

**Senate Community Affairs Committee**  
**ANSWERS TO ESTIMATES QUESTIONS ON NOTICE**  
**SOCIAL SERVICES PORTFOLIO**  
**2015-16 Additional Estimates Hearings**

**Outcome Number: 2.1 Families and Communities**

**Question No: SQ16-000161**

**Topic: Child Protection**

**Hansard page: Written**

**Senator Carol Brown** asked:

In response to a media enquiry (from the Launceston Examiner) about the idea of a National Database the Minister said

Through the recently launched Third Action Plan, work is already under way to examine barriers to information sharing and develop a best practice model of information exchange. Can you provide some further details around this work including, funding allocation, what is the timeline for an outcome on this work and who the lead jurisdiction on this work will be? What level of information sharing will this work be looking at i.e. info sharing between Cth agencies, between Cth and state agencies or between agencies of different states?

**Answer:**

Strategy 3 of the Third Action Plan under the National Framework for Protecting Australia's Children is "Organisations responding better to children and young people to keep them safe".

The National Framework for Protecting Australia's Children is a collaboration between the Commonwealth, state and territory governments and non-government organisations (NGOs). This collaboration is also reflected in the implementation of the Third Action Plan, which is being shared among jurisdictions and the NGO sector.

New South Wales is leading the implementation of initiatives under Strategy 3, through the Strategy 3 Working Group, which comprises members from jurisdictions (including the Commonwealth) and non-government organisations.

Action Area 3.2 is to address barriers to information sharing to allow easier information exchange within and across jurisdictions for government and non-government agencies where there are concerns about child wellbeing.

To date, two projects that address the barriers associated with sharing child protection information are underway and will inform this work:

- Inter-jurisdictional Carer Information Sharing Project – this project is aimed at developing an information sharing system to facilitate information sharing between all government and non-government agencies across Australia with responsibility for the approval of carers of children and young people in out-of-home care. This system would facilitate access to information on prospective carers who may have previously applied or undertaken carer roles in other jurisdictions. The Commonwealth contributed \$150,000 to this project through the National Initiatives Funding in 2014-15.
- Inter-jurisdictional Child Protection Information Sharing Project – this project will explore gaps and barriers to inter-jurisdictional exchange of child protection information and consider options for improving this information exchange.

Both projects are currently in scoping stages. The full scope of these projects including funding for their implementation is yet to be decided by the Children and Families Secretaries' Group.