

SENATE STANDING COMMITTEE ON LEGAL AND CONSTITUTIONAL AFFAIRS
HUMAN RIGHTS AND EQUAL OPPORTUNITY COMMISSION

Question No. 176

Senator Ludwig asked the following question at the hearing on 24 May 2007:

Indigenous Expenditure Statements:

- a) How is the figure at page 19 of the PBS calculated?
- b) Which part of that expenditure relates to education programs directed at Indigenous issues?
- c) How is the amount allocated in to the different components within HREOC?

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

- a) The figures shown are the 2006-07 estimated actual and 2007-08 budget estimate for the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Social Justice Commissioner. These funds are allocated each year by the President as part of the Commission's internal budget process.
- b) The Budget funds the salary of the Commissioner and of the staff supporting the Commissioner as well as the Commissioner's educational activities.

The Attorney-General has agreed to provide \$145,000 funding to the Commission to develop a Community Legal Education (CLE) program.

It is proposed that the Commission will develop an education package, train 15 educators who will then deliver the program to high need Indigenous communities in remote and rural areas. 15 service provider organisations will be engaged to deliver the CLE program in identified high need service areas. The Department is currently consulting with state and territory governments to determine the 15 high need service areas.

On 14 July 2006, following the Intergovernmental Summit on Violence and Child Abuse in Indigenous Communities, the Council of Australian Governments agreed to invest in community legal education to ensure Indigenous Australians are informed about their legal rights, know how to access assistance and are encouraged to report incidents of violence and abuse. One of these actions is the CLE program.

The primary focus of the program is to improve policing in very remote areas and facilitate understanding of recent customary law and bail amendments to the *Crimes Act 1914 (Cth)*.

- c) The amount is reported as Australian Government Indigenous Expenditure based on the guidelines provided by the Department of Families, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs.