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Australian Government

Department of Immigration and Citizenship

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Ms Margaret Swieringa
 Committee Secretary
 Parliamentary Joint Committee on Intelligence and Security
 Parliament House
 Canberra ACT 2600

Dear Ms Swieringa



Inquiry into the Terrorist Organisation Listing Provisions of the *Criminal Code Act 1995*

Mr Anthony Byrne MP, at the hearing, asked a number of times about visa issue and subsequent security concerns.

I have interpreted this question as being:

“How many people became of national security concern after visa grant and how long did it take from the concern being raised to action being taken.”

The only objective measure the department has around “concern” is adverse assessments received from Australian Security Intelligence Organisation (ASIO). An adverse assessment is where ASIO assess an individual to be directly or indirectly a risk to security, within the meaning of section 4 of the Australian Security Intelligence Organisation Act 1979 (Cth). ASIO may have concerns about a range of individuals, but this information would not necessarily relate to immigration matters and would not be shared with this department.

In response to the question:

- From 1 January 2005 to 30 April 2007, there were 6 instances where visas were issued and an adverse assessment was received from the Australian Security Intelligence Organisation, with all the visas subsequently cancelled.
- In 3 of these cases the individuals had their visas cancelled within hours of visa grant and no travel took place.
- In 3 cases, the length of time between visa grant and the adverse assessment was between 14 days and 5 months.

Yours sincerely

Vincent McMahon
 First Assistant Secretary
 Border Security Division

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