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Mr Andrew Hastie MP
Chair, Parliamentary Joint Committee on Intelligence and Security
Parliament House
CANBERRA ACT 2600

By email: pjcis@aph.gov.au

Dear Chair

Question on notice – espionage and foreign interference legislation

During my appearance before your Committee on 31 January 2018, the Deputy Chair asked me whether any intelligence agencies had previously raised with the Inspector-General, or her staff, a need for legislative amendments to deal with threats of espionage and foreign interference. I took this matter on notice and now provide the following response, which I have prepared following consultations with my staff and a review of our internal records of agency meetings.

Neither I nor any other staff member of this office have any recollections or records of any intelligence agencies specifically raising the need for legislative amendments to deal with threats of espionage and foreign interference with us. I note that the Inspector-General is presently on leave of absence, returning on 5 February 2018, and it has not been possible to consult with her in the time available about whether any agency may have raised this issue with her personally. I will consult with the Inspector-General on her return, and will inform you as soon as possible if there is a need to vary the position set out in this response.

Yours sincerely

Jake Blight
Acting Inspector-General

1 February 2018

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