

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

Output 2.5

Question No. 71

Senator Ludlam asked the following question at the hearing on 23 October 2008:

In relation to counter-terrorism training exercises:

- a) the Department undertakes counter-terrorism exercises such as the recent *Mercury 08*. How many more exercises are expected to take place, and
- b) how much do these exercises cost the Department?

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

- a) Counter Terrorism exercises such as *Exercise Mercury 08* are conducted under the auspices of the National Counter Terrorism Committee (NCTC) rather than by the Attorney-General's Department (AGD). Several areas of AGD participate in some or all of the exercises. A total of 17 exercises will be conducted in the 2008-09 financial year of which six will be complete by the end of November 2008. Bids have been received from six jurisdictions, as well as a number of Commonwealth agencies, for exercises in the 2009-10 financial year. However, these bids are yet to be considered by the NCTC.
- b) Costs associated with NCTC exercises are shared between the NCTC Administered Fund and the jurisdiction(s) involved in the exercise. The cost to the Department varies significantly depending on factors such as the type, scale and location of exercise being supported.

The NCTC allocation of funds to exercises in the 2007-08 financial year was \$2,767,430 and in the 2008-09 financial year was \$2,915,000.