

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

Group 2

Output 1.5

Question No. 183

Senator Wright asked the following question at the hearing of 23 May 2012:

- a) Please provide a progress report on the work being undertaken by the National Justice Chief Executive Officers (NJCEOs) Working Group on Justice Reinvestment/Causes of Crime.
- b) We understand that the Working Group on Justice Reinvestment/Causes of Crime delivered a report to the NJCEOs Group in November 2011. When does the Commonwealth expect to publicly release this report?
- c) Seven months have now passed since the Working Group's report was delivered to the NJCEOs Group but we are still awaiting public release. What is the reason for this delay?
- d) Has the Working Group on Justice Reinvestment/Causes of Crime or the NJCEOs Group itself actioned any of the recommendations arising from the November 2011 report?
- e) What progress has the NJCEOs Group made in working with the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) to improve national corrections datasets, in particular national prisoner and offence data?
- f) Please detail the gaps in national corrections data identified by the NJCEOs Group with reference to specific datasets.
- g) Is there a planned timetable for developing the datasets necessary to fill these gaps?

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

The National Justice Chief Executive Officers (NJCEOs) agreed to publicly release the report of the Justice Reinvestment/Causes of Crime Working Group, subject to jurisdictions' approval. Not all jurisdictions have approved the report for public release. The Attorney-General's Department is continuing to follow up this matter with jurisdictions.

Given that approval to release the report has not yet been obtained, the Department is unable to provide advice relating to the recommendations. However, the NJCEOs wrote to the National Corrective Services Statistics Unit (NCSSU) Board of Management requesting it consider specific improvements to the currently available national prisoner data sets.

At its annual meeting on 19 April 2012, the NCSSU Board of Management agreed for the NCSSU/ABS to consider specific improvements to the currently available national prisoner data sets requested by the NJCEOs Group as part of an upcoming review of the ABS 4512.0 – *Corrective Services, Australia* data set. The review will be undertaken by the ABS and is scheduled for completion by the end of 2012. Stakeholder consultations are underway.

The quarterly ABS 4512.0 – *Corrective Services, Australia* statistical series covers persons either held in adult corrective services custody or who are serving adult community-based orders in Australia. It contains data about the number of persons in custody by sex, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander status, type of custody, legal status, and sentence type. It also covers the number of sentenced persons received into corrective services custody each month; the number of federal prisoners, and data about the number of persons in community-based corrections by sex, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander status and type of order. The possibility of expanding this data set to disaggregate by offence type will be considered as part of the review.