

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

Output 2.2

Question No. 80

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

Continuous operation of the national crisis Watch office

- a) Could you provide an update as to this budget measure, and how it is progressing?
- b) How much of the funding provided has been expended?
- c) Has all funding been expended? If not, how much funding has yet to be expended?
- d) 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 variation?
- e) 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?
- f) Has a review been conducted of the program?
 - (i) If so, could you provide a copy?
 - (ii) If not, why not? Is one being conducted, or will one be conducted?
 - (iii) Are there any interim reports available?
 - (iv) Are there any plans to produce any interim reports?

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

- a) This budget measure provided the Attorney-General's Department with funding to extend the operations of the PSCC Watch Office from 16 hours a day, seven days a week to 24 hours a day, seven days a week. Due to the continuing threat environment, the PSCC Watch Office has operated continuously 24 hours a day, seven days a week since 19 November 2002.
- b) and (c) The \$1.284 million in the 2004–05 Budget specifically funded the engagement of 10 additional permanent staff and those positions have been filled. The program involved funding over a four-year period and the Government has allocated \$1.314 million in the 2005–06 Budget and \$1.344 million in the 2006–07 Budget.
- d) There were no variations to the stated budget allocations to report.
- e) The Government has provided funding over four years to the Attorney-General's Department to extend the operations of the PSCC Watch Office from 16 hours a day, seven days a week to 24 hours a day, seven days a week. The program has met and continues to meet its stated outcome without the need for additional measures or funding.

- f) A review is expected to be conducted before the program lapses at the end of the 2006–07 Financial-Year. The review should be conducted by October 2006. There are no plans to produce any interim report.