

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

Output 2.1

Question No. 61

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

With reference to page 118 of the Annual Report and regarding the “initial research commission on community expectations for the review of Commonwealth criminal penalties”:

- (a) Please provide a copy of the research. If the Department cannot provide, please explain why.
- (b) If the Department cannot provide, what were the findings of the research?
- (c) What was the cost of the research?
- (d) Where was the research funded from?
- (e) Who conducted the research?
- (f) What questions were asked during the research, and how many respondents were there?
- (g) How were respondents selected?
- (h) Did the research determine whether “more extensive research is required”?
- (i) If so, what is the projected cost of the “more extensive research” and when are its findings due?
- (j) Who will conduct the “more extensive research”?
- (k) Is the review complete? If yes, please provide a copy of the review. If not what is the expected completion date?

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

- (a) The Minister for Justice and Customs is considering whether to make the research publicly available.
- (b) The findings of the research will be incorporated into an Issues Paper on the Review of Criminal Penalties in Commonwealth Legislation. The Issues Paper will be released for public comment shortly.
- (c) The research cost \$80,000.
- (d) The funding for the research came from the Attorney-General's Department's core funding.
- (e) The research was conducted by the Australian Institute of Criminology.

(f) Respondents were asked about Commonwealth offences categories. For each offence category, respondents were asked if the current penalty range (both in terms of fine and imprisonment) was appropriate, and if not, what would be an appropriate penalty. There were 175 respondents.

(g) Respondents were selected via recruitment through a social research company.

(h) Yes.

(i) The Department is in the process of considering whether further research is required and the nature of that research.

(j) Not applicable.

(k) The Review is expected to be completed by mid-2007.