

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

Program: 1.2

Question No. SBE15/049

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

CHAIR: Who is going to respond at the minister's invitation?

Ms K Jones: Senator, if I could briefly note, in terms of the process of developing the awareness kit, there were various Muslim community organisations that we spoke to that helped us build a better picture of exactly what we needed to include in this kit. In terms of the specifics of that and what changes that led to in the content of the material, I probably need to take that on notice. What I can say though is that these types of tools that assist the authorities in organisations, first responders, teachers, or counsellors, are precisely some of the things that the community has been saying to us that we need more help with that can focus on prevention. One of the key themes that has come in from the community is, 'Let's direct more effort in the prevention space. Let's have the right tools that can help community organisations and first responders and people in schools and in hospitals and doctors.'

I think it is fair to say that the further progression of this kit reflects some of the need that has been articulated by different organisations within the Islamic community for this type of material to assist and focus on the prevention space. Certainly there are issues around that, and they have talked to us in terms of what more we can do to help community based solutions. That is consistent with international experience. It is not all about governments doing things in this space; it is about governments creating the environment where community organisations themselves can play a primary role. Those are some of the themes that have been coming from consultations with the Islamic communities. The issue around an intervention program to have an effect on individuals to try to stop them from getting to the most serious endpoint of the radical pathway and our approach to developing that program was informed by views expressed to us from the community that this was a big gap and we obviously needed to be doing more work in that space.

Senator JACINTA COLLINS: Which was a big gap?

Ms K Jones: The intervention where people have demonstrated some signs of moving down the radicalisation pathway, but perhaps are not at the point of the most intensive law enforcement response.

Senator JACINTA COLLINS: I am sorry, Ms Jones, I suspect that you had moved onto the more general matter. At this moment I was talking to you about the radicalisation awareness kit rather than the intervention program more generally.

Ms K Jones: Right.

Senator JACINTA COLLINS: I think you indicated that you would take on notice what feedback had been received, how best you could describe it from the Australian Islamic community and how best you could describe that in terms of how something like an awareness kit should meet their needs. Maybe if I leave that question with you on notice, we can explore some other time the broader intervention issues.

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

Refer to response to SBE15/048 for the answer to this question.