

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

Sub Program 1.2.1

Question No. 169

Senator Barnett asked the following question at the hearing on 27 May 2009:

What portion of the \$510 million spent last financial year on Federal Government legal cost was to external sources? Please provide details of to whom, the nature and time of the advice and related information.

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

Only 74 of the 99 agencies which reported in 2007-08 provided a breakdown of expenditure between internal and external legal services. The Attorney-General's Department does not collect information concerning who provides the external legal services or advice or the nature and time of such advice.

Of the 74 agencies that reported a breakdown of expenditure between internal and external legal services, a total of \$310.9 million of their legal expenditure was external. This represents 63.1% of the total reported legal expenditure for those 74 agencies.

On 1 July 2008, the Attorney-General amended the *Legal Services Directions 2005* to mandate the use of a standard template by agencies when reporting on their legal services expenditure. The new template requires agencies to provide, among other things, a breakdown of their external and internal legal spend. This template will be used for reporting for 2008-2009.