

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

**Group: 2**

**Program: 1.5**

**Question No. AE15/081**

**Senator Wright asked the following question at the hearing on 27 March 2015:**

Mr Manning: Just to clarify, no money has been cut from an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Legal Service and, as a result of the announcement yesterday, the quantum for those services will remain the same. There is a difference between the program and the services you fund under the program. The program has had a saving taken from it but no service provider has.

Senator WRIGHT: I want to be really clear on that. The \$1.820 million you describe as being uncommitted, held-back funding from the programs, in case there is additional—

Mr Manning: That is right.

Senator WRIGHT: Were any of the services in a position where they understood, including the NATSILS, that there would be some aspect of that money able be used for purposes in the future?

Mr Manning: Not to my knowledge. Certainly not last year, in relation to the year before I came into this job as this was all happening. I will take that on notice and check it. Certainly, the NATSILS have still received their funding over the last two years.

Senator WRIGHT: What I am interested in is if they were of the understanding that that money had been uncommitted the specific programs but it was there, they may well have been doing some planning on the basis of that if they had. You will clarify that for us?

Mr Manning: Not to my knowledge, but I will check in relation to 2013-14.

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

The department is very clear with providers that they should not plan on the availability of such one-off funds.