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Senate Finance and Public Administration Legislation Committee

Inquiry into the operation
and management of the
Department of
Parliamentary Services.

26 October 2020

Submission by the
Australian Federal Police

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Introduction

The Australian Federal Police (AFP) welcomes the opportunity to make a submission to the Senate Finance and Public Administration Legislation Committee's inquiry into the operation and management of the Department of Parliamentary Services (DPS).

This submission addresses the terms of reference (ToR) for this inquiry relevant to the AFP with particular reference to ToR (g): security arrangements.

Relationship between AFP and DPS

The AFP is the Commonwealth's lead agency in the delivery of frontline protection of the Australian community through the provision of policing and protective services, responding both nationally and internationally to associated threat and risk environments.

The AFP provides an enhanced armed protective security response within the Parliamentary Precinct and works in cooperation with DPS who provide unarmed security facilitation, checkpoint and guarding services inside Australian Parliament House (APH). The AFP and DPS work cooperatively under a Joint Security Model (JSM) to ensure community safety and provide prevention, deterrence, and disruption, including through specialist response capabilities.

Existing Memorandum of Understanding

The AFP has two memoranda of understanding (MoU) with DPS covering the provision of protective security at APH.

Operational security and response arrangements

- This MoU outlines operational security and response arrangements at APH. At a strategic policy level, it outlines the provision of services to be delivered by each agency.
- The AFP is currently re-negotiating the terms of this MoU with DPS.

Use of Force

- This MoU relates to the provision of Use of Force training to Parliamentary Security Service (PSS) training instructors, to guide PSS officers' use of force in the performance of their security functions. This MoU does not create legal obligations between the two parties.

Background to Security Arrangements

On 8 September 2014 the Prime Minister of Australia and other Australian Government officials agreed an *Interim Review of Australian Parliament House Security* (Interim Review) be conducted in response to an increase to the assessed national threat level. The Interim Review was conducted on 9 September 2014 by the AFP and Attorney General's Department (AGD).

An outcome of the Interim Review was a recommendation that the AFP be appointed to the position of Security Controller APH (SCPH). This recommendation was implemented by the Presiding Officers' Authorisation, dated 16 December 2014. Since this time an AFP Police Superintendent has been placed into the role of SCPH.

The Operating Framework

Security arrangements at APH are delivered under a JSM between AFP and DPS. The DPS PSS officers are principally responsible for operations inside APH and the AFP delivers services both inside and outside APH to maintain the ability to respond to an incident.

The AFP and DPS PSS work collaboratively, using a single layer of operational responsibility and decision making for both day-to-day operations and incidents, including crisis responses. This includes combined arrangements for planning, preparedness and prevention, operational responses, and information management and communication. DPS and the AFP command their own resources within APH, including administrative functions, with overall control and

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coordination of security matters resting with the AFP.

The AFP security arrangements at Parliament House include the following elements:

- a dedicated AFP SCPH
- enhanced protection capabilities including the presence of armed officers within Parliament House and the parliamentary precinct
- an enhanced response capability
- dedicated protective security intelligence and liaison teams.

In an emergency, the AFP SCPH or their delegate will have overall command and control of the emergency, including the directing of resources from both AFP and PSS.

As the MOU and JSM matures, the relationship between AFP and DPS is getting stronger. Conducting security-related business at APH as partners means trust and confidence between both agencies continuously improves. The AFP and DPS have a mutual focus on improving and maintaining security arrangements at APH.

The AFP and DPS are currently developing a Joint Security Policy and Governance Framework as part of the JSM to detail the oversight and governance mechanisms for the security arrangements within the Parliamentary precincts. This will include detail on the roles and responsibilities of the respective agencies, governance documents, a committee framework and governance review mechanisms.

Ongoing Training

The AFP teams protecting APH have significant operational capabilities. The teams consist of highly trained Protective Service Officers well versed in responding to a variety of security incidents, with AFP and DPS maintaining an exercise regime to develop, coordinate and facilitate security exercises. These exercises aim to annually test security procedures and the responses of AFP and DPS to enhance the safety and security of the APH and its occupants.

The AFP continues to build on existing capability for frontline officers through improved training and enhancement of existing capability. In turn, this allows the AFP to provide strengthened support to the JSM.

Conclusion

The AFP enjoys a strong partnership with DPS and is committed to continuous improvement, building on the joint capabilities currently in place. The AFP remains focused on working with DPS to enhance safety and security within the parliamentary precinct.