



Inquiry into Annual and Financial Reports 2023–2024

Answer to question on notice

Asked by: Mr Peter Cain MLA

Addressed to: Ms Victoria Engel SC, Director of Public Prosecutions

Reference: Office of Director of Public Prosecutions

Hearing: **13 February 2025**

In relation to: Director of Public Prosecutions and Funding Question received: DD Month YYYY

Answer Due: 24 February 2025

- (1) How many additional prosecutors does the DPP identify are required to ensure you fulfil your operational requirements?
- (2) At what Prosecutor Grades would these new prosecutors be brought in at, junior level or more senior?
- (3) What discussions has the DPP had with the ACT Government regarding this additional funding?
- (4) Has the DPP personally met with the new Attorney-General to discuss this issue of additional funding?

Ms Victoria Engel SC: The answer to the Member's question is as follows:

1. The answer is multifaceted. In the short term, to deal with identified pressure points and risks, the office has identified that a further 19 prosecutors, stepped out over the next three financial years, are required to meet operational requirements. This would include 11 immediate positions to address demand. This assessment is contingent on further staff for the Witness Assistance Service (WAS), who work alongside prosecutors, to update witnesses, victims and complainants and to support them; this work falls to be done by the prosecutors alone if WAS is not resourced; meaning the 11 prosecutor positions identified as required would no longer be sufficient. In addition, the office is currently reviewing workload expectations for staff, to update systems in line with other DPPs, and to ensure the risks associated with the nature of the work, which often involves traumatic content, are appropriately managed – it is expected this process will identify the need for further prosecution staff to allow the office to meet its responsibility to the ACT community.
2. It has been identified that the 11 immediate positions required would be at the Senior Prosecutor level (grade 3) and Prosecutor level (grade 1/2). It is also noted that the office has received short term funding for two additional Crown Prosecutors and four Crown Advocates – the above is contingent on this short term funding being extended.

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3. The Director has been in continuous discussion with the ACT Government since May/June 2024 about her funding needs, and those discussions are still ongoing.
4. Conversations with the Attorney General are ongoing.

Approved for circulation to the Standing Committee on Legal Affairs

Signature: 

Date: 13 March 2025

By the Director of Public Prosecutions ACT, Ms Victoria Engel SC