

SENATE STANDING COMMITTEE ON LEGAL AND CONSTITUTIONAL AFFAIRS
ATTORNEY-GENERAL'S PORTFOLIO

Group: 2

Program: 1.3

Question No. AE15/084

Senator Collins asked the following question at the hearing on 27 March 2015:

Senator JACINTA COLLINS: Chair, while you are asking for that on notice: Senator Moore just mentioned to me that what would be quite helpful would be a table or a schemer that describes which legal aid funds go under which programs under which department, where the actual cuts were in the two stages so far and which of those have been remedied. If we could have that in a schemer and if you could build into it the domestic violence stuff which is with the Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet—

Mr Moraitis: Do you want it broken down to the specific centres and legal aid commissions?

Senator JACINTA COLLINS: No, not centres. I will be coming to centres a bit later when we deal with the impact of what has occurred to date. But, just picking up from the chair's question, if we could combine that with that, I think that would be very useful for the committee.

....

CHAIR: So, Senator Collins, what exactly do you want the department to tell you on notice that has not been told?

Senator JACINTA COLLINS: What Senator Moore suggested would be helpful to the committee would be if we asked the department to provide us with a schema that breaks up where the legal aid funding goes into the different programs, what the cuts in both MYEFO—which we have just talked about—and the budget were going to impact and what has been redressed. As I understand it, that is simply MYEFO and not budget, which we will get to later.

Mr Manning: That is right.

Senator JACINTA COLLINS: If a template could describe for us all of that, then hopefully we will be less confused.

The answer to the honourable senator's question is as follows:

The distribution of legal assistance funding administered by the Attorney-General's Department, and associated savings, is listed below:

	2013-14 \$m	2014-15 \$m	2015-16 \$m	2016-17 \$m	2017-18 \$m	Total 2013-14 to 2017-18 \$m
Legal Aid Commissions – National Partnership Agreement (NPA)						
NPA Funding	200.6	204.4	207.8	211.6	215.0	1039.4
Legal Aid Commissions – Funding outside the NPA						
Expensive Commonwealth Criminal Cases Fund	9.8	3.7	3.8	3.9	3.9	25.1
2015 One-Off Transfer to ECCCCF	-	5.2	-	-	-	5.2
2013 ECCCCF MYEFO Savings	-3.5	-1.0	-1.0	-1.0	-1.0	-7.5
2015 Reinstated Funds	-	-	1.0	1.0	-	2.0
2013-14 Budget Measure (funds provided directly to legal aid commissions)	15.0	15.0	-	-	-	30.0
2014-15 Budget Savings (reversal of second year of 2013 Budget measure)	-	-15.0	-	-	-	-15.0
TOTAL	21.3	7.9	3.8	3.9	2.9	39.8
Indigenous Legal Assistance Programme						
Base funding	69.3	69.2	71.7	73.0	74.1	357.3
2013-14 Budget Measure	6.0	6.0	-	-	-	12.0
Royal Commission	0.8	0.8	0.8	1.0	1.0	4.4
2013 MYEFO Savings	-0.2	-1.6	-6.0	-5.5	-5.5	-18.8
2015 Reinstated Funds	-	-	6.0	5.5	-	11.5
TOTAL	75.9	74.4	72.5	74.0	69.6	366.4

Community Legal Services Programme						
Base funding	38.5	38.3	38.9	39.6	40.2	195.5
4 year funds transfer	6.8	6.8	6.8	6.8	-	27.2
2013 MYEFO Savings	-0.9	-3.5	-7.6	-7.6	-7.6	-27.2
2015 Reinstated Funds*	-	-	6.0	6.0	-	12
2015 One-Off Transfer to ECCCCF	-	-0.5	-	-	-	-0.5
TOTAL	44.4	41.1	44.1	44.8	32.6	207.0

* Funding to Environmental Defenders Offices, previously paid under the Community Legal Services Programme, will not be reinstated.