

SENATE STANDING COMMITTEE ON LEGAL AND CONSTITUTIONAL AFFAIRS
FAMILY COURT OF AUSTRALIA

Question No. 119

Senator Kirk asked the following question at the hearing on 24 May 2007:

How did the Court arrive at the decision to donate the amount of \$10,000 per annum to AustLII?

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

In order to arrive at the decision to donate \$10,000 to AustLII, the Family Court of Australia took a number of issues into consideration:

1. \$10,000 equated to approximately 0.25 of a staffing resource. This was considered value for money as there was no upfront development cost for the database and search tool and there were no overheads for ongoing maintenance apart from the \$10,000 which would be committed as an annual figure.
2. The Court considered other courts' contributions which were advised by Mr Graham Greenleaf of AustLII.
3. The Court considered the number of judgments that would be published in comparison to the Federal Court and ascertained that it would have a lesser number of judgments published.
4. The Court was mindful that AustLII was an existing service which served the public well and the Family Court did not need to duplicate this service.
5. Publishing on AustLII was considered a benefit to clients of the Court, both self-represented litigants and lawyers. It was also a benefit to the community to be able to access the information from a known site.
6. Family Court judgments published on AustLII permit the Court's decisions to be accessed via a single source for Australian law.
7. In 2008 AustLII will create an additional database so that the Family Court appeal cases and first instance cases can be given distinct medium neutral citations.
8. AustLII has worked with the Family Court to enhance the functionality and content of the Courts Judgments database known as FAMDEC database.