Senate Standing Committee on Education Employment and Workplace Relations

QUESTIONS ON NOTICE
Additional Estimates 2011-2012

Outcome 1 - Early Childhood Education and Child Care

DEEWR Question No. EW1173_12

Senator Back asked on 16 February 2012, Hansard page 16

Question

DG and the CEOs

Senator McKENZIE: So, you can take on notice the DG and the CEOs, the date it was sent, the types of additional activities the government will be undertaking to raise awareness of government programs in the early childhood space, and any funds allocated to awareness raising exercises around the states. Ms Paul: Happy to do so. I will take it on notice, and then if there is more detail we can offer this afternoon, and if you are here this afternoon, we will make sure we do that too.

Answer

The Australian Government has prepared a consolidated response to the Joint Select Committee on Cyber-safety's interim report *High-Wire Act: Cyber-safety and the Young.* The response was tabled in Parliament in December 2011.

The Department is currently drafting a paper in consultation with Department of Broadband, Communications and the Digital Economy (DBCDE) and the Australian Communications and Media Authority (ACMA) to go to the Australian Education, Early Childhood Development and Youth Affairs Senior Officials Committee in May 2012.

This paper will address the responses to all the relevant recommendations raised on cybersafety education including cybersafety programs for early childhood, an information update on all Australian Government cybersafety initiatives and it will also seek noting of an agreed definition of cyberbullying.

The ACMA's cybersafety program *Hector's World* is aimed at young internet users. *Hector's World* comprises a series of animated videos featuring Hector, a bottle-nosed dolphin, and his underwater friends. Episodes deal with online privacy, cyberbullying and cybersecurity. In addition to the episodes themselves, the program also includes support materials, including fun activities for young people and a series of lesson plans so the activities can be used in the classroom. While the activity is aimed at 5 – 7 year olds, it is also suitable for younger, pre-school users.

The ACMA is also currently undertaking the development of a cybersafety game that can be played by the youngest internet users with their parents. The game is

intended to reinforce the basic internet safety tips appropriate for a young age group. The game will be launched in late 2012.

The core module of the newly revised professional development program for teachers also covers the social and emotional development of young children from birth to six and how this influences their use and understanding of technology and their subsequent exposure to online risks.

The Australian Government has committed $125.8 million over four years in the 2008-09 Budget for a Cyber-Safety Plan which is managed by the Department of Broadband Communications and the Digital Economy.