

SENATE STANDING COMMITTEE ON LEGAL AND CONSTITUTIONAL AFFAIRS  
ATTORNEY-GENERAL'S DEPARTMENT

**Output 2.3**

**Question No. 52**

**Senator Stott-Despoja asked the following question at the hearing on 24 May 2007:**

- a) What work, if any, has the Attorney-General's Department been doing in relation to draft legislation to implement the Australian Law Reform Commission's (ALRC) recommendations from its Report 'Fighting Words: A Review of Seditious Laws in Australia (ALRC 104)'?
- b) Does the Attorney-General intend to introduce legislation to remove the crime of sedition from the statute books? If so, when? If not, why not?
- c) Why was the Report so 'urgent' that the ALRC only had three months to do its work?

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

The Attorney-General requested the ALRC on 1 March 2006 to conduct a review of the sedition laws. The ALRC was asked to report on its findings no later than 30 May 2006. The ALRC's report was finalised on 31 July 2006 and given to the Attorney-General. In accordance with the *Australian Law Reform Commission Act 1996*, the report was tabled in Parliament within 15 days of receipt by the Attorney-General on 13 September 2006.

Since that date, the Government has been giving careful consideration to all 27 recommendations of the report. The ALRC did not recommend the repeal of the sedition offences. The Government will respond to the ALRC's recommendations shortly.