

SENATE LEGAL AND CONSTITUTIONAL LEGISLATION COMMITTEE
ATTORNEY-GENERAL'S DEPARTMENT

Output 2.1

Question No. 55

Senator Ludwig asked the following question at the hearing on 31 October 2005:

- (a) How much of the funding provided to the 'Prevention of Illicit Drug manufacturing strategy' has been expended?
- (b) Has all funding been expended?
 - (i) If not, how much funding has yet to be expended?
- (c) Was there any variation to the stated budget for this program?
 - (i) If so, what was the variation?
 - (ii) Was additional funding provided, or did the program lose funding?
 - (iii) If the program lost funding, where was the funding transferred, and why?
 - (iv) Were any stop-gap measures put in place to ensure the continued operation of this program despite the variations?
- (d) What was the stated outcome of the program at the time the funding commenced?
 - (i) Did the program meet its stated outcome?
 - (ii) If not, in which areas did it not meet its stated outcome?
 - (iii) Were any other measures or additional funding required to meet the stated outcome of the program?
- (e) Has a review been conducted of the program?
 - (i) If so, could you provide a copy?
 - (ii) If not, why not?
 - (iii) Is one being conducted, or will one be conducted?
 - (iv) Are there any interim reports available?
 - (v) Are there any plans to produce any interim reports?

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

- (a) As at 31 October 2005, \$764,247 of the funding provided to the 'National Strategy to Prevent the Diversion of Precursor Chemicals into Illicit Drug Manufacture' (National Precursor Strategy) had been expended.
- (b) Not all of the funding has been expended.
 - (i) As at 31 October 2005, \$4,635,753 of the funding had yet to be expended.
- (c) In the 2004-05 budget the Australian Government extended the funding allocated to the National Precursor Strategy from \$4.3 million over four years (2003-04 to 2006-07) to \$5.4 million over five years (2003-04 to 2007-08)

- (i) The variation was an additional \$1.1 million and extension of the program by one year to 2007-08.
- (ii) An additional \$1.1 million was provided.
- (iii) Not applicable.
- (iv) Not applicable.

(d) The stated outcome of the program at the time the funding commenced was to:

“[P]rovide national leadership and coordination through the following measures:

- a national forensic database on illicit drug laboratories;
- strategic research and analysis of emerging and existing threats, including improvements to national statistical databases on arrests and seizures;
- partnership initiatives, particularly with industry, to identify good practice and effective controls; and
- awareness-raising amongst key sectors, including criminal justice professionals, on the illicit use of precursor chemicals.”

(i) The program is currently in its third year of a five year program and a number of initiatives are being progressed which can be described under four broad areas:

- Enhanced intelligence and information sharing (e.g. the development of a National Clandestine Laboratory Database and enhancements to the National Industrial Chemicals Notification and Assessment Scheme).
- Training for law enforcement, forensic specialists and the judiciary (e.g. an online education and training program for public prosecutors and the judiciary).
- Development of national regulatory approaches (e.g. investigating controls on tablet presses and chemical precursors).
- Development of awareness raising strategies (e.g. pharmacy awareness of diversion).

- (ii) Not applicable.
- (iii) Not applicable.

(e) A review of the program has not been conducted.

- (i) Not applicable.
- (ii) A review of the program has not been conducted as the development and implementation of program measures is still ongoing and not planned for completion until 2007-08.
- (iii) Not applicable.
- (iv) Not applicable.
- (v) Not applicable.