

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

**Program 1.1 and 1.5**

**Question No. 76**

**Senator Crossin asked the following question at the hearing on 26 May 2011:**

In their quarterly reports, do they need to indicate to you how many people have been employed in that quarter, be it full time or part time, and how much money has been spent on salaries, or is the quarterly reporting purely the number of pick-ups or number of clients they have assisted and how they have assisted them?

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

Night patrol service providers are required to submit both financial and performance reports to the Department on a quarterly basis. Additionally, each organisation is required to submit a set of audited financial reports at the end of the financial year, which provide a whole of organisation financial assessment as well as a specific night patrol expenditure report.

In terms of performance information, service providers submit both quantitative and qualitative data. Quantitative data allows the Department to monitor the number of people assisted and provides measurable information about the service being provided to each community. This includes details on the number of people employed and the hours of operation for each patrol. Standard funding agreements require that patrols are active on a minimum of five days per week but this varies to include additional days, according to the needs of each community.

Qualitative data provides anecdotal information about each night patrol and provides valuable information about how the patrol is operating. Qualitative data enables the service provider to describe program operations, identify key and emerging issues and share good news stories. A copy of the current performance template is attached.

Challenges linked to the limited numeracy and literacy that exists within the night patrol workforce can impact on the consistent collection and veracity of data. The Department has introduced enhanced mentoring opportunities for patrollers and is exploring new data collection tools to improve this aspect of the program. Additionally staff undertake regular field visits and work closely with other stakeholders, such as the Northern Territory Police, in the community to further monitor service delivery.

The recent performance audit, *Northern Territory Night Patrols*, undertaken by Australian National Audit Office (ANAO) noted that improved data collection was needed within the program and acknowledged the Department's commitment to introducing an enhanced performance management framework.