AUSTRALIAN SECURITY INTELLIGENCE ORGANISATION

Parliamentary Joint Committee on Intelligence and Security

Review of Administration and Expenditure No. 4

Recruitment and Training

Submission

2 February 2006

Contents

Executive Summary

There has been a substantial increase in the volume, pace and complexity of ASIO's work over recent years. Following the *Review of ASIO Resourcing* by Mr Allan Taylor, on 16 October 2005 the Government announced an increase to ASIO resources that will see the number of ASIO staff grow to 1860 by 2010-11 as well as other capability enhancements to better meet current and future challenges.

ASIO regularly reviews and revises the way in which it does business to ensure we continually improve our effectiveness as well as continue to identify efficiencies. This is particularly relevant to the recruitment and training functions of the Organisation with both aspects undergoing significant changes and developments in recent years.

ASIO has achieved high levels of recruitment in recent years with 224 new staff recruited in 2004-05 and 195 in 2003-04. ASIO is aiming to recruit 250 new staff (for a net increase of 170) each year for the next four financial years with the balance to be recruited in 2010-11 to take ASIO's staff numbers to 1860. To ensure we attract, select and retain the highest calibre staff, ASIO makes use of professional employment and human resource consultants (including out-sourcing aspects of the recruitment process to external organisations) as well as making greater use of assessment centres to select the best candidates. Additional resources in the staffing area to undertake security vetting should see processing times reduced but can do little to address delays caused by factors beyond ASIO's control.

ASIO's training priorities are focussed on building and improving our analytical, operational and leadership/management capabilities. ASIO officers undertake a wide-range of training courses including courses developed and delivered in-house or in conjunction with our international partners (both in Australia and overseas) or courses provided externally. ASIO also encourages and supports officers to undertake individual personal and professional development through the Studies Assistance Program or through various secondment opportunities.

The challenge for ASIO in the period to 2010-11 will be to continue to effectively manage the competing investigative and operational requirements of a heightened threat environment while managing the growth of the Organisation.

It is critical ASIO continue to attract, retain and appropriately train the right people for the right jobs. Effective, creative and responsive recruitment and training practices have never been more critical – and will continue to be so for some time.

Background and Context

The dynamic and diverse nature of Australia's security environment over recent years has had a significant impact on ASIO, as it has on other Australian agencies. Although not the only element in the security environment impacting on ASIO, the threat of terrorist attacks Australian interests here and abroad has been a defining feature.

- We have been specifically targeted by terrorists in Bali, Jakarta and Baghdad and Australians have been caught up in attacks directed at others, including in the United States, London, Saudi Arabia, Egypt and Turkey.

- New threats can emerge without warning – as the UK experience has shown.

These attacks and the ongoing threat of further attacks against Australia interests – both in Australia and abroad – has had a substantial impact on the volume, complexity and tempo of ASIO's work.

There has been an increase in the flow of threat-related intelligence and ASIO's role in connection with the preventative measures of other agencies (including in connection with border and aviation security) has expanded. Added to this is the public's heightened sensitivity to security, evidenced by the number of calls to ASIO's public lines and to the National Security Hotline, including a large number of leads directly or indirectly related to the security of Australia and Australian interests here and overseas – all of which must be assessed and many of which have required further investigation.

In addition, the seriousness of the threat and the urgency with which ASIO must respond to lead information or potential threats to Australian interests here or abroad has required the introduction of new work practices and procedures. Key parts of ASIO now operate 24 hours a day, seven days a week, including the Communications Centre, the multi-agency National Threat Assessment Centre, the Research and Monitoring Unit and the visa security checking area.

ASIO's interaction and engagement with the Australian Federal Police and State and Territory police has become even closer as part of a whole-of-government, multi-jurisdictional approach to counter-terrorism. This has resulted in new and additional resource pressures as ASIO provides essential support for law enforcement prosecutions for terrorism offences and other legal issues, such as the proscription of terrorist organisations and the gazettal process for the suppression of terrorist financing.

ASIO has developed closer engagement with the private sector, particularly in connection with the protection of critical infrastructure through the development and provision of threat assessments and briefings. In 2005 ASIO established a Business Liaison Unit (BLU) to act as a focal point for business contact.

These growing demands and the urgency associated with much of ASIO's work has placed the Organisation's resources under sustained pressure.

Following a review by Mr Allan Taylor, on 16 October 2005 the Government endorsed a five-year strategic plan which will see increases in ASIO's resources. The additional resources will be used to boost ASIO's intelligence collection and assessment capabilities, expand its surveillance capacity and improve information technology systems. Additional staff will be recruited and deployed across all functional areas including operational, analytical, technical, border security and important enabling functions.

This submission focuses on ASIO's recruitment and training functions, with particular attention given to the ways in which our recruitment and training practices have been developed to better meet the challenges of the current and projected security environment.

