

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

Sub Program 2.1.1

Question No. 158

Senator Barnett asked the following question at the hearing on 27 May 2009:

In relation to MTD Making the Difference consultancy on emergency management volunteers – options for support for attraction, support and retention, completed 23/12/08, could you provide detail of the outcomes and provide a copy of the report and the Government's actions in response to this report?

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

In March 2008 the Ministerial Council for Police and Emergency Management-Emergency Management (MCPEM-EM) identified that action needs to be taken to ensure the future viability of volunteers working in the areas of emergency service response and recovery.

MTD Making the Difference was commissioned by the Attorney-General's Department (the Department) to investigate the attraction, support and retention of emergency management volunteers and provide a report. Dr Judy Esmond was the individual overseeing the project for the consultancy firm.

The report was commissioned to provide the Commonwealth, State, Territory and Local Government senior officials on the Australian Emergency Management Committee (AEMC) with sufficient information to scope further joint work. As such it was not a formal report to the Government and there will be no formal response to the report

At its meeting in December 2008, the AEMC, which reports to MCPEM-EM, considered Dr Esmond's report. AEMC agreed that an action plan be developed using Dr Esmond's report and other relevant material. The Department is currently working with the jurisdictions to prepare the draft action plan for AEMC consideration.

The report was prepared as part of MCPEM - EM consideration of a range of volunteers related issues. Ministers will be meeting in November 2009 to consider the issues raised by the report, and the question of its broader release will be considered at that time.