

QUESTION TAKEN ON NOTICE

ADDITIONAL ESTIMATES HEARING : 27 February 2017

IMMIGRATION AND BORDER PROTECTION PORTFOLIO

(AE17/041) - Extra staff employed to bolster current arrangements - Internal Product (DIBP)

Senator Pratt, Louise (L&CA 74) asked:

Senator PRATT: How many extra staff have been employed to bolster the current arrangements?

Mr Pezzullo: As the commissioner indicated, we would both be reluctant, because the department is also engage more broadly in the provision of support, through intelligence capacity and the like—we are starting to stray into the level of capacity and its deployment that has been put in place. It might be possible to reflect on your questions and think about how we might be able to answer them on notice without necessarily betraying our operational dispositions and functional capacity.

Senator PRATT: I am asking about additional staff, which would not indicate how many underlying staff there are. Clearly, additional staff indicates a greater commitment, so I cannot see how that—

Mr Pezzullo: I think the answer would be 'sufficient' additional staff, noting, going back to Mr Groves's advice, that is in some cases you are funded for additional capacity. The same people might be flying long hours patrolling or undertaking additional duties—for instance, as analysts—and it might be that they are pulling over time in doing so. You been given advice about the funding levels, but in terms of how many people we have deployed on the operation, the commissioner and I would want to reflect carefully on the extent to which we want to break that down for you.

Senator PRATT: If you take that on notice.

Answer:

The Australian Border Force employs a flexible and deployable workforce as required to meet operational priorities and requirements. There is a sufficient number of staff that currently support the ongoing surveillance effort. There was no increase in average staffing level (ASL) as a result of the current arrangement.