

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

Sub Program 2.1.1

Question No. 167

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

In relation to the Attorney-General's Department being allocated \$8.3million to implement recommendations of the E-Security Review completed last year (setting up a national computer response function and a review of government internet gateways);

- a) Does the Department have a strategy to implement this overhaul? If so, what is it?
- b) Please provide the work program to undertake the above.
- c) What other Departments/agencies will be involved in the implementation of the emergency response function?
- d) Will the Department be taking into account any of the issues raised as a result of the Victorian bushfires, given that it is based on a review completed last year? If so, please advise of detail
- e) If any reports have been prepared as a result of the review please identify these and present a copy.

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

To clarify, the 2009-10 Budget allocated \$6.2 million to the Attorney-General's Department (AGD) for the creation of a new Australian Government managed computer emergency response team (CERT) and \$2.6 million to the Australian Government Information Management Office (AGIMO) for related e-security initiatives, including a scoping study for the reduction of Australian Government Internet gateways.

- a) Yes. The new national CERT will bring together Australia's existing computer emergency response arrangements. This will be done in collaboration with the University of Queensland (UQ). It will consolidate the national CERT functions currently undertaken by AusCERT and those undertaken by GovCERT.au in AGD and other agencies.
- b) The work program to implement the new national CERT is in development and is contingent upon the outcome of contract negotiations with UQ which are currently underway.
- c) The new national CERT will be coordinated by AGD in consultation and collaboration with agencies represented on the E-Security Policy and Coordination Committee. These agencies are AGD (Chair), the Australian Federal Police, the Australian Security Intelligence Organisation, the Defence Signals Directorate (DSD), the Department of Broadband, Communications and the Digital Economy, the Department of Defence, the Department of Finance and Deregulation – AGIMO and the Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet.

The new national CERT will complement the Cyber Security Operations Centre within the Department of Defence, and will provide a single public interface behind which a range of agencies will work together.

- d) No. The new national CERT is responsible for computer security threats and vulnerabilities. Separate arrangements are in place to deal with natural disasters including bushfires.
- e) The E-Security Review Report is a national security classified document and therefore will not be publicly available.