

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

Group 1.6

Question No. 301

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

- 1) What is the total allocation per school of funding so far under the Secure Schools Program?
- 2) What proportion of the money has been allocated to public schools?
- 3) Which schools that received money under this program have subsequently closed down or closed campuses where funded security measures had been put in place?
- 4) What research has the department done to evaluate the risk factors around school security in relation to public and private schools, and what process was undertaken to select the public and private schools that received funding?
- 5) Please provide a copy of any research mentioned in the response to the previous question.
- 6) Has the federal government made a decision to allow school security funding to be used for (a) security guards and (b) to pay for security measures at other facilities beyond schools? If so, what type of facilities will funding be able to be used on and what is the justification for that decision?
- 7) How will money be allocated in future rounds of the Secure Schools Program or its successor?
- 8) Is the department aware of a commitment made by members of the government to any community group or organisation guaranteeing it will receive funding under its Safer Streets, Safer Suburbs plan? Has any such commitment been made by the department or minister since the Abbott Government was elected and if so what is the financial commitment?
- 9) What process and eligibility criteria will be used in the distribution of funding from the Safer Streets grants program, and over what period is it envisaged that the money will be spent?

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

- 1) The Attorney-General's Department has a list of funded projects under the Secure Schools program on its website. The Department is required to report all grants on its Grants Register when funding agreements are executed.
- 2) Public schools (State and Territory government schools) have received 16 per cent of funding.
- 3) Massada College in South Australia received \$300,000 in 2009. It subsequently closed in 2011 following a period of voluntary administration.
- 4) No research has been done by the Attorney-General's Department to evaluate the risk factors around school security. Schools are required in their applications to demonstrate the risk factors that apply to them.

Funding has been awarded via a targeted competitive selection process. State and Territory Education Ministers and independent school associations were asked to nominate schools for inclusion in the programme. The Attorney-General's Department invited these schools to submit applications addressing the programme selection criteria and demonstrating their security needs and proposing solutions. Only invited schools were eligible to apply. All eligible applications were assessed by the Department and funding recommendations provided to the former Minister for Home Affairs and Justice. The former Minister then awarded funding on the basis of assessed need.

- 5) Not applicable.
- 6) The Government has announced that the cost of security guards will be an eligible item for funding under the new Schools Security Programme, but has not made a decision to pay for security measures at other facilities beyond schools.
- 7) The selection method for the new Schools Security Programme is yet to be determined.
- 8) During the election the Government announced commitments to more than 150 locations across 61 electorates that will receive \$19.2 million of the funding to be made available under the Safer Streets Programme.

The Minister for Justice approved funding of \$250,000 for the Gold Coast City Council as part of the Safer Streets Programme.

- 9) The first round of funding under the Safer Streets Programme will be used to meet specific commitments announced before and during the election for the installation of CCTV and lighting.

Arrangements for any further funding under the programme are yet to be finalised.

Funding under this programme will be available from 2014-15 to 2016-17.