

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

**Output 1.3**

**Question No. 31**

**Senator Evans asked the following question at the hearing on 31 October 2006:**

Freedom of Information (FOI):

- a) Can the Department identify the cost in terms of legal fees for each Commonwealth Department to deal with FOI related matters?
- b) What are AGD's own costs in terms of legal fees to deal with FOI related matters?

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

- a) Yes. The amount spent in legal expenses on FOI matters by each Department is contained in the Annual Report on the Operation of the *Freedom of Information Act 1982*, which is available at: <[www.ag.gov.au/foi](http://www.ag.gov.au/foi)>. Appendix M of the Report contains details of each Department's expenditure on solicitors' fees, legal counsel fees and applicants' litigation costs in relation to FOI matters, and a total cost for all agencies.
- b) This information is contained in Appendix M of the Annual Report on the Operation of the *Freedom of Information Act 1982*, which is available at: <[www.ag.gov.au/foi](http://www.ag.gov.au/foi)>. The legal expenditure over recent years reflects the fact that officers in the Department's FOI Section generally represent the Department in FOI matters before the Administrative Appeals Tribunal.