

EDUCATION, SCIENCE AND TRAINING

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

Outcome: 1
Output Group: 1.3

DEST Question No. E845_07

Senator Carr provided in writing.

Question:

Schools Chaplaincy Program - Ministerial veto

1. Your Guidelines say that the Minister “reserves the right not to approve an application”. What does this mean, in a practical sense?
2. What applications would not be approved? Will all applications that meet the Guidelines’ requirements be approved?
3. Why does the program require a school to formally inform the Department of the identity and personal details of the person they wish to appoint as chaplain? Is this because the Minister wishes to reserve the right to decline to approve an application based on the identity and/or personal characteristics of a potential chaplain?
4. Isn’t this requirement a bit unusual? Can you provide examples of other similar programs where a person who is to be appointed to a funded position has to be identified?

Answer:

Schools Chaplaincy Program – Ministerial Veto

1. Funding is allocated on a competitive basis and there is no guarantee of funding. Applications will be assessed and prioritised against the criteria outlined in sections 4.4 and 2.4 of the Programme Guidelines. The Minister is the decision maker for both successful and unsuccessful applications. This is consistent with other Programmes.
2. See answer to 1. above.
3. The choice of chaplain, faith and, or denomination is for the school community to decide. The Department requires, for a number of programmes, advice of personnel involved in projects which receive Australian Government funding and assurance that appropriate checks of the individual identified have been undertaken.
4. This is consistent with other Programmes that employ individuals in schools, including the Reading Assistance Voucher Programme and the Indigenous Tutorial Assistance Scheme. In addition, the Non-government School Term Hostels assistance also requests identification of all staff and volunteers.