

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

Group 2

Output 1.5

Question No. 118

Senator Scullion asked the following question at the hearing on 23 May 2012:

The House of Representatives Standing Committee on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Affairs last year identified the over representation of indigenous juveniles and young adults in the criminal justice system as a national crisis.

Broadly, what progress has the Government made in implementing the recommendations made in their report, *Doing Time, Time for Doing*?

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

The Government's response to the *Doing Time – Time for Doing: Indigenous Youth in the Criminal Justice System* Report was tabled in Parliament on 24 November 2011. The Australian Government accepted in whole, in part, or in principle all 40 of the Report's recommendations. The implementation of the *Doing Time – Time for Doing* report's recommendations is spread across Departments, including the Attorney-General's Department, Department of Families, Housing, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs, Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations, Department of Health and Ageing, Department of Defence, Australian Bureau of Statistics. A number of the recommendations also relate specifically to areas of State and Territory responsibility (including policing and juvenile justice).

The Attorney-General's Department has been working with other agencies on the implementation of the recommendations. The Australian Government also committed to raise a number of recommendations with State and Territory Governments. Current progress includes:

- The Government committed to raise five of the recommendations with the Standing Council of Law and Justice (SCLJ) as they related to areas of State and Territory responsibility: (Recommendations 2 (Justice targets), 24 (Court interpreter service and hearing assistance), 27 (Post-release accommodation), and 30 (Pre-court conferencing). The Australian Government raised these recommendations at the 12-13 April 2012 SCLJ meeting. The SCLJ noted the recommendations. Any further action in relation to these recommendations is a matter for State and Territory governments.
- Recommendations 3, 4, 5, 6, 8, 15, 16, 18, 19, 22 and 39 are being implemented through existing programs.
- Several of the recommendations are being pursued in conjunction with other major Government initiatives. These include the development of an Indigenous Safe Communities Strategy (Recommendation 1), National Indigenous Law and Justice Framework (Recommendations 29 and 32), Stronger Futures in the Northern Territory Package (Recommendations 3 and 8), House of Representatives inquiry into Foetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder (Recommendation 9), Government response to *Hear Us: Inquiry into*

Hearing Health in Australia (Recommendation 12), and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Education Action Plan (Recommendation 16).

Additional actions are being pursued through appropriate Ministerial Councils. This includes Recommendations 13 (Police training to identify hearing loss) and 23 (Police training and Indigenous employment), which the Department raised with the National Police Senior Officers Group at its 20 April 2012 meeting. The Department is working with jurisdictions to collate information on current police training and employment initiatives as a first step in addressing the recommendations.