

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

**Question No. 124**

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

The Australian Institute of Family Studies (AIFS) has been engaged to conduct a review of the Magellan Project:

- a) How much is that contract for?
- b) What are the terms of reference?
- c) When were the terms of reference settled?

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

- a) The contract between AIFS and the FCoA is for a total of \$50,000.
- b) The terms of reference are as follows:

To examine:

- i. the effectiveness of the Magellan case management system;
- ii. to identify the perspectives of relevant professional stakeholders;
- iii. to compare the process and impact variables on cases subjected to the Magellan process with comparable cases from another jurisdiction without Magellan in place; and
- iv. to evaluate whether Magellan has achieved the desired outcomes of the project.

The research methodology involves two stages:

- i. **Stage 1** - involves conducting interviews and focus groups with key stakeholders from the FCoA and related organisations to examine how Magellan is being conducted, and the perceptions of these key stakeholders about its effectiveness, the successful features, and any barriers to successful implementation.
  - ii. **Stage 2** - involves conducting a file review and case comparison between those cases that have gone through the Magellan process, with comparable cases (i.e., those involving similarly serious allegations of physical abuse or sexual abuse) which did not go through the Magellan process (i.e., from NSW where Magellan had not been rolled out). The focus of the case review will be informed by the findings from Stage 1.
- c) The FCoA, in consultation with the National Magellan Stakeholders Committee which is Chaired by Justice Burr of the Family Court and has representatives from the Attorney-General's Department, National Legal Aid, Victorian Legal Aid and the Victorian Department of Human Services settled the terms of reference at a meeting in Melbourne on Friday 8 September 2006 after a presentation by AIFS as to the methodology of the research.