations and Skills (Qq97-100);
- 4) A note on the discussions STFC and/or RCUK have had with the Department for Education on the National Schools’ Observatory (Q135).
- 5) Clarification of Professor Mason’s remarks that existing scientific facilities will run at full capacity, given STFC’s delivery plan states operations at the ISIS pulsed neutron and muon source and the Central Laser Facility will be reduced (Q82, Q88).
- 6) Will any potential redundancy costs be taken out of capital budgets? If so, are Research Councils incorporating a contingency for this within their plans for the allocation of their capital budgets?

**MEMORANDUM FROM RCUK IN RESPONSE TO POST ORAL EVIDENCE SESSION
QUESTIONS FROM THE HOUSE OF COMMONS SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY
COMMITTEE**

1. Research Councils UK is a strategic partnership set up to champion research supported by the seven UK Research Councils. RCUK was established in 2002 to enable the Councils to work together more effectively to enhance the overall impact and effectiveness of their research, training and innovation activities, contributing to the delivery of the Government’s objectives for science and innovation. Further details are available at www.rcuk.ac.uk
2. This evidence is submitted by RCUK and represents its independent views. It does not include, or necessarily reflect the views of the Knowledge and Innovation Group in the Department for Business, Innovation and Skills (BIS).
3. This evidence is submitted in response to questions received from the House of Commons Science and Technology Committee following an oral evidence session on the Spending Review 2010, held on 19 January 2011, with Professor Alan Thorpe, Professor Dave Delpy, Professor Keith Mason and Professor Rick Rylance.
4. The table below provides details of the Science and Technology Facilities Council (STFC) international subscriptions (combined capital and resource elements) by facility/institution for each of the next four years and a comparison with 2010-11.

Total Resource and Capital	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015
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CERN - CHF (M)	163	165	162	162	162	162
ESO - € (M)	21.042	21.387	21.387	21.387	21.387	21.387
ESRF - € (M)	12.16	8.68	8.77	8.86	8.95	9.04
ILL – € (M)	15.93	15.93	21.01	20.79	18.19	18.05

Notes:

Exact CERN contribution only known for 2011 - CERN percentage share calculated annually on basis of exchange rate and NNI

CERN figures for 2012 onwards do not include indexation

CERN figures based on Medium Term Plan presented in June and September

UK component calculated on known forward buy costs and today's RBS rate

ESRF / ILL figures approved for 2011; planning assumptions only for 2012 onwards

ESRF figures include a 1% pa planning assumption on indexation from 2012 onwards

ILL figures include 0% inflation indexation for 2011-2015

ILL figures based on Associates grants only (UK, France, Germany) as all other income dependent on short-term Members contracts

ILL figures 2010 to 2012 affected by negotiated deferral of payment of 2.5M€ of UK subscription payment from 2010 to 2012 and 2011 to 2013 respectively.

5. The table below gives details and accompanying explanations of spending on astronomy for each of the next four years including a breakdown by capital and resource and a comparison with 2010-11.

STFC Delivery Plan (£M) – Resource and Capital	10/11		11/12		12/13		13/14		14/15	
	Res	Cap	Res	Cap	Res	Cap	Res	Cap	Res	Cap
Astronomy										
Subscriptions (ESO)	10.9	18.3	11.57	17.78	11.69	7.17	11.56	7.37	11.50	7.57
Development	3.21	0.57	5.04		7.35		8.84		9.76	
Operations and exploitation	46.2	4.4	45.44	3.00*	37.88	3.00*	33.15	3.00*	32.45	3.00*
Studentships/Fellowships	14.15		15.25		15.09		14.91		15.22	

Notes:

10/11 and 11/12 Capital for ESO include the final capital special payments relating to accession to ESO

Only capital within the Subscriptions (ESO) 10/11 is confirmed at this time – all other capital allocations are subject to confirmation. * The figures for 11/12 onward are indicative only.

Comparison of investment in STFC themes will be made in submissions to the Committee's new inquiry into astronomy and particle physics.

6. STFC has made a statement with regard to the National Schools Observatory in their submission to the Committee's inquiry into astronomy and particle physics.
7. Clarification of Professor Mason's remarks made in response to Q82 and Q88 has been provided separately in a letter to the Committee Chair. [See below].
8. Any potential redundancy costs would not be taken out of capital budgets.
9. When RCUK gave evidence to the Committee on 19 January 2011 Professor Thorpe stated that it would be an option for Research Councils to use part of their resource budget allocation to cover the cost of new capital projects. We would like to provide a clarification in this area. The resource budget is within the Science and Research funding ringfence whereas the capital budget allocated to Research Councils is not. This is a new arrangement for the spending review period from 2011-12. A virement from resource to capital would run counter to that ringfencing and would require approval which cannot be assumed. In addition, Research Councils only know their capital allocations definitely for the year 2011/2, with the following three years being indicative figures subject to change. This will require Research Councils to manage their reduced capital allocations with considerable care over the next four years of the spending review period. We understand that the capital allocations made by BIS so far do not include potential additional capital that may become available to BIS from asset sales. Research Councils believe they have a strong case for a significant share in any additional capital that BIS is able to allocate.

Research Councils UK
February 2011

Letter to the Chair of the Committee from Professor Keith Mason, Chief Executive, Science and Technology Facilities Council, 21 February 2011

HOUSE OF COMMONS SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY COMMITTEE CSR EVIDENCE
SESSION ON 19 JANUARY

I was grateful to give evidence on to your Committee on 19 January with my colleagues Professor David Delpy, Professor Rick Rylance and Professor Alan Thorpe.

Further to discussion under questions Q82 and Q88, the Committee Clerk wrote for clarification with regard to the capacity at which the ISIS pulsed muon and neutron source and the Central Laser Facility would operate.

I am aware the Committee may have gained the impression during questioning that these facilities would run at full capacity. To clarify, my comments were intended to establish that, while the reduction in capital allocations received by all the Research Councils was going to be difficult to manage, the capital allocation for large UK facilities was sufficient to allow those facilities to run at the capacity that the Councils had jointly agreed was required and to be sustainable at that level.

Yours sincerely
Professor Keith Mason
Chief Executive
Science and Technology Facilities Council