



Campaign for Science & Engineering Monthly update – March 2009

What we are working on

- **Economic Downturn:** CaSE has commented upon policy developments to address the risks and opportunities posed by the economic downturn. We urge the Government to back its words and, indeed, plans with new money.
- **Triple Science:** CaSE continues its campaign to make it a statutory duty for all English schools to offer triple science, that is, separate physics, chemistry and biology GCSEs, to able and interested students. This is discussed in all the relevant meetings and media comment. The Prime Minister announced a new target for 90% of schools to offer it, and while this is progress, we will continue to push for 100%.
- **Impact of the Science and Engineering Research Base:** CaSE is finalising its policy report on the social and economic impact of publicly-funded research.

CaSE News

- **Chief Scientific Advisor at the FCO:** CaSE welcomes the decision, announced by Prime Minister Gordon Brown in his speech on science, to appoint a Chief Scientific Advisor at the Foreign & Commonwealth Office. CaSE wrote to the Foreign Secretary on this issue back in January 2008 and has continued to highlight the lack of scientific expertise at the FCO. We therefore welcome the government's decision.
- We have made some corrections to the SET statistics published in December in CaSE News 58. A corrected version of the complete newsletter is available in the members area.
Corrected SET Statistics:
<http://sciencecampaign.org.uk/members/casenews/casenews58x.pdf>

February Diary

27/02/09 Meeting with the Shadow Chancellor's Office

Nick Dusic had a productive meeting with an adviser to George Osborne MP.

27/02/09 Prime Minister's speech on science

CaSE welcomed Gordon Brown's first speech on science as Prime Minister. He set out a positive agenda for investment in science and for increasing investment in research into the future. Commenting Nick Dusic said, "The Prime Minister gets the importance of science and the need to invest in it. There wasn't a pledge to have an Obama-style boost in science, but it was reassuring to have a commitment to sustained increased investment across the board. The target for 90% of schools to offer triple science GCSEs isn't good enough as every able student should be able to study them. It is great news that there will be a Chief Scientific Adviser for the FCO, which CaSE campaigned for."

Read the press release: <http://www.sciencecampaign.org.uk/press/releases/2009/2702.pdf>

See media coverage: <http://www.sciencecampaign.org.uk/press/inthemedial/index.htm>

27/02/09 UK Deans of Science

Nick Dusic was the guest speaker at the UK Deans of Science meeting in London.

26/02/09 Science Policy for Wales

Nick Dusic took part in the IWA's science policy conference.

25/02/09 The Finance and General Purposes Committee met

24/02/09 CaSE attended the 'Scientists meet the media' event at the Royal Society

20/02/09 CaSE attended a Scottish Deans of Science event

20/02/09 Triple Science Campaign

In a letter published in The Times Education Supplement, Hilary Leever urged the Department for Children, Schools and Families to show its commitment to science by making it a statutory duty for all schools to offer separate GCSEs in physics, chemistry and biology, known as triple science, to able and interested students.

Read the letter: <http://www.tes.co.uk/article.aspx?storycode=6008997>

19/02/09 Denham on a "smarter approach to research funding"

CaSE attended the breakfast meeting at the Royal Academy of Engineering hosted by John Denham MP, Secretary of State for Innovation, Universities and Skills. CaSE is concerned that the government is losing sight of the big picture by focusing on organisational issues when other countries are boosting their investment in science and engineering.

Read more: <http://www.sciencecampaign.org.uk/press/releases/2009/pr0109.pdf>

18/02/09 CaSE met with staff of the House of Lord's Science and Technology Committee

18/02/09 CaSE met with civil servants at the Department of Innovation, Universities and Skills to discuss support for the research base

17/02/09 CaSE met with Professor Keith Burnett, Vice-Chancellor of the University of Sheffield

12/02/09 Meeting with National STEM Director

CaSE Director, Nick Dusic, and Assistant Director, Dr Hilary Leever, met with Professor John Holman, National STEM Director and Director of the National Science Learning Centres. They had a lively and productive discussion on various issues in secondary science education including delivery of triple science GCSEs and development of the science diploma.

10/02/09 CaSE met with GlaxoSmithKline

09/02/09 DIUS meeting on Science and Society

Nick Dusic and Hilary Leever met with the STEM Science and Society team at the Department for Innovation, Universities and Skills. They discussed how it would be possible to take forward some of the suggestions made in the CaSE response to the Science and Society consultation, particularly those affecting diversity and teaching.

05/02/09 Drayson's proposal to focus the UK's research effort

CaSE's director, Nick Dusic, attended the Foundation for Science and Technology's lecture by Lord Drayson where he outlined the terms of his debate on focusing the UK's research effort. Commenting on the proposal Nick Dusic said, "CaSE is keen to engage in this debate with Lord Drayson. Investment in science and engineering research and skills is critical to the economy now and in the future. There are a variety of things the government should be doing to boost the nation's scientific and engineering research and skills during a time of crisis, but narrowing its

research focus is not one of them. The UK needs to continue to pursue excellent research across a broad range of disciplines."

View the lecture: <http://www.foundation.org.uk/>

Have your say on the BBC website:

<http://newsforums.bbc.co.uk/nol/thread.jspa?forumID=6008&edition=1&ttl=20090205113251>

04/02/09 **Whatever happened to departmental R&D?**

Writing in Research Fortnight Nick Dusic said there should be a renewed focused on government department R&D expenditure.

Read the article:

<http://www.researchresearch.com/news.cfm?pagename=newsStory&type=default&elementID=93573>

04/02/09 **CaSE meets with London Mathematical Society**

Hilary Leever met with Peter Cooper and Caroline Davis of the London Mathematical Society to discuss pressing issues in mathematics education including provision of two mathematics GCSEs, the mathematics content of the diploma, and how to get more mathematics specialist teachers into primary schools.

03/02/09

CaSE met with the National Farmers' Union.

CaSE in the Media

<http://www.sciencecampaign.org.uk/press/inthedia/index.htm>

For more information on our activities go to our website

www.sciencecampaign.org.uk

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