

Question on Notice

No. 1096

Asked on Tuesday, 28 September 2004

MR SEENEY asked the Attorney-General and Minister for Justice (Mr Welford)-

QUESTION:

With reference to (a) an alleged incident at a staff Christmas party organised by the Office of the Director of Public Prosecutions and, in particular, various freedom of information applications in connection with that incident and (b) Crown Law's advice of 13 May 2004 to the Office of the Information Commissioner that "*the Crown Solicitor acts for the Department in all related matters*"-

- (1) What is the Value of Crown Law's services in these matters?
- (2) How much of the total cost has actually been billed and/or paid to date?
- (3) What is the value of other departmental resources applied to these matters?
- (4) Does he support the use of departmental resources to block or at least delay access to these documents?
- (5) Doesn't this diversion of resources, and in particular Crown Law resources, reflect a conflict between the department's obligation to serve him as Minister and its core obligation to serve the interests of the broader community?

ANSWER:

- (1) The value of time incurred by Crown Law in regard to this matter is currently \$36,298.50. This is primarily departmental advices in response to the many overlapping and repetitive applications made by the Opposition.
- (2) \$30,887.60.
- (3) The Department does not calculate the cost of each individual FOI application.
- (4) The Department follows proper process in responding to all applications to ensure they are dealt with according to the Act.
- (5) See answer to 4.