

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

Program 1.2

Question No. 69

Senator Rhiannon asked the following questions at the hearing on 18 October 2011:

The government cut funds to a program called Bsafe that provided personal alarms to women victims of domestic violence and sexual assault to give them added level of safety. The alarm notifies several emergency contacts at once. The \$125,000-a-year program ended on 31/8/2011.

1. Why did it lose its funding? Which department funded it?
2. Were you consulted about the cuts before the decision was made? If so by who?
3. Have you made any representations to other departments or agencies about the B-Safe program cuts reported on the 7:30 program recently?
4. Are there any plans to further fund this project?

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

1. No funding was cut. The non-recurrent grant funding for the Bsafe pilot project concluded in March 2011.

The funding, provided under the National Community Crime Prevention Program, was administered by the Attorney-General's Department. All grants under this program are non-recurrent.

2. The funding concluded in accordance with the terms and conditions in the funding agreement between the Commonwealth and Women's Health Goulburn North East (WHGNE) for the delivery of the B-Safe Pilot Project.
3. As noted above, there were no funding cuts; the non-recurrent grant funding came to an end in accordance with the funding agreement.
4. On 25 November 2011, the then Minister for Home Affairs and Justice, the Hon Brendan O'Connor MP, approved transitional funding of \$55,000 to be provided to WHGNE to support the continuation of the Bsafe service for an additional six months while alternative funding sources are investigated by WHGNE.