



COMMONWEALTH OF AUSTRALIA

# Official Committee Hansard

JOINT COMMITTEE OF PUBLIC ACCOUNTS AND AUDIT

**Reference: Indigenous Law and Justice inquiry**

THURSDAY, 17 MARCH 2005

CANBERRA

BY AUTHORITY OF THE PARLIAMENT

**JOINT STATUTORY COMMITTEE ON  
PUBLIC ACCOUNTS AND AUDIT**

**Thursday, 17 March 2005**

**Members:** Mr Baldwin (*Chair*), Ms Grierson (*Deputy Chair*), Senators Hogg, Humphries, Moore, Murray, Scullion and Watson and Mr Broadbent, Ms Burke, Miss Jackie Kelly, Ms King, Dr Laming, Mr Somlyay, Mr Tanner and Mr Ticehurst

**Members in attendance:** Senators Hogg and Moore and Mr Baldwin, Mr Broadbent, Ms Grierson, Dr Laming and Mr Ticehurst

**Terms of reference for the inquiry:**

To inquire into and report on:

- (a) the distribution of the resources of Indigenous legal aid services between criminal, family and civil cases;
- (b) the coordination of Indigenous legal aid services with Legal Aid Commissions through measures such as memoranda of understanding;
- (c) the access for Indigenous women to Indigenous-specific legal services; and
- (d) the ability of Law and Justice program components to recruit and retain expert staff.

**WITNESSES**

**BOERSIG, Mr John, Assistant Secretary, Indigenous Law and Justice Branch, Attorney-  
General's Department ..... 1**

**POPPLER, Dr James, Acting First Assistant Secretary, Indigenous Justice and Legal Assistance  
Division, Attorney-General's Department ..... 1**



**Committee met at 9.06 a.m.****BOERSIG, Mr John, Assistant Secretary, Indigenous Law and Justice Branch, Attorney-General's Department****POPPLER, Dr James, Acting First Assistant Secretary, Indigenous Justice and Legal Assistance Division, Attorney-General's Department**

**CHAIR**—I welcome representatives from the Attorney-General's Department. Thank you for coming to brief and update members of the sectional committee on the provision of legal services to Indigenous Australians. Today's briefing begins the evidence-gathering program of the sectional committee inquiring into Indigenous law and justice matters in this new parliament. Some members are new to the inquiry, but we have read the evidence received in the previous parliament by written submissions and verbal testimony and we will be seeking your response to some of the issues raised.

This is a private briefing and thus the information you give will be treated in confidence, though we do have Hansard along to record the proceedings. In the event that the information would be useful to the committee's inquiry, we will contact you about authorising publication. I advise witnesses that the hearings today are legal proceedings of the parliament and warrant the same respect as proceedings of the house itself. The giving of false or misleading evidence is a serious matter and may be regarded as a contempt of parliament. The evidence today will be recorded by Hansard and will attract parliamentary privilege.

Before I begin, I would like to raise some questions that Mr Boersig took on notice at a public hearing on 9 June 2004 and which remain outstanding over eight months later. The secretariat has contacted the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Service and then your organisation on a number of occasions without satisfaction. On the last occasion, Mr Boersig undertook to return a call, which did not then occur. Mr Boersig may have taken these questions on notice as an officer of ATSIIS but, as the portfolio responsibility transferred, I would have thought so the responsibility for responding to this committee. I expect the outstanding matters to be dealt with as a matter of priority, and I take this occasion to warn you that, if questions taken on notice or arising from today's briefing are not responded to promptly and in full, I shall be writing to the Attorney-General to seek his assistance in obtaining the required information. Perhaps you would like to start with an opening statement. If you could include those responses to the questions still outstanding, it would be very much appreciated by members of the committee.

**Dr Popple**—Certainly, Chair, we can do that. Perhaps it might be useful to start with some background information, particularly for members of the committee who were not previously involved in this issue. You would be aware that, on 1 July last year, the mainstreaming of Indigenous services took place and, as a result of that, responsibility for these law and justice programs moved from ATSIIS to the Attorney-General's Department. At the same time, 51 staff who were working for ATSIIS moved across to a new branch in the department, called the Indigenous Law and Justice Branch, which Mr Boersig heads. Included amongst those 51, were 34 staff who are located in what are now called Indigenous coordination centres located around the country and were formerly ATSIIS regional offices, staffed and operated by DIMIA but obviously containing staff from various agencies and departments.

