

Parliamentary Joint Committee on Intelligence and Security
Review of the Counter-Terrorism Legislation Amendment (Declared Areas) Bill 2024

Topic: CONTACTING DUAL CITIZENS OVERSEAS

Senator Josh Wilson

Question

Mr JOSH WILSON: This probably has never come up, but, in the circumstances where you have a dual citizen who might be in another country that is one of their citizenships, in addition to being an Australian citizen, and that area becomes a declared area while they happen to be there, then obviously the offence applies, because, at some point, they've chosen to remain there rather than coming back to Australia, which they need to do in a timely way or they will fall foul of this regime. I'd be very surprised if any of the four instances that have come up so far are in that category—and we obviously don't want to talk about those—but surely some consideration has been given to that sort of circumstance. Do we have a way of notifying Australian citizens in an area that has become a declared area that they need to return home, or is there the expectation that, within a few months, they would get back here?

Mr Muffett: I'm not aware of that circumstance having arisen but am happy to take that on notice, and we can have a look into it.

Answer

The process for advising dual citizens following the announcement of a declared area is the same for all Australians.

Following the declaration of Al-Raqqa province in Syria in 2014 and Mosul District in Ninewa province in Iraq in 2015, a range of notification processes were used to ensure information was disseminated as broadly as possible. This included the issuing of a media release and publication of the declarations on the Australian National Security webpage (<https://www.nationalsecurity.gov.au/>). Updated travel advice was also published on the Smartraveller webpage (<https://www.smartraveller.gov.au/>) and sent to registered travellers (registration for Smartraveller no longer exists). The declarations included a detailed description of each declared area, including a map, to ensure the areas were readily identifiable by members of the public.

In addition, the Government developed a travel warning brochure advising potential travellers that if they travelled to a declared area without a legitimate purpose they may be committing an offence. The brochure was produced in both Arabic and English and distributed to community groups and at airports.