Recruitment and Training in ASIO

ASIO's recruitment and training functions sit within the People and Resources Branch of the Corporate Management and Liaison Division. While corporate recruitment is centrally managed within People and Resources Branch, in effect staff from across the Organisation are engaged in the process through participation in assessment centres (see page 10), selection panels, referee interviews, or other aspects of the process.

Similarly, although the training area formally sits in the People and Resources Branch, in effect, all areas of the Organisation contribute to training courses to ensure that presentations and learning experiences remain current and relevant (see pages 13).

Figure 1: ASIO's Organisational Structure as at January 2006
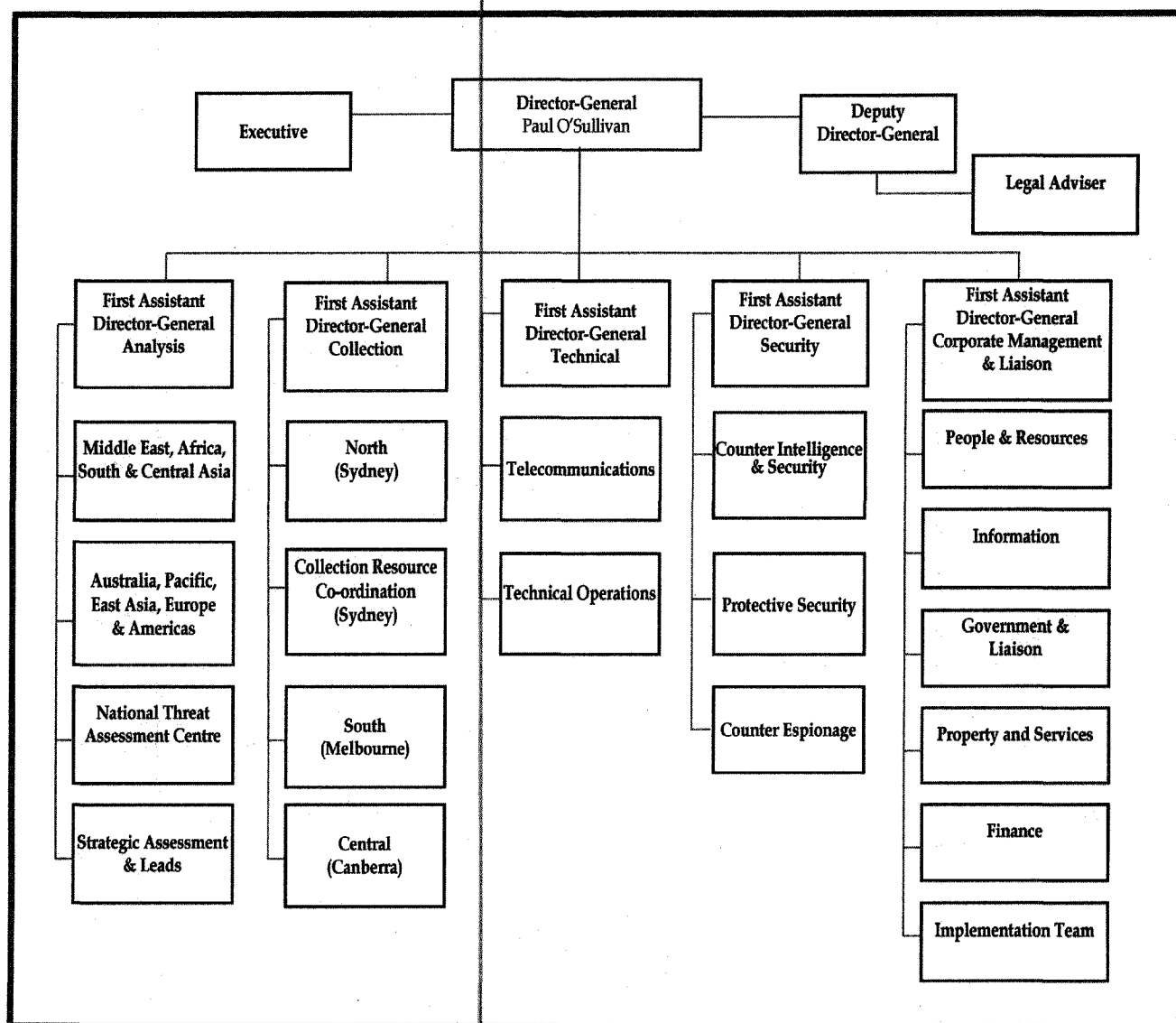
Recruitment

ASIO's work is directed at the prevention of attacks or harm to Australian interests. The urgency associated with much of our work (particularly in connection with counter-terrorism); and the requirement for flexibility, responsiveness and creativity places unique and at times unusual demands on the staff of the Organisation across a range of job families.

This complexity also requires a mix of staff with highly specialised technical skills, exceptional interpersonal skills and cross-cultural awareness and sensitivity, investigative and analytical skills, or a range of language skills. Risk management, flexibility and responsiveness within ASIO means continually fine-tuning resource allocations across high priority investigations and essential corporate requirements (such as recruitment and training, revalidation of security clearances, or meeting oversight and accountability requirements). Yet, there are inherent constraints and limits to ASIO's flexibility to deploy staff outside their usual area of expertise in the event of a crisis.