At the same time, four programs came across from ATSI to the department and are now our responsibility. Those are: the Legal Aid program, which at the moment supports 25 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander legal services to provide culturally appropriate legal aid for Indigenous people; a law and justice advocacy program, which supports Indigenous people in their pursuit of social, cultural, economic and political rights through the legal system; a prevention, diversion and rehabilitation program, which provides diversion, prevention, education and rehabilitation projects to help reduce Indigenous people's adverse contact with the justice system; and a family violence prevention program, which improves access of Indigenous people, particularly women and children at risk, to legal services and provides holistic and culturally appropriate responses to family violence in Indigenous communities.

I also advise that, on 1 December, we had a restructure within our department. As a result of that, the Indigenous Law and Justice Branch is now co-located with the Legal Assistance Branch within the division that I am acting head of. The Legal Assistance Branch deals with mainstream legal aid issues, financial assistance from the Commonwealth directly and the operation of community legal services. The reason I tell you that is that we have done that in order to maximise the interaction between the Indigenous and mainstream legal aid program management, hopefully to the benefit of both operations.

We have two main projects—I think it is fair to say—on the Indigenous side. One is the tendering out of Indigenous legal services. You would be aware that the tender was released for those legal services in both Victoria and Western Australia back on 13 November. Those tenders closed on 17 December, and we anticipate an announcement soon about the successful tenderers in those states. The tenders for Indigenous services in Queensland were released on 5 March and they close on the 6th of next month. In relation to those three states, those new services under the new arrangements will commence on 1 July this year. The remaining states and the Northern Territory will be tendered out in the following financial year in order that they will all commence under the new arrangements no later than 1 July 2006.

The other main project is the expansion of the Family Violence Prevention Legal Services. You would be aware that there are currently 13 services. The government announced in the last budget process that they were to expand that by a further 13. On 7 January this year, the Attorney announced 13 high-need areas, and we sought applications from organisations to operate Family Violence Prevention Legal Services in those areas. On 25 February, the Attorney announced that seven service providers had been chosen. We are still working in relation to the remaining six areas. They are my background comments. Mr Boersig would like to say something in relation to the outstanding questions.

**Mr Boersig**—In relation to the alleged failure to return a call, that is certainly not my recollection. I am not sure what the situation is in that regard. Certainly any calls that came in were returned by either me or Mr Harwood and sometimes by Dr Popple. If there is some error there, it is certainly not deliberate on my part. If there is any concern on the committee's behalf in relation to the delay, I certainly apologise. Clearly it is my responsibility as head of the branch to ensure that these matters are completed, and we are here and ready to answer the questions as required.

**CHAIR**—I will run through the outstanding questions. With the liberty of my colleagues here, I will ask them directly to you. The first question was—and I will repeat the question as put in the previous proceedings:

You did say that in your submission to us, and page 100 of the audit report shows an increase of actual services versus target for legal matters for women, but we understand that the demand is increasing because the number of charges laid against Aboriginal women has been increasing fairly rapidly. Is that correct?

To which you replied, Mr Boersig:

I would have to take that on notice in terms of a specific answer.

We await your answer.

**Dr Popple**—I will attempt to answer that and Mr Boersig can perhaps provide some further information if you require it. The short answer is that the department does not collect data of that nature and, to our knowledge, AT SIS did not and does not collect that data either. I am talking specifically about the number of charges laid against Aboriginal women. We certainly have some data available to us about, for example, the number of Indigenous women in the prison population. We have that information from the National Corrective Services Statistics Unit within the Australian Bureau of Statistics. For example, I understand that, in 1994, the total number of female prisoners was 837. Of those, 158 were Indigenous, which represents a proportion of 18.9 per cent. By 2004—that is, 10 years later—the total number of female prisoners was 1,672 and 424 of those were Indigenous, which represents a proportion of 25.4 per cent. That does not answer your question directly, because it relates to population rather than charges. We just do not have that information, I am afraid.

**Ms GRIERSON**—Obviously that data supports the trend of an increase in the number of women coming into the prison system. Do you have any matching data on the trend of the number of services being accessed by or given to women?

**Mr Boersig**—A couple of things have happened of recent times that reflect endeavours to address these issues. First, I need to say that ‘charges’ relates to the way data is recovered. People are often charged with multiple offences but, as the data systems record the major charge, it is hard for anyone to get an accurate picture of all the charges. There have been two reports recently into this issue: one is by Rowena Lawrie, which we can identify and provide for you; the other is a forthcoming report by HREOC, which also looks at these issues, particularly in New South Wales.

