

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

**Output 2.2**

**Question No. 67**

**Senator Ludlam asked the following question at the hearing on 20 October 2008:**

In relation to the Burmese regime:

- a) has the Department provided counter-terrorism support or other kinds of support to the Burmese regime in the past? What is the nature of this support, and can you provide a breakdown of the costs of this support to the Department
- b) does the Department currently provide counter-terrorism support or other forms of support to the Burmese regime? If not, when did this cease? If so, can you outline the nature of this support, its budget impact, and its estimated future budget impact, and
- c) is this support under review in the light of the situation in Burma?

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

a) Our records indicate the Department has not provided any bilateral support to any Burmese officials in relation to counter-terrorism or other issues. However, some support has been provided to enable the participation of Burmese officials in specific multilateral activities.

Throughout 2004 and 2005, Burmese officials were involved in meetings of the Legal Issues Working Group (LIWG), which was convened following the Bali Ministerial Meeting on Counter Terrorism in February 2004. This Department had primary responsibility for progressing the work of the LIWG.

Officials from Burma attended five meetings of the LIWG. This attendance did not involve any costs to the Department, although AusAID funded Burmese participation at the first LIWG meeting in Canberra (August 2004) and at two LIWG workshops on international legal cooperation in Thailand (January and June 2005).

Two officials from Burma attended the 2007 Asia Pacific Regional Meeting, which was jointly hosted by the Department and the Permanent Bureau of the Hague Conference on Private International Law. The purpose of the Regional Meeting was to discuss matters related to the operation and implementation of certain Hague Conventions within the Asia-Pacific region. This attendance did not involve any costs to the Department, as AusAID funded the attendance of the Burmese officials.

The Department provided financial support to Burma for its attendance at three meetings of the Asian Collaborative Group on Local Precursor Control, which was established to promote adoption of best practice policies and practices to address the threat of local precursor chemical diversion in the Asian region.

The financial support covered travel costs for the Burmese officials, including flights, allowances and accommodation. The approximate travel costs for each meeting are as follows:

October 2006	Gold Coast	\$3,595 (one person)
February 2007	Tokyo	\$11,650 (two persons)
September 2007	Hobart	\$9,610 (two persons).

The funding for this support was appropriated from the confiscated assets account set up under the *Proceeds of Crimes Act 2002*.

b) No. The Department has not been involved in the provision of counter terrorism support or other forms of support to Burma except in relation to its involvement in the meetings outlined above.

c) No.