

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

Output 1.4

Question No. 90

Senator Hanson-Young asked the following question at the hearing on 23 February 2009:

Will there be educational support provided to legal centres when dealing with clients who wish to use the complaints mechanism of the optional protocol to CEDAW?

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

Assistance to use the complaints mechanism under the Optional Protocol to CEDAW would fall outside the Commonwealth Guidelines for legal assistance to Legal Aid Commissions, although it may be that Commissions would provide some initial advice. For community legal centres, the provision of assistance would not be contrary to existing Program Guidelines although the Guidelines do require centres to ensure that resources are allocated in such a way as to provide the most benefit to the greatest number of people.

Regarding education support, the education pack titled *Women's Human Rights* has been produced to serve as a source of information regarding human rights treaties, CEDAW and the Optional Protocol. It is hoped the pack will provide practical guidance to community lawyers and their clients in their efforts to further the human rights of women. The education pack is publicly available through the Office for Women website.