**Ms GRIERSON**—I suppose it is important for the committee to know whether that has been increasing the demand for Indigenous legal services. One would expect that a 5½ per cent increase is only the tip of the iceberg. These people have been committed to prison. With an increasing trend shown there, one would expect there to be an increasing trend also in service demand. I think it is important for us to know about that.

**CHAIR**—Can you send that information to the committee so that we can receive it and make it a submission to our inquiry?

**Mr Boersig**—Certainly.

**CHAIR**—Are there any other questions in addition to the questions I have asked, colleagues? For the benefit of Senator Moore, we are on page 5. We are going through the outstanding questions one by one and hopefully obtaining responses now. Ms Plibersek asked:

Can you tell us what proportion of funding is being spent on overheads rather than on legal service delivery?

Mr Boersig said:

There have been some estimates of that in the past but I would have to take that on notice and find the exact amounts.

**Dr Popple**—We have endeavoured to come up with some amounts. I should point out that the answer to this question depends a great deal on your definition of ‘overhead’. We have attempted to do that based on the approved budgets for the various ATSILS that we fund under that program. Our estimate is that approximately 25 per cent of the amounts identified in all those organisations’ budgets are what we would call overheads.

**CHAIR**—Do you have with you for dissemination a table on revenues and expenditure?

**Dr Popple**—Certainly. We can hand that to you. You will have to excuse our scribble down the bottom of that page. We have a table of the break-up by ATSILS.

**CHAIR**—Is that dated?

**Dr Popple**—It is the approved budgets for ATSILS for 2004-05. There is no date on it, but it relates to the current financial year.

**CHAIR**—Is it the wish of the committee that the submission from Attorney-General’s be accepted as evidence into the sectional committee inquiry into Indigenous law and justice and authorised for publication? There being no objection, it is so resolved.

**Ms GRIERSON**—Do you have a view on that figure of 25 per cent?

**Mr Boersig**—I think it is a good figure.

**Ms GRIERSON**—Do you think that is about the norm?

**Mr Boersig**—As Dr Popple said, it goes partly to the definition of what you include in overheads. The question really relates to what is in service delivery and what is in overheads, and we have tried to identify those.

**CHAIR**—Mr Boersig, when you were asked whether you could give us a ballpark figure, you replied:

In Queensland, for example, there are 11 separate services who would have principal solicitors, auditors where necessary, financial officers and bookkeepers. For an accurate figure I would prefer to take that question on notice.



Can I assume that those figures are included in that table?

**Mr Boersig**—Yes, that covers the whole country.

**CHAIR**—Ms Plibersek also asked:

Could you re-order funding so that you had one principal organisation—an auspicing body in each state—which would have the same effect as the tendering process that you are suggesting?

Mr Boersig asked:

In terms of having a single service provider?

Ms Plibersek then said:

Yes, or having a main service provider. Either way: a single service provider or a central service provider that is an auspicing body for other service providers but that takes care of the backroom stuff—the auditing, hiring and firing and other administrative parts of the job.

Mr Boersig replied:

There is a contrast between the costs associated with administration for Western Australia, where they have one service for the whole state, and Queensland where there are 11. I think those differences are demonstrable but I will take the question about the actual figures on notice.

**Dr Popple**—Again, the breakdown there is across the country. But I would also note that with the tender for Queensland services, which I mentioned before, the committee may be aware that the government is seeking a single provider or two providers where now there are 11 providers. So certainly the intention is that there will be a reduction—at least in Queensland—of the overhead costs as a proportion of the amount spent in Queensland.

**CHAIR**—Do members of the committee have any points they wish to raise on that?

**Ms GRIERSON**—Will the tender that is out at the moment end up with one single provider?

**Dr Popple**—Certainly that is what the government is asking for.

**Ms GRIERSON**—Have you projected savings on that? If you have projected savings, I hope they will be devoted to legal services.

**Dr Popple**—That is right. The tender documentation includes amounts of money and seeks a single service provider or two service providers. Any savings, as you say, will flow to increased services—in this example in Queensland—because there is no change in the amount of money by virtue of the tendering process.

