

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

Program 1.2

Question No. 77

Senator Barnett asked the following question at the hearing on 26 May 2011:

Senator BARNETT: I have questions on Safer Suburbs. I will be as quick as I can because I know Senator Humphries has some important questions under the disaster financial support section. I understand the government in this budget put in \$5.2 million extra over three years for the Safer Suburbs program. It continues, “the renaming of the successful Howard government National Community Crime Prevention Program, with both programs being funded in this budget, according to page 35 of the PBS. The National Community Crime Prevention Program ends in 2012-13 and the Safer Suburbs program will end a year later in 2013-14”, according to page 34 of the PBS. If that is wrong, please correct that on the record. I would like to know with regard to the Canning electorate—again, I am happy for you to take this on notice—in which financial year the following election commitments will be funded: \$85,000 for Waroona Football Club lighting; \$50,000 in seed fighting for Roleystone skate park; \$25,000 to Legal Ink for anti-graffiti management; \$15,000 to Jarrahdale youth group for a half a basketball court; and \$80,000 for the City of Mandurah anti-graffiti removal team and band, noting that the City of Mandurah has submitted an application for Safer Suburbs funding but for CCTV cameras, not an anti-graffiti removal team. So if you are happy to respond or take that on notice, that would be appreciated.

Mr Wilkins: Senator, I will ask Mr Iain Anderson to address those questions.

Mr I Anderson: I will seek some clarification first. The amount of funding for the Safer Suburbs program is \$5.42 million. I do not think that is a figure you mentioned.

Senator BARNETT: I had \$5.2 million.

Mr I Anderson: It is \$5.42 million over three years. In terms of the actual programs themselves, we are currently working through the processes required under the Commonwealth grant guidelines in getting full project bids. Then we will be going through a process of drafting up and agreeing on the full suite of grant documentation, agreeing on milestones and going through the audit requirements and that sort of thing. So it is not possible at this point to say in which financial year the program funding will necessarily occur. It is our experience with this and other similar programs that sometimes it takes longer than initially envisaged for a community organisation to actually deliver the full program. You mentioned, for example, the NCCPP and the funding for that continuing. The funding for that continuing in fact just reflects the fact that some programs have not yet been completed under that program. Similarly, with Safer Suburbs, it is likely that projects will take a while to complete. We are not necessarily saying in which financial year they have to occur. It is mainly that they need to occur properly in accordance with the grant documentation and then have a full acquittal process.

Senator BARNETT: But there are budget papers which indicate that they conclude at a certain time. That is on page 34.

Mr I Anderson: Yes, that is right, Senator. Notionally, at least, the funding is—

Senator BARNETT: Well, it is in the budget papers. I do not consider that notional, Mr Anderson.

Mr I Anderson: No, Senator. But, as you pointed out yourself, funding for the NCCPP has been carried forward. The reason it has been carried forward has been that some of these projects do not

occur in the time frame that the community organisation originally proposes. So the budget papers provide that there be \$1.5 million expended in the first year, \$3.3 million in the second year and \$0.5 million in the third year. If, as may happen, some of those community organisations take longer than they envisaged to complete those projects, funding would need to be carried forward into a subsequent budget year, as happened with the NCCPP.

Senator BARNETT: Mr Anderson, thank you very much. I ask you to review the *Hansard*. If there is anything that is not accurate in the *Hansard*, could you take that on notice and clarify it in a response to a question on notice?

Mr I Anderson: Certainly, Senator.

Senator BARNETT: Thank you.

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

The Department is working with the nominated organisations for the delivery of the Safer Suburbs Program election commitments in the electorate of Canning.

Arrangements for the delivery of these projects are being completed in accordance with the Safer Suburbs Program guidelines. The identification of milestones and timing of payments will be agreed to as part of this process.

Once the arrangements are in place for these projects, it is expected that the agreed funding will be made available across the life of each project, as significant milestones are met, with initial funding commencing in the 2011-12 financial year.

Funding under the Safer Suburbs program ends in the 2012-13 financial year, subject to each project being completed in the timeframe proposed by the community group or local council responsible for delivering the project.

If for some reason a group requires a longer period to complete a project, it is possible that the final payments of funding may not occur until the 2013-14 financial year.