

SENATE LEGAL AND CONSTITUTIONAL LEGISLATION COMMITTEE  
ATTORNEY-GENERAL'S DEPARTMENT

**Output 2.1**

**Question No. 43**

**Senator Ludwig asked the following question at the hearing on 14 February 2006:**

Regarding the \$6million under underspend in the budget for Output 2.1:

- a) Why did this underspend occurred – what areas of the CRJD were underspending?
- b) How much of this underspend occurred because of staffing changes?
- c) What happened to the remaining funds? Were they transferred to another section of the Department or to another project?
- d) If so, give details?
- e) If not, were they
- f) What are the areas which have suffered cutbacks as a result of the 25% budget cut in this area?
- g) What are the areas of the division that suffered the cutbacks, the extent of the cutbacks and whether any performance goals were altered as a result of the cutbacks?
- h) Have there been any cuts in staffing as a result?
- i) If so, could you indicate the areas that suffered cuts in staffing, and the extent of those cuts?

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

The underspend of \$6.140m for output 2.1 for the 2004-05 financial year comprises underspends in Criminal Justice Division totalling \$6.610m offset by an increase of \$0.470m in actual overhead allocated to the output compared to the budgeted allocation of overheads. In 2004-05, there were no cutbacks to the Division's budget and there were no staffing cuts.

The underspends in Criminal Justice Division comprised program underspends totalling \$5.968m and a core divisional underspend of \$0.642m. The program underspends comprised:

- \$1.545m in the Financial Intelligence Support Team program (now Anti-Money Laundering Assistance Team) – following consultation with countries in the Pacific region, the program has been recast as a program of bilateral financial assistance provided primarily by a team of experts based in Australia rather than in Suva as originally planned and funding for the program has been reprofiled to extend it by one year to 2008-09
- \$0.543m in the National Firearms Training Module program – the development of the training module is subject to endorsement by the jurisdictions and unspent funding will be carried over until the program has been completed
- \$1.670m in the National Strategy to Prevent the Diversion of Precursor Chemicals into Illicit Drug Manufacture (National Precursor Strategy) program, part of the broader Tough on Drugs package – The underspend is directly related to the timeline for developing the National Clandestine Laboratory Database. Detailed consultation with jurisdictions and consideration of existing databases has extended the timeframe. Notwithstanding the initial delay in expending funds for the development of the National Clandestine Laboratory Database, all funding under the \$5.4 million National Precursor Strategy has been allocated to projects which will be rolled out in 2006-07 and 2007-08.

- \$1.393m in the National Crime Prevention Programme – funding was committed but there were some delays in completion of grants and contracts under the program and funding has been carried over to 2005-06, and
- \$0.817m in the National Community Crime Prevention Programme – the production of information kits and other program materials will now be completed in 2005-06 and unspent funding has been carried over for this.

The core divisional underspend occurred primarily in legal expenses where expenditure from year to year is inherently variable.