

EDUCATION, SCIENCE AND TRAINING

SENATE LEGISLATION COMMITTEE - QUESTIONS ON NOTICE 2006-2007 ADDITIONAL ESTIMATES HEARING

Outcome: 1
Output Group: 1.3

DEST Question No. E841_07

Senator Carr provided in writing.

Question:

Schools Chaplaincy Program - Research

1. Have you done any studies or investigations into the likely take-up rate and pattern for this program? For example, have you looked at the likely take-up rate by sector? Since most non-government schools are run by religious authorities or organisations, do you expect that they will be more likely to take up the offer than secular government schools?
2. Will a non-government school be eligible under this program, no matter how high its SES score and its tuition fees?
3. Will the program give priority to non-government schools with low SES scores? Will it give priority to government schools?
4. Will it be possible under the program for a school to appoint a secular (non-religious) chaplain? What eligibility criteria will apply to such a chaplain?
5. Does it contravene Federal anti-discrimination law for a Commonwealth program to specify that a person whose salary is to be paid under the program not only professes a religion, but is ordained or similarly credentialed? Have you looked into this?
6. Would a member of an organisation that followed the teachings of Rudolf Steiner be eligible to become a chaplain under this program?
7. What is meant, on p.4, when the Guidelines say: *"In particular circumstances, alternative endorsement arrangements may be considered"*?
 - a) What circumstances, and what arrangements?

Answer:

Schools Chaplaincy Program – Research

1. No.
2. Criteria for the prioritisation of applications are detailed in section 2.4 of the Programme Guidelines.
3. Criteria for the prioritisation of applications are detailed in section 2.4 of the Programme Guidelines.
4. All chaplains under this Programme must meet the definition of a chaplain as outlined in section 1.5 of the Programme Guidelines.

5. The Department has received legal advice that the administration of the Programme in accordance with the Guidelines would not contravene any Commonwealth, State or Territory law.
6. See 4.
7. In some faiths, different arrangements apply in the recognition of clergy. These are to address particular needs of particular faiths.
 - a) For example, the Muslim community where circumstances do not fit with other endorsement arrangements.