

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

Group 1.6

Question No. 230

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

- 1) Why has all the money been directed towards CCTV? What does the evidence and experts say about CCTV?
- 2) What are the costs involved in installing CCTV, including surveillance, monitoring, and installation of hardware and maintenance of the cameras?
- 3) Is there evidence that proves CCTV is the most cost effective crime prevention method?
- 4) Have community groups, councils and non-governmental organisations (beneficiaries of the fund) been consulted in the government's decision to redirect all the money to CCTV? If so what was their response?
- 5) How will CCTV deter anti-social behaviour for example those affected by drugs and alcohol?
- 6) Is there evidence that suggests that CCTV rates highly in any risk assessment undertaken prior to the commission of the offence?
- 7) Has the government taken into consideration that CCTV cameras will cause crime displacement.
- 8) If so what precautions will the government take to combat crime displacement?
- 9) Has the government established proper systems of democratic accountability, control and oversight over the implementation and use of these technologies?
- 10) Are there privacy legislations which offer adequate and proper protection from CCTV for ordinary citizens?

11) How will CCTV cameras assist project workers and outreach workers to deal with anti-social behaviours and substance abusers.

12) What social and material support will CCTV provide for youth at risk of committing crime?

13) Did Brimbank City Council apply for a grant under the National Crime Prevention Fund?

14) Was Brimbank City Council awarded a grant?

15) Has the money been redirected into any alternative programs in the Sunshine area?

16) Given that Brimbank City Council has demonstrated need, will the Brimbank City Council be awarded a grant for CCTV cameras under the new program?

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

1) to 12) The Government's Safer Streets Programme will boost the efforts of local communities to address crime and anti-social behaviour. A key component of the Programme is helping them to install closed-circuit television (CCTV) camera systems and better lighting in communities experiencing high levels of criminal activity and anti-social behaviour.

The costs of installing, operating and maintaining CCTV systems vary between locations and depend on a range of factors including the location of cameras, available lighting, data transmission and communications infrastructure, signage, data storage, monitoring arrangements and maintenance. Organisations seeking to install CCTV systems are encouraged to consider these costs as part of their project planning and decision making process.

CCTV is one part of an effective crime prevention programme that provides significant deterrence to anti-social behaviour and is a valuable investigative tool. The Government's *Policy to Tackle Crime* notes that recent studies indicate that CCTV can be extremely helpful in solving crime.

The Government's Safer Streets Programme will boost the efforts of local communities to address crime and anti-social behaviour by helping them to install CCTV, lighting and other security infrastructure to tackle crime and safety hot spots and provide solutions to local crime problems. Projects involve business and commerce groups, local councils and police. There is a particular focus on reinvigorating local shopping strips and precincts that have been compromised by anti-social and unlawful behaviour.

Councils and other organisations placing CCTV cameras in public places must comply with privacy legislation, policies and guidelines that apply to their activities.

- 13) Yes.
- 14) The former Government announced on 8 August 2013 its intention to offer \$300,000 to install more lighting and three CCTV cameras in Clarke Street, Sunshine. No funding agreement was entered into or executed as the government was in caretaker mode at the time of the announcement.
- 15) Uncommitted funding from the National Crime Prevention Fund has been redirected to the Government's Safer Streets Programme.
- 16) The first priority for the Safer Streets Programme is to deliver specific election commitments. Arrangements for any further funding under the Safer Streets Programme are yet to be finalised.