Recruiting, training, integrating and retaining high calibre staff who can operate effectively and grow personally and professionally in this environment is essential.

Table 1: Recruitment 1998 - 99 to 2005 - 06 YTD

Years	Commencements
1998-99	73
1999-00	109
2000-01	71
2001-02	117
2002-03	101
2003-04	195
2004-05	224
2005-06 YTD	97 (as of 31 December 2005)

Recruitment processes and practices

We continue to seek quality staff to fill a broad range of roles including intelligence analysts, linguists, data entry and checking officers, information technology and technical specialists, human resources personnel, surveillance officers and administrative staff.

ASIO aims to recruit 250 people (for a net increase of 170) in each of the next four financial years with the balance to be recruited in 2010-11 to reach 1860 staff, compared to 1009 as at 31 December 2005. This is not the start of a high level of recruitment activity but represents a continuation of a process that saw 224 new staff recruited in 2003-04 and 195 in 2002-03.

Logistical Aspects

ASIO has regularly sought to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of our recruitment processes and practices while ensuring we continue to attract and recruit high calibre applicants and maintain sound security practices in the security vetting process.

In November 2003, an external HR consultant followed-up a 1998 review of our recruitment processes and recommended that ASIO:

- – implement improved processes for initial screening of applicants (i.e. eligibility, improved selection criteria, more initial screening testing); and

- – a staffing section restructure and more resources to better respond to increased recruitment targets.

As a result, aspects of the recruitment process (for example, eligibility testing and initial screening, psychometric testing, etc) were out-sourced while we retained only those aspects that needed to be done in-house by ASIO staff. Implementing these changes has resulted in an improvement in the calibre of applicants that are progressed for further consideration by ASIO staff and greater efficiency in the use of ASIO resources (both in the recruitment area and for managers and other ASIO officers serving on selection panels).

The restructuring of the recruitment area resulted in the establishment of clearer roles and accountability mechanisms which in turn enabled streamlining of processing and facilitated better workload sharing during peak periods.

ASIO has increased staff levels in its recruitment area with more recruitment staff to commence in early 2006 to ensure we maintain high levels of throughput in processing applications, including to move them expeditiously through the security vetting parts of the process.

Action is in train to make the recruitment process even more efficient, including by using electronic application forms and the electronic capture and storage of applicants' details. The redevelopment of ASIO's web site in 2006 will be an important component of this project.

Advertising

ASIO will continue to run a series of advertising campaigns during 2006 aimed at attracting high calibre applicants from a range of cultural backgrounds to fill positions across a range of job families.

To ensure our approach remains fresh, we work with different recruitment and advertising agencies to develop innovative advertising campaigns that aim to draw the attention of Australians who may not normally consider a career with ASIO.

Other advertising initiatives include targeted campaigns in relevant industry publications (such as legal and accounting magazines) and internet advertising through career and graduate web sites (see Annex A: Sample of ASIO's Advertising).

Advertising costs for the 2004-05 financial year, mainly in the print media, were $835 347 compared to $753 836 in 2003-04.

Security Vetting

One aspect of ASIO staff recruitment that remains a particularly resource-intensive task is the extensive security vetting (including psychological testing) that must be done to establish an applicant's suitability to hold a security clearance and work in a sensitive environment.

The average Top Secret Positively Vetted (TSPV) clearance takes three to nine months to complete due to the numerous stages in the process and the time it takes to conduct comprehensive background checking, particularly where an applicant has resided in multiple locations in Australia and/or overseas.

Additional staff deployed against this function will assist in reducing processing times for those aspects that are under ASIO's control. However, the timing of the process is not entirely a matter for ASIO. Delays caused by the time taken for applicants to acquire and provide the necessary documentation and the time taken by other Australian or international agencies to respond to our trace checks due to their own work practices, priorities or resource constraints will continue to make this a lengthy and time-consuming process.

Generalist Intelligence Officer (GIO) Recruitment

In early 2005 a review of GIO trainee recruitment was conducted by an external consultant to identify opportunities to update and improve our selection processes to ensure we do not disadvantage applicants from non-English-speaking backgrounds.

We also reviewed and validated the core GIO competencies and improved the assessment centre selection process. The new competencies are more clearly aligned with the GIO role and facilitate the process of selecting suitable applicants.

ASIO recently engaged a reputable advertising company to assist in developing an advertising strategy which attracted competitive GIO applicants from all backgrounds and cultures. The GIO website was also updated to reflect the new advertising campaign.

In 2004-05 ASIO recruited 43 GIO trainees in 2004-05 from 1650 applicants. This was the largest number of GIO trainees ever recruited into ASIO in a year. Ten of these 43 trainees came from a non-English-speaking background. In January 2006, 18 GIO trainees commenced with the Organisation of which 1 came from a non-English speaking background. A further intake of around 22 trainees is scheduled for July 2006. (ASIO reverted to two intakes each year to better spread the training and induction workload).

