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Campaign for
Science and
Engineering
in the UK



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Campaign for Science and Engineering response to the 2007 Pre-Budget Report and Comprehensive Spending Review

CaSE was today pleased to receive confirmation in the 2007 Pre-Budget Report and Comprehensive Spending Review that the total public investment in the science base will rise 2.5% from £5.4 billion in 2007-8 to reach £6.3 billion by 2010-1. CaSE also enthusiastically greeted the announcement to expand the single fund for health research to £1.7 billion by 2010, although it would be good to have greater clarity on the annual allocations and whether they include the future investment for the new molecular biology lab in Cambridge and the proposed international science centre in London.

CaSE was pleased that the Government accepts the recommendations of the Sainsbury Review published last week.

Dr Hilary Leever, Acting Director, commented:

"We are looking forward to the Government taking a more radical approach to solving the shortages in secondary science teachers. It is also time to evaluate and rationalise the many science, engineering, mathematics and technology promotion and enhancement schemes on offer.

We are pleased to see moves to improve government procurement of services.

We were disappointed to find little mention of government departmental funding of science. While the science budget for research councils and higher education has increased over the last ten years, funding for science commissioned by government departments (e.g., within the MoD or DeFRA) has decreased by a comparable amount.

Over the last decade there has not been the dramatic increase in science funding as might be thought from some figures. Furthermore, government has increasingly sought to guide the allocation of funding by the research councils. It is not clear why government seems to prefer to influence independent researchers to do the science they want done, rather than fund it directly in their own departments. Just today, Research Council UK released "Excellence with Impact" with the goal of maximising the economic impact of research."

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Notes for Editors

1. For more information contact Dr Hilary Leever on 07905 304 702
2. CaSE is a pressure group that works to improve the scientific health of the UK . CaSE was founded in 1986 (then known as Save British Science), and is accepted as an organisation that speaks for a wide section of the science and engineering community in a constructive but also critical and forceful manner. We speak directly to ministers and civil servants, interact with the press and backbench politicians, organise symposia to discuss current developments in policy, and publish documents. Our work is supported by 1,500 individual scientists and engineers and by a wide range of industrial companies,

universities, city financiers, learned societies, publishers and others. Full details of CaSE's work can be found at www.sciencecampaign.org.uk.