

Economics Legislation Committee
ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON NOTICE
Industry Portfolio
Budget Estimates Hearing 2015-16
3 and 4 June 2015

AGENCY/DEPARTMENT: AUSTRALIAN NUCLEAR SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY ORGANISATION (ANSTO)

TOPIC: Security at ANSTO

REFERENCE: Question on Notice (Hansard, 3 June 2014, page 80)

QUESTION No.: BI-5

Senator LUDLAM: I understand. Finally on security—and again on notice if you would prefer, or I could take this to the AFP I guess—have there been any changes to site security following that incident in September of last year where a number of men were intercepted by police on site?

Dr Paterson: There have been some changes to the security arrangements on site. The previous safety supervisory function, which was called SOS, has been replaced with an outsourced function.

Senator LUDLAM: Since that event you have outsourced an element of your security?

Dr Paterson: Correct. Our site control room has now got a different set of management arrangements. I think it is important to be very clear that the incident that you referred to was not on the ANSTO site; it was off the ANSTO site. And there was at no time a suggestion that there was an attempt to enter the ANSTO site.

Senator LUDLAM: I understand that. On notice, if there are any further details you would like to provide, particularly about the subcontracting arrangements—I will leave it there.

ANSWER

No changes have been made to site security as a result of the September 2014 incident. Changes made to ANSTO's site security in mid-October 2014 were planned prior to the September 2014 incident.

As part of the October 2014 changes, control room operations were outsourced to one of Australia's largest security firms with significant expertise and experience in control room monitoring. ANSTO's first responder safety function was also outsourced to a private company. Changes to both functions were made following a detailed review of ANSTO's security arrangements and in consultation with the Australian Federal Police (AFP). The changes have been successfully implemented and are delivering improved operational outcomes as well as cost savings. The AFP continues to be responsible for the 24 hour-a-day physical protection of the ANSTO site as well as armed first response.

ANSTO's Security and Safeguards Division continually monitors the security risk environment informed by information received from the Australian Intelligence Community. To date ANSTO has received no information that it is the subject of any specific threat. If however, the threat level increases or specific threats to ANSTO emerge, then the ANSTO 'Heightened Security Measures Plan' will enable the security posture to be strengthened quickly.