Non-GIO Assessment Centres

ASIO has sought to improve the process of selecting the most suitable and appropriate candidates from a pool of applicants across a range of job families.

We have made greater use of professional employment consultants and agencies to undertake initial screening and aptitude testing to develop a short list of potential candidates. In addition, initial psychological testing has been brought forward in the process to eliminate at an early stage applicants who do not meet our psychological requirements.

Where multiple positions in a job family need to be filled we have made greater use of assessment centres to develop a more comprehensive appreciation of the strengths and weaknesses of individual applicants and their general suitability for employment with ASIO. Previously this methodology only was used in the recruitment of GIOs although it is proving to be an effective way of selecting applicants for a range of other job families, including intelligence analysts, executive assistants, and surveillance officers, for example.

The assessment centre process involves a series of individual and group activities as well as individual panel interviews conducted over the course of a day. The activities seek to identify the applicants' proficiency in a range of generic skills applicable to ASIO employment and provide an indication of their suitability to work in a security intelligence environment. The assessors include experienced human resource consultants and senior ASIO officers.

Staff subsequently employed as a result of this process – once trained and with some on-the-job experience – have mostly proven to be competent and effective ASIO officers. Anecdotal evidence suggests the extra cost and time involved in working through this more intensive process is more than offset by the benefits of selecting and employing the most suitable people for the positions and generally avoiding poor performance management issues down the track.

Workforce Composition

We continued to engage temporary employees on a contract basis to meet short-term needs and provide flexibility to our staffing arrangements. At 30 June 2005, 23 percent of staff were temporary employees compared to 20 percent in 2003-04.

Against the background of ASIO's strategic five-year plan, we are working through a process to move some staff currently on temporary contracts to permanent arrangements to provide greater certainty for the Organisation and individual staff members alike.

Table 2: Composition of workforce 2000-01 to 2004-05

Number of staff at end of Financial Year	2000-01	2001-02	2002-03	2003-04	2004-05	2005-31 Dec
TOTAL	584	618	668	805	955	1009
Permanent full time	453	497	536	603	693	720
Permanent part time	26	25	28	38	43	43
Contract staff (F/T)[1]	63	58	51	103	155	169
Contract staff (P/T)	14	18	23	28	22	28
Casual	25	19	30	33	42	29
Non-operational	3	1	-	-	-	-

Retention

In 2004-05 ASIO's attrition rate dropped to 5.8 percent, the lowest rate since June 1999. We interview all separating staff to ascertain their reason for leaving. Departing staff consistently cite their reasons for leaving as seeking better promotional opportunities, increased remuneration, greater job satisfaction and greater rewards and recognition.

Notwithstanding a relatively low attrition rate, we are continuing to address retention issues in an effort to maintain the rate at around 5-6% to achieve a healthy turnover of staff while retaining skilled and experienced staff to ensure the continuing effectiveness of the Organisation.

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[1] Includes 20 secondees and 6 locally engaged staff.

Table 3: Attrition Rate 2000-01 to 2004-05

2000-01	2001-02	2002-03	2003-04	2004-05
11.5%	10.4%	7%	6.2%	5.8%

Notably, ASIO's 7th Workplace Agreement, which came into effect on 1 January 2006, will see salaries rise each year for the next four years making our salary structure more attractive and competitive.

Other components of the Workplace Agreement included:

- the alignment of administrative conditions of service for permanent and temporary staff

- the formalisation of the requirement for (and past practice of) staff to respond to the need to:

  o work additional hours;

  o be readily available to perform work (on-call); and

  o return to work in emergency situations

The growth of the Organisation in the period to 2010-11 will inevitably generate greater promotional opportunities as well as other improvements in the workplace affecting the level of job satisfaction.

Training and Development

ASIO's training and human resource development remains focused on building and improving analytical, operational and leadership/management capabilities. In addition to corporately sponsored and funded training activities, individual work groups arrange job–specific training. In 2004-05, ASIO directly spent $3,613,963 (about 2.8 percent of our budget and an increase of 38 percent from that invested in 2003-04) in training and development.

However, this figure only represents those aspects of training that can be directly costed or attributed (for example, external course fees, training travel and accommodation costs, consumables, etc). It does not take into account the costs in time or salary for ASIO presenters to internal and external training courses, the ongoing mentoring and on–the–job training of both new and more experienced staff, or the raft of other training, development or learning activities continually occurring within ASIO.

Staff are rotated through the training section on a regular basis to ensure that the training courses remain relevant and the staff planning, delivering or coordinating the various courses have recent practical experience in their area of expertise. Where appropriate, use is also made of visiting course officers – a practitioner who can bring the most current experience to a particular course as an adviser, presenter or facilitator.

