

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

Program 1.3

Question No. 83

Senator Wright asked the following question at the hearing on 18 October 2011:

Is it not discriminatory to charge the 10,500 Commonwealth Marriage Celebrants an annual registration fee and not the 24,000 marriage celebrants of religion of a recognized denomination?

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

Ministers of religion from recognized denominations are registered and regulated under a different statutory regime within the *Marriage Act 1961* by the Registries of Births, Deaths and Marriages in each of the States and Territories. They are not registered on an individual basis but as employees of an organisation which nominates them for registration. The Department does not incur any costs in relation to their registration or regulation.