

PARLIAMENTARY JOINT COMMITTEE ON ASIO, ASIS AND DSD

At the hearing of the Parliamentary Committee on ASIO, ASIS and DSD on 2 May 2005 the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT), represented by Mr Andrew Goledzinowski and Mr James Larsen, took three questions on notice relating to the Criminal Code re-listing of Ansar al-Islam, Asbat al-Ansar, Egyptian Islamic Jihad, the Islamic Army of Aden, the Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan, Jaish-e-Mohammed and Lashkar-e Jhangvi as terrorist organisations for the purposes of section 102.1 of the Criminal Code.

The three questions and DFAT responses are as follows:

1. Can DFAT provide a breakdown of the amount of departmental time and officer time taken in assessing the re-listing of the organisations named above?

The Attorney General's Department (AGD) provided the draft Statement of Reasons for all of the seven re-listings on 1 March 2005, requesting DFAT's consideration in advance of the Chief General Counsel's (CGC) approval of the proposed listings and finalisation of the Statement of Reasons. On 7 March AGD advised that the CGC had confirmed the proposed re-listing of four of the seven entities (Asbat al-Ansar, Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan, Jaish-e-Mohammed and Lashkar-e Jhangvi). On 8 March AGD advised that the CGC had confirmed the proposed re-listing of Ansar al-Islam. DFAT provided its response to AGD on these proposed five re-listings on 9 March 2005. AGD advised on 10 March 2005 that the CGC had confirmed the proposed re-listing of Egyptian Islamic Jihad and requested DFAT's comments. DFAT responded to AGD on 14 March 2005. AGD advised on 22 March 2005 that the CGC had confirmed the proposed re-listing of the Islamic Army of Aden and requested DFAT's comments. DFAT responded on 23 March 2005.

It is not possible accurately to quantify the amount of time spent by relevant DFAT officers in considering and preparing a response to AGD requests for comment on the proposed re-listing of these organisations. DFAT estimates that the combined amount of time so spent by officers of the various areas of DFAT involved would not have exceeded a few person-hours per organisation.

2. Can DFAT advise whether or not there is any organisation connected with the Tamil Tigers which has had bank accounts frozen or was a subject of interest to the Australian authorities (based on their UN listing)?

No organisation connected to the Tamil Tigers (LTTE) has had its bank accounts frozen in Australia under the Charter of the United Nations Act.

3. Can DFAT advise on whether there have been any criminal charges made under the Charter of the United Nations Act for any financial transactions relating to terrorist organisations from within Australia?

No criminal charges have been made under the Charter of the United Nations Act.