Job Families

The training requirements for the different job families in ASIO vary which means there can be a lag time between the date of commencement and the time it takes before a new staff member can be assessed as fully effective.

For example, the GIO traineeship lasts 12 months (see page 15). In effect, this means that GIO trainees who commenced in January 2006 would have started the recruitment process in early to mid 2005 but will not be fully deployed into a substantive position until January 2007. Of course the trainees will make a contribution to the work of the Organisation in the course of the work placement components of the traineeship, but these are essentially learning opportunities for the trainees and any substantial work output by them is, in effect, a bonus for the functional area.

For non-GIO staff, the period of initial training is usually shorter. For example, in the case of data entry and checking officers the initial on–the–job training period is seven months which involves the new starters working closely with, and under the supervision of, a more experienced officer. While there is a short term 'cost' inasmuch as the level and rate of output of the more experienced officer is reduced, such training is essential to developing a high level of capability in what is a 'mission critical' function.

In the case of intelligence analysts the training period lasts 11 months and involves formal classroom instruction and on-the-job mentoring by more experienced officers. This imposes particular demands on senior officers in the Analysis Division who are generally required to both manage and mentor their staff given the limited experience of many of the more junior officers who make up their work units.

The situation is somewhat easier in the case of other job families – such as the technical, IT, human resource, financial or administrative staff – where many newly recruited staff can be fully effective on the commencement of employment following a short period of induction.

Corporate Training

Introduction to ASIO Program (ITAP)

All new staff undertake a compulsory two day program within three months of their commencement to familiarise them with ASIO.

The ITAP provides an overview of the legislative framework, ASIO's structure and functions, the roles and responsibilities of ASIO, ethics and accountability, and security principles. It is delivered by a combination of training section staff and senior officers or SES managers from across the Organisation. Presentations are regularly up-dated to ensure they remain current, fresh and relevant.

An expanded version of this program (including additional exercises and activities) is delivered to specialised trainee intakes such as the GIOs and surveillance officers.

General Corporate and Administrative Skills Training

Various administrative courses are delivered to relevant staff, including training in ASIO's information technology systems, contract management, project management, selection panel skills, presentation skills, trainer training, critical thinking, interviewing, effective reading and writing, and finance and budgeting.

ASIO officers also attend courses provided by external presenters such as 'Terrorism: International Political and Social Perspectives' and 'Introduction to Islam.'

Counter-Terrorism Response Training

ASIO officers participate in counter-terrorism training exercises. In 2004–05 ASIO officers participated in two exercises in Victoria and one in the Northern Territory as well as Exercise WYVERN SUN in Thailand.

Ethics and Accountability

The Ethics and Accountability in ASIO program was delivered to 133 staff in 2004-05. This program is delivered by SES officers and includes a session with the Inspector-General of Intelligence and Security. It covers the:

- key principles of ethical standards and accountability within ASIO and the APS,

- need for ethical standards and a code of conduct,

- internal audit processes within ASIO, and

- behaviours and/or actions that do not conform to ASIO values and code of conduct.

The course also provides an outline of the organisational mechanisms in place to assist in making ethical judgements and decisions.

Operational and Analytical Training

GIO Traineeship

GIOs make up the job family most directly involved in collecting intelligence and progressing investigations 'on-the-ground.' Their work is complex and demanding and they need to be resourceful and flexible in responding to what can be quite difficult situations. They need to have a high degree of cross-cultural awareness, work across cultural boundaries, and be able to work with a range of agencies in all parts of Australia and internationally.

ASIO's GIO traineeship is a 12-month competency-based program that introduces the concepts and develops the skills required for intelligence collection and analysis work. It consists of a combination of formal training (including in critical thinking, information technology, ethics and accountability, leadership and management) and a series of work placements directed at giving the trainees a sound appreciation of ASIO and security intelligence work.

Trainees are continually assessed against the various competencies. In a very few cases, where trainees have not met particular competencies (including after receiving additional remedial assistance), or where they have decided that they are not suited to GIO work, they have left the traineeship. Some have been redeployed to other parts of the Organisation while others have resigned and sought alternate employment.

In January 2005, 24 GIOs graduated from the re-designed traineeship. An internal review of the new program concluded that, in the main, it had been highly successful and was an improvement on the previous model. The review team made a number of recommendations, including:

- re-scheduling some post traineeship training into the initial 12 month traineeship period;

- providing instruction in adult education techniques and issues to the intelligence officers posted to the training section; and

- allocating further resources to the delivery of the traineeship.

Subsequent feedback indicates that these changes have improved the quality and effectiveness of the program with a further 36 trainees graduating in January 2006.

Since 2005, the analytical training component of the GIO traineeship also has been delivered to the non-GIO intelligence analysts. GIO trainees and intelligence analysts participate jointly in the course to build mutual respect and a common understanding across both groups, encourage the development of interpersonal relationships and networks between these interdependent job families.

