

Senate Finance and Public Administration Legislation Committee—Budget Estimates May 2007

Answers to Questions on Notice

Parliamentary Portfolio, Department of Parliamentary Services

Answers to Questions on Notice

Topic: Police check processes

Question P9

Ms Penfold—The President tells me that police checks can involve Interpol, but I am not sure they do for the basic \$36 ones that we obtain.

Senator MURRAY—If you do not know and you are not completely across it, perhaps you could let the committee know. It would be interesting to know what it does not cover as opposed to what it does cover.

Ms Penfold—We can follow that up.

Answer

The \$36 (standard charge) obtains a full national police records check. The national police records check is conducted via a review of the "National Names Database" which is used by all jurisdictions in Australia.

A \$36 (standard charge) police records check will record only convictions as a result of a matter going to court. Therefore, speeding fines and other traffic infringements will often not be included.

The \$36 (standard charge) police records check only covers Australian jurisdictions. If overseas checks are required for a person who has resided overseas, the organisation requests the person to obtain a check from the relevant police authority in the country where the person resided.

Each State, Territory and Commonwealth jurisdiction has its own "spent convictions" legislation permitting certain convictions not to be disclosed, or requiring them not to be relied on, in certain circumstances.

Therefore, a \$36 (standard charge) police records check will generally not reveal:

- (a) minor infringements that either do not go to court, or go to court but without a conviction being recorded;
- (b) charges or convictions outside Australia; or
- (c) convictions covered by a spent convictions scheme.