**CHAIR**—On 9 June 2004, at pages 18 and 19, Ms Grierson asked:

But we also know that in Victoria and New South Wales the LACs' family law solicitors have been seconded to ATSILS to meet the high demand of Indigenous family law cases. We do not have any data on that, but I would like you to comment on how that secondment is going. Does anyone know how that is going and how well they have been received by Indigenous people?

Mr Boersig stated:

I would have to take that specific question on notice. Generally, there are memorandums of understanding between ATSILS and legal aid commissions, for example, in New South Wales, that encourage cooperation in a landscape where there is great need and where each organisation has some particular expertise. It works better in some places than in others, obviously. Newcastle is one of those places.

You have taken that on notice. Would you like to expand on that, please?

**Dr Popple**—We made some inquiries of New South Wales and Victoria. To our knowledge, there is only one situation where there has been a formal secondment, although there may be other arrangements that are less formal. The formal secondment has been between the Victorian Aboriginal Legal Service, VALS, and the Victorian Legal Aid Commission for a family law solicitor to work in VALS. From VALS, we understand that arrangement was successful: that the solicitor was very well received and its clientele were happy with the arrangement.

**CHAIR**—Are there any further questions on that, Ms Grierson?

**Ms GRIERSON**—No, thank you.

**CHAIR**—Any there any further questions from other members of the committee? Also on 9 June, at page 24 of the *Hansard*, Ms Plibersek asked:

Would you have any figures on the proportion of Indigenous legal service spending on perpetrators of crime compared with victims of crime, if you take into account both ATSILS and the Family Violence Prevention Legal Services?

Mr Boersig replied:

I will take that on notice and have a look at it.

**Mr Boersig**—We are not able to provide absolutely accurate figures in relation to this. We are able to say, though, that we have amended the data systems so that in forthcoming years we will be able to identify victims, accused, applicants, respondents, plaintiffs and defendants. So we will be able to provide that information.

**CHAIR**—Why are no accurate figures available now?

**Mr Boersig**—In the ATGIS data recovery they were not required. When we moved over, we kept the same data systems. We have now changed those data systems and I can indicate that about 23 to 25 per cent of ATSILS's work is for women.

**Ms GRIERSON**—What was that percentage?

**Mr Boersig**—Between 23 and 25 per cent. Over the last few years, they have been the percentages.

**Ms GRIERSON**—One of the main issues to come out of our original inquiry work so far is that the service is being gobbled up by criminal cases, and often victims of domestic violence and all sorts of disputes were not getting any representation, because the emphasis had to be on criminal representation. So now, while more careful classification is important, knowing that it is occurring and finding ways to provide for it are terribly important. Do you think the tender documents that are out there recognise that or will make it more possible to service that need?

**Mr Boersig**—Yes. I can indicate that tender documents have been focused so that issues about incarceration and identifying where a person's physical safety is at risk are key priority areas. That then should show a gradual shift to providing service into those areas. Bearing in mind your earlier comments about women, we expect there to be an increased need for dealing with incarceration issues for women as well. Some of that work will be addressed there also. Further, there is the expansion of the Family Violence Prevention Legal Services, which is a significant initiative. In addition, as Dr Popple said, another 13 are being rolled out.

**Dr Popple**—None of their clientele are perpetrators; they are victims or people at risk.

**CHAIR**—On 9 June, at pages 24 and 25, Ms Plibersek also asked:

Are you doing any work on finding out whether women are feeling comfortable and confident about accessing those services or whether they themselves subscribe to the view that, basically, legal services represent blokes and women have to look elsewhere for their help?

Mr Boersig replied:

The issues of accountability and client satisfaction are fairly high in terms of the way the tender document is being prepared. The kinds of accountability we are looking for will relate to some of those issues.

Ms Plibersek then asked:

But no work has really been done historically on that?

Mr Boersig replied:

I would have to take that on notice.

I would appreciate your comments.

**Dr Popple**—To a great extent, Mr Boersig has already addressed that in his answer to the previous question. As he said, roughly 23 per cent of the clients of ATSILS are Indigenous women, but we have no data on their satisfaction or otherwise with the service they have been given. But with the future changed arrangements under the tendering system, we plan to have more data to be able to address those sorts of questions.

**Mr Boersig**—In addition, I know we have also required, as part of this process, client satisfaction surveys to be conducted by the organisations, both from Family Violence Prevention Legal Services and from future legal aid providers. The idea is that we will know what people think, and it is part of their obligations in reporting to us to obtain that information.