On-going Training

GIOs maintain and further develop their operational and analytical capability through an on-going program of intermediate and advanced training consisting of both internal and external training throughout their careers. This includes training in intelligence gathering, human source management, cultivation and recruitment skills, investigation management, intelligence analysis, and reporting skills.

Some of this training is developed and delivered in-house while other training is conducted in cooperation with our international partners, both in Australia and overseas.

We also engage in joint training with police services, with police training ASIO officers in the handling of evidence and the collection of intelligence in ways that maximise its evidentiary value.

Linguistic Capability

In July 2004 Mr Philip Flood's *Report of the Inquiry into Australian Intelligence Agencies* (the Flood Report) noted the need for a stronger language capability in Australian intelligence agencies. The report recommended that the Australian intelligence agencies should be active in building a profile of staff with language skills, paying particular attention to emerging issues and ensuring the agencies have the language skills, including in Arabic, and other expertise to match emerging needs.

In the 2005-06 Budget the Government allocated $3.1 million over four years to further develop the language skills and expertise of ASIO staff.

ASIO developed a program, which commenced in 2005, to train several officers each year in relevant languages. This training is full-time for up to two years and involves in-country components. Upon completion of this program, officers will be placed in positions where they can apply their language skills. ASIO also encourages and supports staff to gain and update language skills utilising the Study Assistance Program.

ASIO officers assigned to overseas language-designated posts are provided with comprehensive language training utilising DFAT language training programs lasting up to 2 years. In most cases, ASIO's overseas liaison officers speak the language of the country to which they are posted.

In addition, ASIO continues to recruit specialised linguists across a range of languages to ensure we closely match ASIO's linguistic capabilities with the requirements of our high priority investigations.

Management and Leadership Skills

Leadership development continues to be a priority for staff with management responsibilities, including all Senior Executive Service (SES) and Senior Officers. A comprehensive Leadership Development Strategy was put in place during 2005, ensuring that leadership capability across the Organisation is aligned to national public sector best practices. The broad range of training activities includes time-outs, formal in-house and external courses, the introduction of a new 'From Management to Leadership' program and support for tertiary education.

As part of the corporate governance arrangements of ASIO, in 2005 three SES time-outs focused on performance improvement, managing organisational growth, ethics and accountability, budget and new policy proposals, corporate governance and the security environment.

In addition, Senior Officers and SES Officers attend two time-out days each year to raise awareness of current leadership and management issues across the organisation. In 2004-05 many Senior Officers attended focus groups to generate ideas for quality improvement in a wide range of areas including linguistic capability, organisational growth, ethics and accountability, and training and performance management.

Other Training Opportunities

Rotational Opportunities between Agencies

The Flood Report also identified a need for greater cooperation and sharing of resources in relation to training across the Australian Intelligence Community (AIC). To address this gap the Joint AIC Induction Steering Committee and the Joint AIC Induction Curriculum Development Committee were formed. ASIO is a member of both committees.

ASIO officers participate both as students and presenters in the monthly Joint AIC Induction Program, which commenced in May 2005. The program provides new AIC staff with an understanding of the roles and functions of each AIC agency with a focus on inter-agency co-operation and whole of government response to intelligence and security.

Secondments and personnel exchanges with other agencies in Australia and overseas provide additional professional development opportunities and reflect the longstanding partnership and cooperation that exists between ASIO and its domestic and international partners.

In addition to staff exchanges with some overseas liaison partners, ASIO currently has officers from the AFP, ASIS, AUSTRAC, Defence, DFAT, DIGO, DIO, DOTARS, DSD, DSTO and ONA. Prior to 11 September 2001 there was only one external secondment into ASIO - from Defence. ASIO also has officers seconded to the AFP, ASIS, ONA, DOTARS, DFAT, and PM&C. Prior to 11 September 2001 ASIO only had one external secondment - to PM&C. Interaction with such seconded officers provides ASIO officers with additional, albeit incidental, opportunities to learn about other agencies.

Other Personal and Professional Development

Staff are encouraged to pursue further training or study during their career utilising ASIO's study assistance program which is similar to those operating throughout the APS. Financial assistance is provided where courses are directly relevant to the work of the Organisation. In 2004–05 study assistance was provided to 59 people to support their tertiary studies.

Annex A

Sample of ASIO's Advertising

We're looking for intelligent people to fill in the blanks.

Australian Government

We're looking for people for a challenging career with ▮▮▮▮

As a Generalist Intelligence Officer your role will involve matters of national significance. You will be expected to investigate ▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮ collect and analyse ▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮ ▮▮▮▮▮▮ and intercept ▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮ ▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮

Successful applicants must possess excellent communication skills. You will be required to speak to people from ▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮ ▮▮▮▮▮ and liaise with ▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮

You will also excel at critical and conceptual thinking. You must be able to generate creative solutions to complex problems.

You will assess ▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮ ▮▮▮▮▮▮ ▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮ and generate reports and briefings for ▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮

Your role will involve both desk and field work. You will be involved in joint operations with both ▮▮▮▮ and ▮▮▮▮▮▮

Daily work includes ▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮ ▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮ identifying threats ▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮ ▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮ and gathering intelligence ▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮

As part of your role, you must be prepared to be mobile. You can expect postings to ▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮ every few years.

