

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

Output 2.4

Question No. 73

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

With reference to pages 19 and 147 of the Annual Report and regarding the "crisis management planning for the Australian Muslim Community":

- (a) Please explain what this project is?
- (b) What is the total projected spending on this project by year?
- (c) How much has been spent to date?
- (d) Is it complete? If not, what is the projected completion date?

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

(a) The Protective Security Coordination Centre (PSCC) received funding from the Department of Immigration and Multicultural Affairs (DIMA) to implement some pilot measures in 2005-06. The PSCC provided secretariat support for the Improving Crisis Management Sub-group of the Muslim Community Reference Group (MCRG), which was run by DIMA. The measures aimed to assist the government to work with Muslim communities and organisations to promote harmony and combat extremism by:

- encouraging recognition and support for moderate Islam and Muslim practices in the broader Australian community
- empowering the Muslim community to respond to emerging issues through improved liaison with police and emergency services
- seeking to ensure that the concerns and needs of the Muslim community are considered in ongoing national security planning

The PSCC held a workshop, which included representatives of the Northern Territory Muslim community and government in Darwin in May 2006, and assisted Muslim community representatives to attend and participate in the Security in Government Conference in Canberra, also in May 2006.

- (b) Funding of \$144,000 was received from DIMA to implement measures in 2005-06.
- (c) As at 30 June 2006, some \$120,000 had been spent on the initiatives.
- (d) A second workshop was to be held in Sydney in June 2006, but was delayed due to the heightened sensitivities at the time of the conflict between Israel and Lebanon. An amount of \$22,000 was rolled over to 2006-07 to fund the second workshop. This workshop took place in December 2006.