**CHAIR**—Are there any other questions in relation to that question, colleagues? On the same date, 9 June, at page 28, Ms Grierson asked:

The other area I want to ask about is the recommendation that suggests that custody is too often the outcome of legal services, that it does not necessarily solve a problem and that there should be some community-friendly and more acceptable alternatives to custody. Have you got views on that? Are there any programs being developed in that way?

Mr Boersig replied:

The restorative justice programs you were referring to, perhaps?

Ms Grierson replied:

I cannot find what I wanted to refer you to, but can you take that on notice and see whether there are any suggested programs that we are not aware of.

Your response, please.

**Dr Popple**—As I mentioned in my introduction, we operate a number of programs, one of which is the prevention, diversion and rehabilitation program. The Attorney-General recently approved revised guidelines and I have a copy here, if the committee would like it. These new guidelines for that program feature restorative justice measures as a specific area for funding.

**Mr Boersig**—We fund between 110 and 140 of these types of programs around Australia, and there are a range under this that endeavours to address that.

**Dr Popple**—Just for completeness, I also have copies of the guidelines for the other programs we administer. Would you like to take those as a job lot?

**CHAIR**—Thank you. Is it the wish of the committee that Program Guidelines 2005-06 for Prevention, Diversion and Rehabilitation, for Legal Aid for Indigenous People, for Law and Justice Advocacy and for Family Violence Prevention Legal Services, as presented by the Attorney-General's Department, be accepted as evidence to the sectional committee inquiring into Indigenous law and justice and included in the committee's records as exhibits? There being no objection, it is so resolved. The last question that you took on notice was from Ms Grierson, on page 28 of the *Hansard* on 9 June, where she asked:

Also, it is apparent that the Australian Institute of Criminology have developed a funding allocation model which can provide a valuable template, one would think, for funding distribution. That was stated previously. Can you make that model available to us? I am told your Law and Justice Branch engaged the Australian Institute of Criminology to develop a revised funding formula for the distribution of financial resources, earmarked for the provision of Indigenous legal aid services. Can we see that model, and is that model part of the tender process?

Mr Boersig replied:

Can I take that on notice?

**Dr Popple**—We have a model to hand up to you. It is not quite the same model that was discussed at that time, but it is the model the Attorney approved and is the one not only being used for the tender process but also that will apply for funding for those Indigenous legal services that are not tendered for next financial year as well. Perhaps I can hand up a document. I actually have multiple copies of that.

**CHAIR**—Is it the wish of the committee that the document entitled *Implementation of an adjusted AIC funding allocation model for the provision of legal services in ATSI regions* presented by the Attorney-General's Department be accepted as evidence in the joint committee's inquiry into Indigenous law and justice and included in the committee's records as an exhibit? There being no objection, it is so ordered. I now invite members of the committee to put questions to the representatives of the Attorney-General's Department. Could you briefly describe the purposes of ATSI and why it is necessary to have legal services that are specifically designed for Indigenous Australians?

**Mr Boersig**—There is a long history in relation to the identification of a special or particular need for Indigenous Australians. That history reflects their contact, or adverse contact, with the criminal justice system. As a result of that, it was clear that a specialised service would be beneficial for their particular needs, and that has been developed. That has been recognised for over 30 years now.

**Ms GRIERSON**—Probably the real thing we are concerned about is the spread of resources and whether they fall to families, criminal areas or civil matters. Perhaps one of the key findings was, as I said before, that criminal was dominating. Other services that could have prevented criminal activities and responses were just being neglected. Does the new tender recognise that, and does it aim at finding solutions to that?

**Mr Boersig**—It certainly is part of a broader landscape that is being developed in relation to the full needs of Indigenous people. There is still a lot of work to be done to identify all those needs. However, it is clear that what we are trying to do in the tender is get the available resources directed as fully as possible to those in need on the ground. We are asking organisations to prioritise the highest need areas and those in most need. For example, there is a means test put in, and there is a priority area in the policy directions. We also require the potential successful tenderers to work cooperatively with all other service providers in the area. That includes both legal aid commissions and non-legal services. The idea is to leverage as far as possible the work at both state and federal levels so that there are better outcomes for Indigenous Australians. That is in the context of needs in both rural and remote and also urban areas.

**CHAIR**—I have 10 pages of questions here on various issues. If the committee wishes, I could put these questions on notice for the Attorney-General's Department and ask for a rapid response—something short of eight months—to these rather than painfully going through them one by one.

