

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

Group: Civil Justice and Legal Services Group

Program: Royal Commission into the Home Insulation Program

Question No. 157

Senator Singh asked the following question at the hearing on 24 February 2014:

Has it been the practice of governments in the last three decades to cover the reasonable costs of legal representation for witnesses called before Royal Commissions?

The answer to the Honourable Senator's question is as follows:

There is no general rule that governments cover the reasonable legal costs of witnesses, however they may do so.

In some circumstances, the legal costs of public servants, former public servants, Ministers and former Ministers who are called as witnesses may be covered, in accordance with legislation and established guidelines.

As well, certain other witnesses may be eligible to have their reasonable legal costs met, under the applicable guidelines for legal financial assistance.