

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

Group: 3

Program: 1.7

Question No. BE15/092

Senator Collins asked the following written question from the 27 and 28 May 2015 hearing:

The Schools Security Programme Guidelines states that, "The programme will adopt a targeted application process, with individual schools to be nominated by their State or Territory education authority. The nominated schools will then be invited to apply for funding".

1. Who nominated the 'identified schools'?
2. Who was responsible for the initial identification of these schools?
3. Were independent bodies or groups involved in the initial identification process?
4. Who was responsible for making the final determination regarding 'identified organisations'?
5. Where there any prerequisites for submitting a nomination?
6. Was there a nomination committee? Please provide details?
7. How was the committee sensitized to issues of unconscious biases through training or other awareness building activities?
8. Were committee members subject matter experts on terrorism and radicalization?
9. Where subject matter experts involved or consulted in the identification and nomination process?
10. Where risk assessment officers of various Education Departments involved or consulted through the identification or nomination process?
11. Were law enforcement personnel involved or consulted at any stage of the identification and nomination process?
12. Was the broader school community involved or consulted through the identification or nomination process?
13. Were civic groups and private organisations involved with the school community consulted or involved in the process?
14. Was the selection criteria developed before the launch of the Schools Security Programme and communicated to potential applicants?
15. Can you explain the inter-agency co-operation in the identification and nomination process?
16. What improvements can be made to inter-agency co-operation?
17. What additional resources are being put in place to develop a greater understanding of radicalisation in Australian schools? For example training/information seminars for Police and other security agencies, as well as for school Principals.
18. Did the process involve approaching specific schools? On what basis were these schools chosen?
19. What process was used to identify schools at risk of violence, terrorist attacks and harassment?
20. Were school Principals and the broader school community consulted?
21. Can you provide a comprehensive list of schools that received funding and how much each school was allocated?
22. What proportion of these schools are Islamic institutions?

23. Were there schools that expressed interest for the programme but were unable to apply because they were not nominated?
24. What are the details?
25. What advice was given to nominated schools in terms of using funding in the most effective manner?
26. Have the various State and Territory Education Departments provided direction and leadership to nominated schools, including on the risks of radicalisation and extremism?
27. Have these schools received direction and leadership on the establishment of racial and religious tolerance and social cohesion in schools?

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

1. On 28 July 2014, the Minister for Justice, the Hon Michael Keenan MP, wrote to state and territory education ministers and independent schools associations requesting them to nominate schools that they considered should be invited to apply for funding under the Schools Security Programme.

State and territory education ministers and independent schools associations were asked to submit their school nominations by 13 August 2014. Separate lists of nominated schools were received per jurisdiction from relevant state and territory education departments and from independent school associations.

2. See answer to question 1.
3. See answer to question 1.
4. All nominated schools were invited by the Attorney-General's Department to apply for funding.
5. State and territory education ministers and independent school associations were advised that the programme was designed to assist government and non-government schools facing a risk of attack, harassment or violence stemming from racial or religious intolerance, and with a need to meet their security requirements through non-recurrent grants for security infrastructure, such as fencing, lighting and CCTV, and for the cost of employing security guards.
6. The nomination process was a matter for state and territory education departments and independent schools associations.
7. See answer to question 6.
8. See answer to question 6.
9. See answer to question 6.
10. See answer to question 6.
11. See answer to question 6.
12. See answer to question 6.
13. See answer to question 6.
14. The department wrote to nominated schools inviting them to apply for funding under the Schools Security Programme and provided a link to the Schools Security Programme Guidelines, which included the selection criteria.
15. See answer to question 6.
16. The department will review the process for inter-agency co-operation as part of the broader programme evaluation process, over the life of the Programme.
17. Through the Australia New Zealand Counter-Terrorism Committee, Countering Violent Extremism Sub-Committee (CVESC), funding has been allocated to develop training resources for teachers, principals and other frontline professionals on how to recognise and respond to indicators of radicalisation in schools. The training package will include an e-learning component that will be piloted as face-to-face training, and then further refined to

be applicable for train-the-trainer delivery and also stand-alone e-learning. These resources are currently being developed through a partnership between Victoria Police and the Australian Multicultural Foundation (AMF).

In addition to this the Education Council and ANZCTC commissioned work to identify what initiatives already exist in schools to support students at risk of radicalisation and what additional support and resources may be required. Advice will be provided to these councils in November.

The Australian Government, in cooperation with the CVESC, AMF, and state and territory education authorities, is also in the process of developing primary and secondary school education programmes that include a number of resources for students aimed at countering violent extremism, and fostering social cohesion.

The CVESC has also funded the creation, led by Victoria Police, of a nationally applicable awareness training package that equips frontline police with the knowledge and skills to recognise and appropriately respond to activity that is associated with extremist ideology and behaviours, radicalisation processes and pre-incident warning signs, as well as enhance their cultural awareness. End products include materials to support face-to-face training and an e-learning package.

18. See answer to question 1.
19. See answer to question 1 and 5. Each application was assessed by the Attorney-General's Department against the Programme Guidelines.
20. See answer to question 6.
21. Once the funding agreements have been executed, details of each grant will be published on the department's grants register.
22. See answer to question 21.
23. See answer to question 6.
24. See answer to question 6.
25. As part of the application process, nominated schools were required to outline how their project demonstrated value for money.
26. This is a matter for state and territory governments.
27. See answer to question 26.