You must also have a degree and pass appropriate security and psychological assessments.
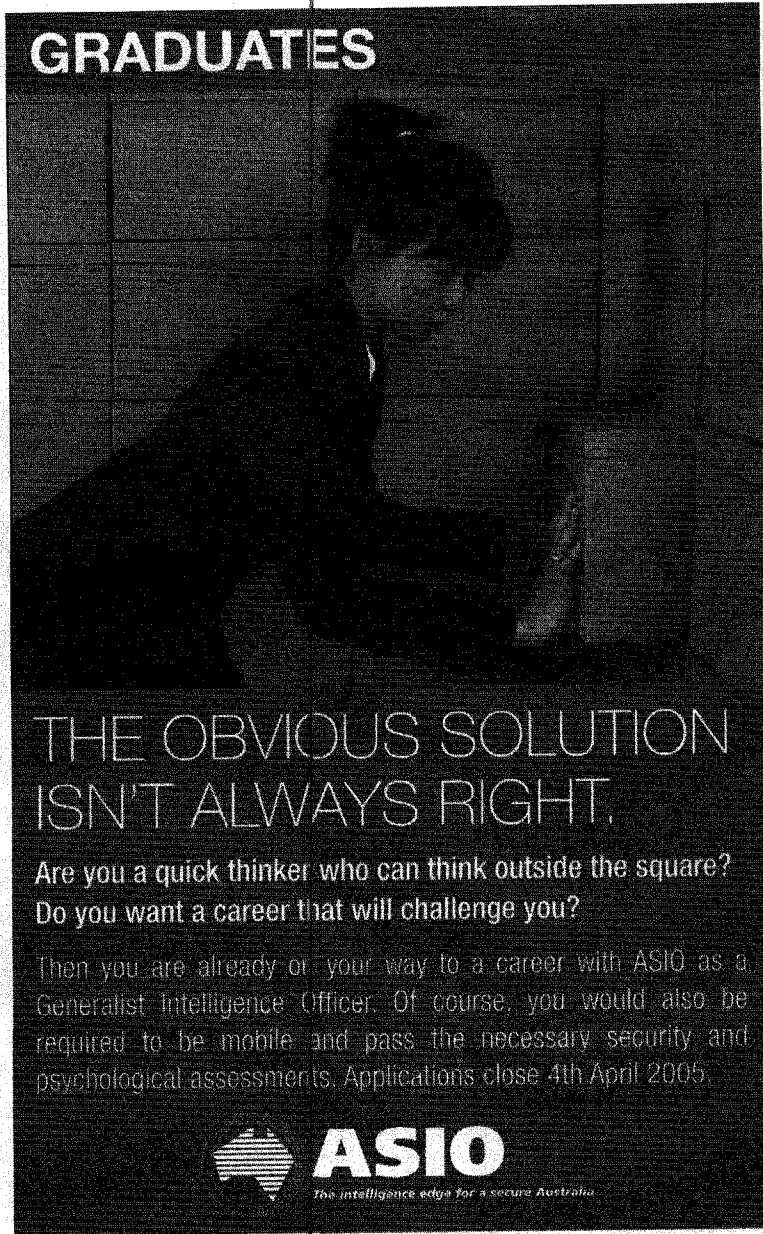
If you're looking for an intellectually challenging career of national importance, visit the following website before November 14.

www.asio.gov.au/employment/GIO/gio.htm

ASI001

adcorp.013013

For further information visit our website at
www.asio.gov.au/employment/gio/gio.htm

adcorp.G13012

Sample: Case Study 1

"Who said a career for life was over?"

Forty year old Andrew* talks about his career with ASIO

After almost two decades working for ASIO, Andrew* has some interesting stories to tell about a career which has spanned half his working life and seen him move up the ranks of Australia's national security agency.

An immigration investigator in the mid 80s, Andrew was only looking for a 'change' when he decided to join the agency.

"I had been working in investigations for seven years and decided I wanted a change of environment. Although I enjoyed what I was doing, I wanted something more fulfilling and was after a challenging role that would keep me motivated," says Andrew.

So began a career which for Andrew would span some highs and lows and see him progress up the ranks of ASIO from Surveillance Officer to senior training officer to senior director involved in recruitment.

"For me the most rewarding aspect of working as a Surveillance Officer was knowing that I had made a difference, if even in a small way. There were moments of intense boredom. Monitoring a target can get very tedious if you're just sitting in a car. But there were also periods of unbelievable excitement and adrenalin. I wouldn't have given that up for anything," says Andrew.

"Also the people you work with end up becoming friends for life. You're bonded by a common shared experience. The friendships you form are unlike any other and being with people who inspire you on a daily basis has made the years fly by."

