

Senate Finance and Public Administration Legislation Committee

ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

Prime Minister and Cabinet Portfolio

Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet

Budget Supplementary Hearings 2002-2003, 20 November 2002

Questions: PM 41-44

Outcome 1, Output 2.2

Topic: CEDAW 4th/5th Report

Direct on Notice

Senator Crossin asked:

PM41. Australia's combined 4th & 5th report to the CEDAW Committee was due to be completed in August 2000. In 2002 the OSW website says –“ OSW is currently preparing Australia's combined report, it is expected that this will be released this year.” Why has this not been done?

PM42. If it has been done why is it not on the website yet and what are the reasons for the delay?

PM43. If it has not been done when is it now expected to be completed?

PM44. Why has there been such a delay in producing this report

Answer: Australia's 4th/5th CEDAW report was delayed due to the Government's Review of the United Nations Treaty Committee System in 2000.

Preparations for the report have involved extensive consultations with key stakeholders including Commonwealth, State and Territory agencies, the Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Commission, the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Commission, and women's groups in the community. The report has now been finalised.

In August 2002, OSW advised the UN CEDAW Committee that Australia would lodge the report by the end of this year. The CEDAW Committee has subsequently advised that there are backlogs in the consideration of country reports and recommended that Australia delay submission of the report until 2004. The Government is currently considering its response

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ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

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Question: PM 45

Outcome 1, Output 2.2

Topic: CEDAW Optional Protocol

Direct on Notice

Senator Crossin asked: What has been advised to the Government in relation to CEDAW and the Optional Protocol by the OSW?

Answer: OSW has provided advice on Australian women's views on this issue and developments in other countries.

Question: PM 46

Outcome 1, Output 2.2

Topic: CEDAW 4th/5th Report

Direct on Notice

Senator Crossin asked: Have the 'relevant stakeholders representing women and women's organisations' that OSW meets with regularly to discuss current policy issues, raised the lack of response to CEDAW and the failure to ratify the Optional Protocol?

Answer: Some stakeholders have raised these issues.