

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

Output 1.2

Question No. 24

Senator Barnett asked the following question at the hearing on 20 October 2008:

Provide costs of legal services provided to the Government since 30 June 2008.

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

The Department does not have this information.

Under the *Legal Services Directions 2005*, agencies regulated by the *Financial Management and Accountability Act 1997* are required to make the records of their legal services expenditure for the previous financial year publicly available by 30 October each year. Therefore, the legal services expenditure for FMA agencies since 30 June 2008 will not be published by those agencies until after the end of the 2008-09 financial year.

As a result of an amendment to the Directions that commenced on 1 July 2008, FMA agencies as well as agencies regulated by the *Commonwealth Authorities and Companies Act 1997* will in future also report directly to the Office of Legal Services Coordination on their legal services expenditure within 60 days after the end of each financial year. This new reporting requirement first applies to expenditure in the 2008-09 financial year.