

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

Program: 1.6

Question No. SBE15/031

Senator Collins asked the following question at the hearing on 20 October 2015:

Ms Quinn: That would not have, and that is not the reason that no family violence prevention legal service was recommended to government as the nominated provider. It was because we decided to recommend providers that could service the entire region, and, in the areas where there is a family violence prevention legal service, we have directed the nominated provider to ensure that they are working with the AFVPLS in their region. AFVPLSs do not operate everywhere; they only operate in rural and remote areas, and not in every jurisdiction. The ones that spring to mind are in the Kimberley, Alice Springs and Townsville. There may well be one in the Dubbo region too. But we are working really closely with them to make sure that the entire sector and the entire community benefits from the funding.

Senator JACINTA COLLINS: Okay, but what you are essentially describing here is the tension between one provider providing broad services and specialist organisations that provide services to meet the needs of, in particular, Indigenous women. Now, the women's safety package, to my understanding, includes roughly \$21 million of Indigenous initiatives, so that is quite apart from what you are describing as well—

Ms Quinn: Yes.

Senator JACINTA COLLINS: and the criticism here is that that has almost exclusively gone into policing in remote communities—again, not towards organisations that already exist and specialise in providing support for Aboriginal Family Violence Prevention Legal Services. I understand what you are saying in relation to the CLCs, but I still find it difficult to understand what consideration, if any, was provided to specialist family violence prevention legal services within the Indigenous element of the Women's Safety Package.

Ms Quinn: I obviously cannot comment on how PM&C is allocating its component.

Senator Cash: We would need to take that on notice or alternatively put it to Mr Scullion on Friday at the PM&C Indigenous estimates.

Ms Quinn: The commitment we have made is to work with the providers we have nominated to receive the funding to maximise the benefit to all providers. This is not about saying, to use Alice Springs as an example, that in that region FVPLS was seeing none of the benefit of that funding. It is saying that we are not entering into multiple funding agreements but are actively requiring the Central Australian Women's Legal Service to partner with all of the other providers, including the existing Territory government funded domestic violence specialist units, the FVPLS, the Central Australian Aboriginal legal service that we fund, and legal aid.

Senator JACINTA COLLINS: The other questions I have here might also be for Friday. I understand you cannot give us the current figures for the Aboriginal Family Violence Prevention Legal Services. Are you able to tell me, from the period when they were within the Attorney-General's Department, roughly what funding they attracted?

Ms Quinn: I am sorry, but I have not brought those figures with me. I can take on notice what the funding level was when they were transferred, but I do not have the figures with me.

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

The Family Violence Prevention Legal Services Programme was administered by the Attorney-General's Department from 2006-07 to 2013-14.

The appropriated funding is tabled below:

2006-07	2007-08	2008-09	2009-10	2010-11	2011-12	2012-13
\$12.512m	\$18.681m	\$18.798m	\$20.143m	\$19.491m	\$19.832m	\$19.082m

In 2013-14, the appropriation was \$20.997 million. The machinery of government transfer took place in November 2013, when \$10.544 million was transferred from the Attorney-General's Department to the Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet.