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Job freeze at the CSIRO could stunt productivity and innovation

The ACTU are concerned about the consequences of the Government's public service jobs freeze in science and innovation which, over time, will see a drop in productivity and vital job-creating innovation.

ACTU Secretary Dave Oliver said, "Cutting jobs at the CSIRO will be bad for productivity in the long run. Our national productivity growth depends on innovation and research, and the application of that research in the development of new products and new technologies."

"Continued austerity measures, particularly in science and research, will cripple Australia's ability to grow and expand. We will be left behind as our brightest and best leave our shores to go and work elsewhere."

Mr Oliver said the CSIRO had been responsible for a number of exciting innovations including new software to more accurately predict the spread of bushfires, a new process enabling three-dimensional printing of customised shoes for racehorses and pioneering of Wi-Fi Our technology for our smartphones.

"Staff cuts put major hurdles in the way of future projects and that could cost Australia dearly in terms future productivity," he said.

A further concern is that there is no end date to the current public sector cuts.

"The Government must be upfront about how long this interim recruitment freeze will apply," Mr Oliver said.

"This latest attack on jobs will result in 550 term and casual positions being immediately affected. However with no end to the freeze in sight, within the next few months all 1400 term and casual employees could lose their jobs."

"This is a terrible outcome for CSIRO employees who must be feeling very low right now."

"In this day and age, can Australia really afford to have a government who doesn't value and see the vast potential of productivity and jobs growth in new industries such as climate change, scientific research and innovation? This is an important question people need to consider."

Media contact: Eleni Hale 0418 793 885 and Ben Ruse 0409 510 879