

EDUCATION, SCIENCE AND TRAINING

SENATE LEGISLATION COMMITTEE - QUESTIONS ON NOTICE 2004-2005 BUDGET ESTIMATES HEARING

Outcome: 1

Output Group: 1.1 – Funding for Schools

DEST Question No. E002_05

Senator Carr asked on 1 June, 2004, EWRE Hansard page 89.

Question:

Is the Commonwealth liable if a child is mistreated under this program?

Answer:

Tutorial Credit Initiative

There are extensive measures in place to ensure that the tutors who are engaged have the appropriate expertise and have undergone child protection screening.

All Tutors will be engaged by brokers and not by DEST. Tutors will have no employment or other direct legal relationship with DEST.

Under the contractual arrangements brokers will have with Tutors, the Tutors must comply with the Tutorial Credit Initiative Guidelines (the Guidelines). The Guidelines specify that prospective tutors must:

- demonstrate relevant qualifications in Education;
- adhere to the Tutorial Credit Initiative Code of Conduct;
- complete an Australian Federal Police criminal record check, in addition to any state legislated child protection screening processes; and
- demonstrate that they have experience in, or a background suited to, establishing a positive relationship with the parent/caregiver and student.

Furthermore, the Guidelines state that the tuition should be provided in the child's home, at a local school, at a coaching college or other appropriate venue, in the presence of a responsible adult unless otherwise agreed by the parent/caregiver and the Tutor in writing. Tuition will not occur in a Tutor's home.

The Broker is required to investigate any complaints and liaise with parents/caregivers in order to achieve a resolution to the objection. Tuition contracts may be terminated by the Broker.

DEST is responsible for monitoring these arrangements to ensure Brokers are following and enforcing the Guidelines. The Code of Conduct makes it clear that DEST may direct a broker to suspend or terminate a Tutor's contract if a breach of the Code of Conduct is suspected.