



PARLIAMENT OF AUSTRALIA

Joint Standing Committee on Intelligence and Security

MEDIA ALERT

Issued: 22 June 2010

Chair: The Hon Arch Bevis MP

Intelligence Committee Recommends Separate Oversight of AFP Counter-terrorism

The Intelligence and Security Committee's report into the Administration and Expenditure of the Australian Intelligence Community for 2008/09 has found that a gap exists in the current intelligence community oversight regime. In the report tabled last night the Committee recommended that the *Intelligence Services Act 2001* be amended to include AFP counter-terrorism elements in the list of organisations that the Committee reviews.

Chair of the Inquiry Hon Arch Bevis MP said: "ASIO, ASIS, DIO, DSD, DIGO and ONA all currently report to the Intelligence and Security Committee. The only organisation not required to report is those elements of the AFP engaged in counter-terrorism functions".

Mr Bevis added: "Requiring the AFP counter-terrorism element to appear before the PJCIS would reflect normal oversight practice as applied to all other Commonwealth Departments and Agencies."

Amongst the report's 7 other recommendations were:

- That the Government agree to amending the *Intelligence Services Act 2001* to enable specific material which does not affect current operational activity to be provided to the Committee. A small working group drawn from relevant Departments, Agencies and the Committee should be set up to prepare this amendment for consideration by the Government.
- The Committee recommends that, should the proposal to amend the open access period of the *Archives Act 1983* proceed, consideration should be given to special provisions for AIC documents to be exempted, on a case by case basis, from release at 20 years.
- That, due to the increased activities of the Australian Intelligence Community and the additional functions required of the IGIS, the budget of the Office of the Inspector General of Intelligence and Security be increased.

Downloadable copies of the report are available on the Committee's inquiry website at:
<http://www.aph.gov.au/house/committee/pjcis/reports.htm>

For media inquiries, contact the Committee Chairman, The Hon Arch Bevis MP on
(02) 6277 4518.