

QUESTION TAKEN ON NOTICE

SUPPLEMENTARY BUDGET ESTIMATES HEARING: 30 October 2006

IMMIGRATION AND MULTICULTURAL AFFAIRS PORTFOLIO

(244) Output 2.4: Promoting the Benefits of Cultural Diversity

Senator Nettle asked:

In reference to the newspaper advertisement and website <http://www.harmony.gov.au/grants> regarding Funded Community Projects. These refer to promoting 'Australian values' and 'mutual obligation'.

1. In regards to mutual obligation, please advise when it was first introduced as criteria?
2. On what basis that decision was made?
3. If there are any documents that describe how mutual obligation is defined or specified by the department?
4. Is there a definition of 'Australian values' which is used by the department in considering grant applications?

Answer:

1. The promotion of 'mutual obligation' was first introduced to the outcomes sought from funded community projects in 2006.
2. The decision reflects a long standing view in the management of cultural diversity policies and programmes, including the Living in Harmony initiative and in the promotion of Australian citizenship, that participation in Australian society is based on a balance of rights and responsibilities.
3. The relevant document is the 2006 *Guidelines for Funded Community Projects*. A copy is attached.
4. The guidelines define Australian values as including belief in democracy and the rule of law, egalitarianism, equality, freedom of speech and religion, and a sense of fairness and a fair go. In assessment of applications consideration is given to the extent to which project activities will promote these values, as well as mutual respect, participation and a sense of belonging for everyone, and celebration of our successes as Australians particularly in integrating new arrivals into our community.

