

SENATE STANDING COMMITTEE ON LEGAL AND CONSTITUTIONAL AFFAIRS
FAMILY COURT OF AUSTRALIA

Question No. 24

Senator Barnett asked the following question at the hearing on 19 October 2009:

What is the average waiting time from the conclusion of a trial to the handing down of a judgment? Provide relevant particulars concerning cases that have taken the longest period of time, from the conclusion of the trial to the handing down of the judgment?

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

1. As at 19 October the average waiting time from the conclusion of a trial to the handing down of a judgment in 2008/09 was approximately 3.4 months.
2. The relevant particulars in relation to the handing down of judgments in the longest cases is as follows:
 - a. One judge developed a life threatening illness and required immediate surgery. The judge in question was unable to complete the judgments in these cases and with the consent of both parties another judge heard further submissions and made a determination in a timely manner.
 - b. A decision and order was made in a matter but there was a delay in finalising the judgment.