On the downside, the demands of the job have taken a toll on Andrew's personal life. "The impact on one's personal life can be quite difficult," admits Andrew. "I valued my family time and the organisation did everything they could to support me, in fact they were more understanding of the need for family time than any other place I had worked for. Colleagues were equally supportive and of course, many were in the same boat so they could relate to what you were going through."

Given his background in investigations, friends of Andrew may say he was always suited to a career in ASIO. But today, the forty year old says anyone can do it.

"Some people may think being a Surveillance Officer demands a lot of physical fitness or that you've got to have a security or investigations background like myself. But, there are people from all walks of life, fitness levels and age groups in the team. In my opinion the key requirement for this job is common sense and moral courage."

Looking back on his career, Andrew recalls a typical day as a Surveillance Officer.

"We didn't always start in the office which was perfect as many of us lived further away. Most often we were briefed the day before about the case and what it would involve so on the assigned day, we were ready to go wherever the 'target' was located.

After a shift, you would go back to the office, draft the report and file it. The information would then go on to form a broader intelligence database,."

The last two decades have also seen a dramatic shift in the agency's culture. Andrew remembers that when he first joined career progression was limited and interaction between internal departments minimal.

"It's great to see the diversity of people from a variety of groups and life experience who join ASIO. The whole place is buzzing with activity and it's an exciting time of growth for the organisation. As a result, there are more opportunities for career progression at a vertical and horizontal level and the interest we're getting from the public is phenomenal."

- ENDS -

For more information about the Surveillance Officer role or a career with ASIO visit XXX

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Sample: Case Study 2

"I'm like any girl in her 20s, I just can't talk about what I do"

Twenty-something Alison tells her story working as a Surveillance Officer for ASIO

Like many girls in their 20s, Alison enjoys fashion and magazines, going out for a night with her friends and dining at trendy restaurants. Alison's job reflects her lifestyle too; one day she can be heading to the beach; in business attire in the CBD; or even casually strolling around a suburban shopping mall.

But unlike most her age, Alison works as a Surveillance Officer for ASIO gathering vital information and facts to enhance national security. She joined over a year ago and today can't imagine doing anything else for the next several years.

"At first I found the thought of working for ASIO quite intimidating. I had all these images based on what you see in the movies and they were all wrong!" admits Alison.

At a young age, Alison was drawn to field based work and fact gathering. She remembers having a natural self-confidence and bravado, which would lend itself to work as a private investigator and a stint as a security guard later in life.

As a private investigator she handled cases on behalf of suspicious partners and spouses but soon realised she wanted more out of her career, in particular a sense of personal achievement. Quite by chance, she stumbled on an advertisement for a job as Surveillance Officer for ASIO and after passing the rigorous recruitment process, Alison has been enjoying her new role.

"I love the way the job is so unpredictable. It's almost like I live another person's life everyday! If my target heads to the Post Office, I go to the Post Office, if they go for a swim at the pool, so do I," says Alison.

"Sometimes you may be watching something that you think is totally irrelevant only later to find out how vital the information was that you sourced. Moments like that give me a real kick."

While initially Alison had thought that coming from a investigative background was a prerequisite for the role, she soon discovered that Surveillance Officers do come from all walks of life.

"Given the type of work we do, I thought that most of my team members would have come from similar backgrounds as me. In fact, many of them are from completely different professions and come from all walks of life and age groups, which makes for a really dynamic team and gives a fresh perspective to what we do.

I've also learned so much more about surveillance since joining ASIO; the most relevant skills are common sense and being able to think on your feet!"

Not being able to share the details of her working life was difficult at first but Alison credits the support of her family and understanding of the organisation.

"My close friends and family know that I work for ASIO but I can't give them exact details of what I do. At first, it was very difficult. I couldn't come home and 'vent' and whenever someone asked me what I did, I had to make up a story to tell them and then remember what I had said in case I ran into them again! But, after a while, you do get used to it.

My team members are a great bunch of people. They've helped me through early teething problems. The organisation as a whole is very aware of some of the personal pressures we go through – such as not being able to talk about what we do outside of work– and they make an effort to provide support and advice."

As for her social life, Alison is single at the moment and not letting the secrecy of the job slow her down.

"As for dating, it's not like anything has really changed! Even before I'd joined ASIO, I would go out for to pubs and bars with my girlfriends and for a laugh we'd sometimes all pretend to have different names and identities!" says Alison.

"I can appreciate that it would be difficult to keep what I do a secret from a potential boyfriend but I think the right person will understand and support me."

Alison says the job has some definite perks.

"Sometimes, when I'm out following a target who's gone shopping, I get to go shopping too. Or sometimes, as I'm passing through an area following a target, I might see something in a shop that I like and think to myself, hmmm…I'll have to go back there!" says Alison.

"Aside from the fun parts of the job, there are real development and career progression opportunities available; we're encouraged to take advantage of regular training and further education and learn from other team members.

Of course the biggest bonus is knowing that what I do makes a real difference to my country. It's not every day we're given the chance to make this kind of contribution and I feel lucky to be a part of it."

- ENDS -

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