

Senate Legal and Constitutional Affairs Committee

QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

FAMILIES, COMMUNITY SERVICES AND INDIGENOUS AFFAIRS PORTFOLIO

Northern Territory National Emergency Response Bill 2007 and Related Bills

10 August 2007

Topic: Staffing

Question No: 6 and 7

Hansard Page: Written

Senator Ludwig asked:

What are the required staffing levels & basic role of:

- Permanent/temporary staff
- Those located in NT/other locations
- Seconded's/ how much is being refunded

What is the total staffing cost broken down by department?

Answer:

It is not possible to provide all the above details requested in the time frame, particularly in relation to costing broken by departments. In addition implementation planning is still occurring with not all communities having been surveyed. The number of additional Commonwealth staff may change over time and additional people may also be engaged as contractors or through service providers. The following information is provided for the major agencies involved in the Response by portfolio.

Attorney-Generals

Australian Crime Commission will engage an additional 16 people the majority will be located in the Northern Territory. Australian Federal Police have no new positions in 2007-08 but are seconding existing officers to the Northern Territory Police Force.

Defence

Defence are not engaging any additional personnel to undertake this activity but will utilise a mixture of 125 Reservists and 3 Permanent ADF members. The majority of these personnel are Northern Territory based.

Employment and Workplace Relations

There will be approximately 140 new positions in DEWR with staff for CDEP transition, management of the expansion of Work for the Dole and other employment programmes, contract and support staff and community employment brokers. Approximately 105 of these are expected to be based in the Northern Territory. A significant proportion of these staff are expected to be required for the transition period only. A further 10 positions will be created in Indigenous Business Australia (IBA). These IBA staff will be working with Northern Territory service providers to transition to the new arrangements, including assisting with business development.

Education, Science and Training

There will be around 17 new staff of whom 8 are expected to be based in the Northern Territory.

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Families, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs

There will be approximately 150 new staff positions with about 75% of these staff based in the Northern Territory. These positions include Government Business Managers, support to the Emergency Response Taskforce and Operations Centre personnel.

Health and Ageing

There will be approximately 42 new positions in the Department. 15 of these positions are expected to be in the Northern Territory.

Human Services

Centrelink will have approximately 350 additional staff of whom 300 will be based in the Northern Territory. The Department will have 5 additional staff based in Canberra and Medicare Australia will have an additional 2 Northern Territory based staff.

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10 August 2007

Topic: Implementation

Question No: 25

Hansard Page: Written

Senator Ludwig asked:

Has each dept prepared a timeline of work and/or actions for the provisions of:

- Health services
- Housing
- Infrastructure
- Education funds
- Provision of police
- Employment services.

Answer:

The Government's strategy has several components including our current phase, stabilisation which aims to protect children and make communities safe and the normalisation phase of services and infrastructure. The decision lies with the Northern Territory Emergency Response Taskforce on deployment of services, resources and infrastructure according to community priorities.

The legislation also outlines a staged approach to a number of the measures.

Additionally, there are a number of existing programs that have been announced as part of the Budget process, for example the Australian Remote Indigenous Accommodation program, that are to be rolled out in parallel with the Emergency measures.

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10 August 2007

Topic: Implementation

Question No: 26

Hansard Page: Written

Senator Ludwig asked:

Is there an implementation document from each agency or dept about what will be done and how it will be coordinated?

Answer:

The Government's strategy has several components including our current phase, stabilisation which aims to protect children and make communities safe and the normalisation phase of services and infrastructure. The decision lies with the Northern Territory Emergency Response Taskforce on deployment of services, resources and infrastructure according to community priorities.

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Topic: Surveys

Question No: 27

Hansard Page: Written

Senator Ludwig asked:

How many communities have been surveyed? How many more to go? When will this be completed? Will the outcomes be published?

Answer:

As at 10 August, 60 communities have been surveyed. The remaining 13 communities will be surveyed by 23 August. Noting that the surveys are intended principally to support operational planning rather than for publication, the decision whether or not it is useful to publish the outcomes is one for the Northern Territory Emergency Response Taskforce.

The Government takes the general view, subject to advice from the Task Force, that caution needs to be taken to not impede operations by imposing unnecessary requirements to publish material that is operational in nature.

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10 August 2007

Topic: Staffing

Question No: 8

Hansard Page: Written

Senator Ludwig asked:

What occurs of 30/06/2008 in respect of contracts for employment?

