



**Defence Security
Authority**

Campbell Park Offices
Canberra ACT 2600
Australia

Tel: +61 2 6266 2617
Fax: +61 2 6266 2697

HDSA/b /01

Mr Brenton Holmes
Secretary
Senate Legislation Committee on Foreign Affairs, Defence and Trade
Parliament House
CANBERRA ACT 2600

Dear Mr Holmes

In preparation for the forthcoming Senate Legislation Committee hearings I have been reviewing the *Hansard* of the budget estimates hearing of Monday 4 June 2001. I have come across evidence given that I believe requires some clarification.

In answer to a question from Senator Hogg (FADT 32 of *Hansard* Monday 4 June 2001) Mr Jason Brown, the then Assistant Secretary Security, stated that 'It is not the policy of Defence, nor has action been allowed, to allow leakers to leave Defence'. The Secretary and the Chief of the Defence Force are strongly of the view that allegations of unauthorised disclosure of official information should be investigated and criminal or administrative action pursued as appropriate. Defence has the power to prevent the resignation of members of the Australian Defence Force, who comprise the majority of Defence personnel, and who can only resign with the agreement of their Service. However, under the Public Service Act (1999), civilian members of Defence are able to resign at any time.

Yours sincerely

Margot McCarthy
Head Defence Security Authority

15 February 2002

