

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

Group: 2

Program: 1.3

Question No. AE15/091

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

Senator JACINTA COLLINS: Thank you. Now, what can you tell me about Redfern?

Mr Manning: Are we talking about Redfern community legal centre? It was one of the centres which are impacted by the government's decision yesterday, in the sense that its additional funding that would have ceased two years early no longer will.

Senator JACINTA COLLINS: Yes, but what has happened to its operations to date; and what representations has the department or government received with respect to the Redfern service?

Mr Manning: I do not have that information. I am not sure if Ms Jardine has personal knowledge of it.

Ms Jardine: No. We have received a number of representations, and we are happy to take on notice which organisations we received representations from.

Senator JACINTA COLLINS: Yes, I think that would be a useful question for you to take on notice: the full number of organisations for which representations have been made with respect to the impact of the foreshadowed reductions in funding that have now been reversed. I think that would be a helpful one. Are you aware of the statements by Liana Buchanan reported in The Age today? She is the Chief Executive of the Federation of Community Legal Centres in Victoria. She said:

... many centres had already reduced their lawyers and wound back services in preparation for the planned funding cuts.

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

1. The Government received the following representations about Redfern Legal Centre:
 - 3 February 2015 – Letter to the Attorney-General from Joanna Shulman, Chief Executive Officer.
 - 7 April 2015 – Joint letter to the Attorney-General from the Chief Executive Officer and Chairperson of Redfern Legal Centre.
2. As at 27 March 2015, the Government had received 43 representations, including from Redfern Community Legal Centre, with respect to the impact of the foreshadowed reductions in funding that have now been reversed for 2015-16 and 2016-17.