Answer:

Refer answer to Q 9

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QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

FAMILIES, COMMUNITY SERVICES AND INDIGENOUS AFFAIRS PORTFOLIO

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10 August 2007

Topic: child abuse

Question No: 21

Hansard Page: Written

Senator Ludwig asked:

How many notifications of suspected abuse or neglect have been referred to Child Protection? How many matters relating to abuse have been made to police?

Answer:

It is not appropriate for the Australian Government to comment on investigations of this nature as they are matters for the Northern Territory Police and the Northern Territory Government.

Senate Legal and Constitutional Affairs Committee

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FAMILIES, COMMUNITY SERVICES AND INDIGENOUS AFFAIRS PORTFOLIO

Northern Territory National Emergency Response Bill 2007 and Related Bills

10 August 2007

Topic: child abuse

Question No: 22

Hansard Page: Written

Senator Ludwig asked:

How many cases are currently being investigated? Have any charges been laid? If so, how many and what is the nature of the charges that have been laid.

Answer:

It is not appropriate for the Australian Government to comment on investigations of this nature as they are matters for the Northern Territory Police and the Northern Territory Government.

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QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

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Northern Territory National Emergency Response Bill 2007 and Related Bills

10 August 2007

Topic: Legislation

Question No: 70

Hansard Page: Written

Senator Ludwig asked:

What other provisions in the bills, like the extension of ACC examiners terms from 5 to 10 years, are unrelated to the purposes of the emergency intervention in the Northern Territory? Please highlight all such provisions and provide an explanation for their inclusion in this package of legislation.

Answer:

The provision referred to, and all the provisions in the bills are related to the Australian Government's National Emergency Response.

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Northern Territory National Emergency Response Bill 2007 and Related Bills

10 August 2007

Topic: NT Emergency Response

Question No:71 and 74

Hansard Page: Written

Senator Ludwig:

Q 71 When the intervention was first decided, is there a timeline of events since then that can be provided?

Has an Interdepartmental committee been formed between the relevant departments? If so, who is on the committee?

Q 74 In respect of the intervention? When did FaCSIA begin consultation with other relevant committee's, such as AGD, etc?

Answer:

To complement the SES Taskforce which reports to the Secretaries Group on Indigenous Affairs an Interdepartmental Committee was established in response to the Northern Territory Emergency Response.

The membership includes FaCSIA, DEWR, DoHA, DEST, ADF, AFP and AGD.

This IDC convenes weekly

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10 August 2007

Topic: Legislation

Question No: 72

Hansard Page: Written

Senator Ludwig asked:

When was the request for drafting of the bill made?

Answer:

The drafting of the bills followed the Australian Government's announcement of the Emergency Response on 21 June 2007.

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10 August 2007

Topic: Legislation

Question No: 73

Hansard Page: Written

Senator Ludwig asked:

Could a timeline of drafting the bills be provided?

Answer:

The bills were drafted between the date of the Australian Government's announcement of the Emergency Responses on 21 June 2007 and their introduction to Parliament on 7 August 2007.

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10 August 2007

Topic: Consultation

Question No: 75

Hansard Page: Written

Senator Ludwig asked:

When was the NT government formally advised of the NT intervention?

Answer:

21 June 2007.

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FAMILIES, COMMUNITY SERVICES AND INDIGENOUS AFFAIRS PORTFOLIO

Northern Territory National Emergency Response Bill 2007 and Related Bills

10 August 2007

Topic: Consultation

Question No: 76

Hansard Page: Written

Senator Ludwig asked:

Has the NT been consulted about the bills? If so, when? If not, why not?

Answer:

A full briefing was provided on Monday 6 August 2007. In addition formal consultation occurred in relation to the alcohol measures.

On a range of general matters, there has been contact at Ministerial level and between senior officers in the period between the Government's announcement and 6 August. Additionally, the most senior NT public service officer has been appointed to the Task Force.

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10 August 2007

Topic: Legislation

Question No: 77

Hansard Page: Written

Senator Ludwig asked:

Has the classification amendments been advised to the classifications Ministers? If so, when and in what form, if not why not?

Answer:

Following Parliament's consideration of the legislation the measures passed into law will be implemented.

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10 August 2007

Topic: Legislation

Question No: 63

Hansard Page: Written

Senator Ludwig asked:

What was the rationale for displacing the Northern Territory Self Govt Act?

Answer:

Sub-section 50(2) of the Northern *Territory (Self-Government) Act 1978* has been displaced because any compensation that is payable will be paid under the compensation provisions in the Commonwealth bills.