

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

Program 1.1

Question No. 26

Senator Boyce asked the following question at the hearing on 25 May 2011:

Senator BOYCE: ... Mr Wilkins, adoptees often complain about the state based nature of the births, deaths and marriages registers as well, because often they were born in a state that was not the natural residence of their mother. Has this issue been brought to your attention? And, in your work on the registries, are you looking at it?

Mr Wilkins: It has been brought to our attention. I am a little vague as to where we are on that. It has been raised in a number of different contexts through SCAG. It is not really part of this exercise, but it has been raised as an issue around some of the work that SCAG has done, I think, on disclosure of information in the context of adoption.

Senator BOYCE: This is not so much about disclosure as about the difficulty of potentially having to search seven more registers.

Mr Wilkins: I am not sure that we are doing any work on that, as such, through SCAG.

Senator BOYCE: Would you mind checking and, if so, provide me with information?

Mr Wilkins: I am certainly happy to check and give you whatever information we have on that, yes.

Senator BOYCE: Thank you.

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

Questions relating to origin searching by Australian adults adopted domestically are, at a Commonwealth level, a matter for the Department of Families, Housing, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs.

There is no current relevant activity in the SCAG forum.