

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

Output 1.7

Question No. 39

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

In relation to Community Legal Centres (CLCs) and the Community Partnership Program:

- (a) Were a number of CLCs receiving funding under the Office of Employment Advocate's (OEA) Community Partnership Program the subject of external reviews by Deloitte Touche Tohmatsu in May-June 2006?
- (b) Which centres were the subject of the review?
- (c) What were the terms of reference for the review and were they public?
- (d) Were any terms of reference provided to the subject centres of the review? If not, why not?
- (e) What were the findings of the review?
- (f) Have the findings of the review been made available to the CLCs involved? If not, why not?
- (g) Have the findings of the review been made public? If not, why not?
- (h) Have there been any funding decisions taken in response to the findings of the review?
- (i) How were these decisions communicated to the affected CLCs?
- (j) Has the Department undertaken any inquiries as what impact these decisions will have on the affected CLCs? If not, why not?
- (k) Does the Department expect that the discontinuation of funding under the Community Partnership Program will adversely impact on the CLC's ability to provide employment-related advice?
- (l) What was the total cost of the review undertaken by Deloitte Touche Tohmatsu?
- (m) Is the Department aware of how the OEA now expects to provide these services now that CLC funding has been discontinued?
- (n) When will OEA stop advertising these services?
- (o) Who will now provide independent advice?
- (p) How many clients did these programs service and who will now service them?

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

(a) Six community legal centres funded under the Commonwealth Community Legal Services Program received funding under the Community Partnership Program:

South West Brisbane Community Legal Service (Qld)
Macquarie Community Legal Centre (NSW)
Welfare Rights and Legal Centre (ACT)
Community Legal Centre for Western NSW (Dubbo)
Northern Suburbs Community Legal Service (WA)
Launceston Community Legal Centre (Tas)

(b) – (i) The Office of the Employment Advocate administers the Community Partnership Program. Questions regarding that program, including questions relating to the review of the program, should be directed to the Department of Employment and Workplace Relations.

(j) No. The Office of the Employment Advocate decided not offer new contracts to the six CLCs that received funding under the Community Partnership Program. Those CLCs will not be required to continue providing the services under the contract after the contracts have expired.

(k) The six CLCs funded under the Community Partnership Program receive CLSP funding to provide generalist legal services. They may continue to provide employment-related advice using that funding.

(l) – (p) The Office of the Employment Advocate administers the Community Partnership Program. Questions regarding that program, including questions relating to the review of the program, should be directed to the Department of Employment and Workplace Relations.