

**SENATE STANDING COMMITTEE ON  
EDUCATION, EMPLOYMENT AND WORKPLACE RELATIONS**

**QUESTIONS ON NOTICE  
SUPPLEMENTARY ESTIMATES 2009-10**

**Outcome/Agency**                    **2**

**DEEWR Question No.**            **EW719\_10**

Senator Fielding asked on 22 October 2009, EEWL Hansard page 68.

**Question**

*Review of the National Safe Schools Framework (NSSF)*

**Senator FIELDING**—Were the terms of reference for that review on the website? I do not know whether I saw them there.

**Ms Phillips**—I think they are on the website, but we can provide you with a copy of those.

**Answer**

The terms of reference, comprising Project Objectives and Required Outcomes, are attached.

## Project Objectives

- The aim of this project is to review the current NSSF (available at [www.dest.gov.au/schools/nssf](http://www.dest.gov.au/schools/nssf)) and supporting documents to ensure they remain a valuable resource for schools and state and territory education authorities.
- Given the current document was developed in 2002, prior to emerging trends in cyber technology enabling new forms of bullying to develop, it is timely that the documents are reviewed to ensure they are consistent with current legislation and policies regarding the issue.
- In reviewing the NSSF, the successful tenderer will be required to undertake the following activities:
  - Determine existing or potential linkages between other child welfare and wellbeing issues such as but not limited to, child protection, child abuse, substance abuse, social and emotional learning, values education, drug education and young carers initiatives;
  - Research current Commonwealth and state and territory based legislation for linkages to the NSSF and the issues it seeks to address. Since the development of the current NSSF and supporting documents there have been significant changes in legislation, particularly in relation to online crimes. Schools have expressed their concerns about where their responsibilities lie in relation to cyber-bullying activities that occur outside the school area and hours. Clearly outlining the legislation in the NSSF or supporting documents will provide clarity on this issue for schools and parents;
  - Establish linkages with recent whole-of-Government initiatives including the:
    - *Melbourne Declaration on Educational Goals for Young Australians* (the Melbourne Declaration) which was endorsed by all Ministers for Education in December 2008. The Melbourne Declaration has a focus on the wellbeing of young people and the direct relationship of wellbeing and educational attainment. For the reviewed NSSF to be implemented successfully, it needs to tie to the goals outlined in the Melbourne Declaration that relate to the wellbeing of young people.
    - The National Partnership arrangements agreed to at the last Council of Australian Governments meeting on 29 November 2008 on Quality Teaching and Low Socio-Economic Status Schools;
  - Examine the role of parents and carers in creating a safe and supportive school environment and how the NSSF can link with the Australian Government Family-School Partnerships Framework. By establishing this link, the Government seeks to clearly define the role of parents and carers in creating safe and supportive environments and explore ways in which their involvement can be encouraged by schools;
  - Exploring the possibility of embedding the safe school message into other state/ territory based policy and curriculum to ensure that there is a whole-school approach to creating a safe and supportive environment and supporting the wellbeing of both students and staff;
  - Exploring other commercially or government developed tools used to respond to bullying issues and making recommendations on their viability in the Australian schooling context;

- Recommend ways in which a reviewed NSSF can successfully be implemented in schools which respects the federalist relationship, and that of different schooling systems (government, Catholic and independent); and
  - Drafting a reviewed version of the NSSF and supporting documents for publication.
- The successful tenderer will be supported by a reference group of experts in the school bullying and child wellbeing field including representatives from the Commonwealth and state and territory education authorities, researchers, parent groups, principals' associations and other significant stakeholders.
  - The reference group will be responsible for providing advice to the successful tenderer and the Australian Government on jurisdictional issues, valuable research that would contribute to the review process, providing contacts for schools and other groups where required, and reviewing the versions of the reviewed NSSF and associated documents as required.
  - The successful tenderer may also be required to work with a contractor of an Australian Education Systems Officials Committee (AESOC) working group that will be identifying lighthouse schools and examining the positive practice these schools undertake to effectively promote a safe school environment. This particular activity will be dependent on projects commencing in a similar timeframe.

## **Required Outcomes**

The successful tenderer will be required to:

Work with a reference group. In working with this group, the successful tenderer will be asked to prepare agendas for meetings (which will include teleconferences and a small number of face-to-face meetings), take minutes and prepare a draft for circulation to the group.

Deliver a final report to DEEWR recommending how the revised NSSF should be implemented, raising and issues and other recommendations as outlined in 1.2.

Deliver a revised NSSF and supporting documentation for publication to DEEWR for consideration and make changes as required by DEEWR and/ or the reference group.