

**Senate Community Affairs Committee**  
**ANSWERS TO ESTIMATES QUESTIONS ON NOTICE**  
**FAMILIES, HOUSING, COMMUNITY SERVICES AND**  
**INDIGENOUS AFFAIRS PORTFOLIO**  
**2012-13 Budget Estimates Hearings**

**Outcome Number:** 7

**Question No:** 220

**Topic:** Closing the Gap

**Hansard Page:** Written

**Senator Scullion** asked:

I refer to a report in the Koorie Mail (22 February 2012) in which the National Congress of Australia's First Peoples co-chair Jody Broun claims that rates of indigenous incarceration have worsened over the past 20 years. Statistics from the Australian Institute of Criminology support this, indicating a 34.5% increase in indigenous imprisonment since 2000 through 2008. Given that Indigenous disadvantage in justice has been proven to be a growing area of concern, shouldn't it be included as one of the seven close the gap targets?

**Answer:**

The targets for Closing the Gap were set by the Council of Australian Governments (COAG) in 2008. At that time COAG recognised that overcoming Indigenous disadvantage required a sustained commitment from all levels of government to work together and with Indigenous people, with major effort directed to seven action areas or 'building blocks' including the Safe Communities building block.