

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

**Program 1.3**

**Question No. 58**

**Senator Barnett asked the following question at the hearing on 25 May 2010:**

Please provide a breakdown of costs per defendant for the Melbourne terrorism trials, and advise on the status of the case.

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

The total costs of providing assistance to the 13 persons charged with terrorism offences in the Melbourne terrorism trial to March 2010 was as follows:

Solicitor costs	\$2.759 million
Barrister costs	\$6.899 million
Disbursements	\$0.102 million
Total costs	\$9.760 million

Funding provided from the Expensive Commonwealth Criminal Cases Fund is separate from, and does not impact on, Commonwealth Budget funding for individual legal aid commissions and is not reflected in the Budget allocations for each State and Territory.

Providing a more detailed breakdown of expenditure would not be consistent with the longstanding policy that neither the Attorney-General nor the Department comments on legal assistance provided in individual cases. This practice is consistent with obligations imposed by the *Privacy Act 1988* and the confidentiality provisions imposed by the various State and Territory legislation. It also protects information provided by applicants which would otherwise be subject to solicitor-client confidentiality.

Four of the 13 persons charged were acquitted, with the other persons convicted following either pleas of guilty or a contested trial.