**Mr BROADBENT**—I hope they are not all similar to the first question. Are they?

**CHAIR**—In what respect?

**Ms GRIERSON**—The first one was just background, wasn't it?

**Mr BROADBENT**—Backward.

**CHAIR**—They were questions that were outstanding. I have 10 pages of questions here broken into different areas. There being no objection, it is so ordered.

**Ms GRIERSON**—I just add that a lot of those questions will not have to be answered one by one. There are some key questions that you will find that we want detailed answers to.

**CHAIR**—You might be able to consolidate your answers. We do not expect answers to 300 questions. Perhaps you could look at those and provide pertinent points that give this committee a better understanding of the process, direction and, in particular, outcomes that we can expect from the reforms and the intent of this. The committee will distribute those to you in electronic format as well as hard copy. I ask that the table you submitted earlier be sent to the committee in an electronic form of spreadsheet to make it easy to incorporate it as an exhibit into our report. Are there any other questions?

**Mr BROADBENT**—Is the tender process really designed to cover all the questions that we are putting to you today, or does a statement of intention need to go with the tender process? To me, a tender process is really a structured process about the delivery of service and the cost of that delivery of service. It is not necessarily driving what this committee obviously desires from it. I am talking about the whole tender process now. Does it actually need to have a statement of intention?

**Ms GRIERSON**—Could I add to that? I want to know how you are going to measure if it works. We have moved to it. We have no choice in the fact that we have moved to this tender process. We want to know what your targets are and how we are going to know if they succeed. We do not want to have to do another inquiry into a service that was badly set up without any clear parameters, goals, objectives or processes to manage that.

**CHAIR**—If I can add to that, because it is the same question: will those milestones of achievement be forwarded to the Audit Office to measure your performance against in their future audit report?

**Mr Boersig**—We have already spoken to the Office of Evaluation and Audit about looking at how this is being delivered and the outcomes—not this current year but in the future year—and, as I understand it, that will be part of our schedule.

**CHAIR**—Are there any further questions?

**Mr BROADBENT**—Is that one going on notice?

**CHAIR**—They will come back to us on it. Being realistic, because I would say we are about to embark on the final inquiry in the community and then we will be preparing our draft report, can I have a date which you will commit to to answer those questions on notice?

**Dr Popple**—I am sure we could do that within four to six weeks. Would the end of April be acceptable to the committee?

**CHAIR**—That would be acceptable.

**Mr BROADBENT**—Can I just ask a process question, because I have another part to that question that came from me, the deputy chair and the chair. I want one more addition, and that is the chain of responsibility once the tender is in place. Do you understand what I mean by that question?

**Mr Boersig**—In the sense of who they will be reporting to and how will they be doing it.

**Mr BROADBENT**—Who is accountable in the whole process once you move to the tender process, and is there a difference to a tender process in, say, public works, overseas aid, defence or audit responsibilities? When you are dealing in an area of families, emotions, responsibilities and those different areas that are not necessarily a fixed product, what is the chain of responsibility? How does it get back to the Attorney-General, or is it cut off at the tender level? Is there an abrogation of responsibility once you go into the tender process? That is what I am asking, though I did not want to ask you that.

**Dr Popple**—The short answer to that question is: no, there is no abrogation of responsibility. We will certainly include that in the questions taken on notice and give you a more detailed answer, but I think some of the answer to your question is in the detail of the tender documentation. We have some copies to hand up if you would like them. They are already available on the web and have been for a while. However, we will endeavour to answer that.

**Mr BROADBENT**—The question now has four parts. Are these two witness now meant to go to the *Hansard* to get the question, or are we going to add those questions—

**CHAIR**—We will formulate the questions and put them to them.

**Dr Popple**—We would appreciate that. Thank you.

**CHAIR**—When you are preparing your answer to the question that Mr Broadbent has asked about the command hierarchy and the flow, in addition to perhaps a written statement of direction, can it also be presented in a graphic form so that people can look at the flow and direction. Thank you very much. Members may have questions which they, through the committee, will put to you in writing, and your prompt response to those questions would be appreciated. Importantly, we require the questions taken on notice from members and senators to be submitted and taken as part of the proceedings today. You have given a commitment to answer them by the end of April. On behalf of the committee, I thank departmental officers for the evidence they have provided to this committee today.

**Committee adjourned at 9.40 a.m.**