

## **Senate Standing Committee on Education and Employment**

### **QUESTIONS ON NOTICE Supplementary Budget Estimates 2013-2014**

#### **Outcome 2 - Schools and Youth**

**Department of Education Question No. ED0214\_14**

**Senator O'Neill asked on 20 November 2013, Hansard page 92**

#### **Question**

##### **Safe and secure school program**

Senator O'NEILL: The first set of questions in 2.3 that I have regard the safe and secure school education commitment. Could you put this on the record for me clearly. I think I understand this: what is the \$18 million safe and secure school program doing? Mr Cook: That will be run by the Attorney-General's Department, I understand. It is about funding in those particular communities where the school itself may need consideration in terms of security. Sometimes it is in multicultural communities where there has been risk of violence in relation to schools or school facilities. It is continuing that program. Senator O'NEILL: Under the previous government it was sitting under the A-G as well? Mr Cook: That is my understanding. Senator O'NEILL: So this is not a change. How do schools make application for such funding? Mr Cook: I would have to take that on notice. It is actually not done by the Department of Education.

#### **Answer**

The Attorney-General's Department provides funding for the Secure Schools Program to help meet the security needs of government and non-government schools that are assessed to be at risk of racial, religious or ethnically motivated violence, property crime and harassment. This funding is provided for security-related infrastructure, such as closed-circuit television systems, perimeter fencing and gates, lighting, blast protection and vehicle and pedestrian access controls.

The Secure Schools Program uses a targeted application process. State and territory governments and independent schools associations nominate the schools that can apply for funding. Only those schools invited to apply are eligible to receive funding. Funding decisions are made by the Minister for Justice. The Secure Schools Program has been expanded to include funding to preschools to improve security infrastructure.

The Secure Schools Program was announced in 2007 and committed \$20 million to assist at-risk government and non-government schools to meet their particular security needs. A further \$15 million was committed in the 2011-12 budget to continue the Secure Schools Program for another three years. A total of 126 projects at 77 schools and preschools have been funded to date.

The Government will continue the Secure Schools Program with a commitment of \$18 million over three years (2014-15 to 2016-17) for schools that face a special risk of attack, harassment or violence stemming from racial or religious intolerance.