

## EDUCATION, SCIENCE AND TRAINING

### SENATE LEGISLATION COMMITTEE - QUESTIONS ON NOTICE 2004-2005 SUPPLEMENTARY ESTIMATES HEARING

**Outcome:** 1  
**Output Group:** 1.1 – Funding for schools

#### DEST Question No. E311\_05

Senator Crossin provided in writing.

#### Question:

##### *Funding for schools*

It was announced in June that in part, in order to qualify for values in schools funding schools will be expected to have “an active flagpole”.

1. By “active” does this mean the flag must be raised and lowered each school day?
2. If so, who will carry out this function?
3. If not then how often is it expected that the flagpole will be used?
4. Will the children be expected to attend all the flag raising and/or lowering?
5. How many queries has DEST received since this announcement for information on this requirement?
6. Is it known how many schools actually had flagpoles?
7. Is it known how many have since purchased them?
8. Who will pay for the flagpoles and the erection of them where this is necessary?
9. Who will be expected to pay for the flags or will these be free?
10. Have schools been sent information on this requirement, including information on where to buy poles and flags?
11. Was this information sent to all schools and by whom? If not, will it be?
12. What are the performance indicators to meet this requirement?
13. Who will monitor compliance and how?
14. What sanctions are proposed against non compliant schools?
15. Is it within the guidelines for Aboriginal schools to fly the Aboriginal flag?

#### Answer:

##### *Funding for schools*

Questions 1-14:

Under the *Schools Assistance (Learning Together - Achievement through Choice and Opportunity) Act 2004* every school is required to have a functioning flagpole and fly the Australian flag as a condition of receiving Australian Government funding. This requirement is part of the draft Australian Government Programmes for Schools Quadrennial Administrative Guidelines 2005-2008 and was included within the agreements sent to school and system authorities in respect of Australian Government funding. The timing and ceremonies involved are matters for individual schools but it is expected they would be in accordance with the conventions governing the flying of the Australian flag. The Government has no intention of doing a flagpole census but it has offered to reimburse the cost of the repair or purchase and erection of a flagpole for each school without a functioning flagpole up to a maximum of \$1,500 per school. Information is available from Members of Parliament and on the Department's web site, including guidelines and an application form. As at 31 December 2004 the Government has received 784 applications for repairs to an existing flagpole or the purchase of a new flagpole in primary and secondary schools across

Australia. Schools may obtain an Australian flag free of charge from their local member of the federal parliament. Reporting on this condition will form part of the educational accountability requirements provided by school and system authorities in respect of Australian Government funding.

15:

As stated above it is expected that the flag flying will be accordance with the conventions governing the flying of the Australian flag. This includes the principle of one flag per pole and the order of flying precedence being followed, so that the national flag comes first, followed by State and Territory flags then peoples' flags. Schools can fly the Aboriginal flag if they so wish but under the conventions the Australian flag takes precedence over other national flags when flown in Australia or on Australian territory.