

**Senate Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs, Defence and Trade**  
Budget Estimates – 4 June 2008  
Responses to questions taken on notice from the Department of Defence

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**Q1**

**Forces Entertainment**

Senator Payne, Hansard 4 June 2008, p29

Did the Minister's office make contact with Mr Max Markson in relation to Tania Zaetta?

**RESPONSE**

The Minister's office did not contact Mr Markson. Mr Markson contacted the Minister's office to inquire about the status of the investigation into the conduct of Ms Zaetta. Mr Markson was provided a Defence Department telephone number and immediately referred to the Department.

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**Q2**

**Civilian Deaths in Afghanistan**

Senator Nettle, Hansard, 4 June 2008, p26

Has the Government done anything to encourage NATO or ISAF to collate numbers of civilian deaths in Afghanistan?

**RESPONSE**

No. Australia is satisfied that ISAF has in place a system for reviewing credible reports of civilian casualties. Under ISAF Standard Operating Procedures, any credible claim of civilian death must be investigated.

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**Q3**

**Rendition of Mamdouh Habib**

Senator Nettle, Hansard, 4 June 2008, p32

Please advise if Defence has been involved in any way, through meetings or advice, in the matter of the rendition of Mamdouh Habib.

**RESPONSE**

Defence has no record of involvement through meetings or through the provision of advice in the matter of the rendition of Mr Mamdouh Habib.

**Q4**

**US Sub-munitions in the Iraq Conflict**

Senator Allison, Hansard, 4 June 2008, p38

In the Iraq conflict of 2003, did the US advise Australian personnel about the number of sub-munitions it was using and where it was using them?

**RESPONSE**

Australian forces were not generally advised by the United States of the munitions types it was employing in the Iraq conflict of 2003. On some occasions, Australian personnel may have been aware of individual cases of the use of sub-munitions.

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**Q5**  
**SMArt 155s**

Senator Allison, Hansard, 4 June 2008, p39  
How many SMarT 155s does the ADF hold?

**RESPONSE**

Defence policy is that we do not disclose the quantity of munitions and weapons held in inventory.

**Q6**

**Cluster Munitions in Iraq**

Senator Allison, Hansard, 4 June 2008, p39

Is any country conducting “de-cluster munitioning” in Iraq at present?

**RESPONSE**

The Australian Defence Force (ADF) did not employ cluster munitions in the 2003 Iraqi War. The ADF does not maintain, nor is it required to maintain, records of where coalition forces deployed cluster munitions or the extent to which such weapons were employed by our allies.

In 2007-08 the Australian Government contributed \$2 million to the United Nations Development Programme’s ‘Clearance of Explosive Remnants of War in Southern Iraq and Mine Risk Education’ implemented by the Danish Demining Group with the Rafidain Demining Organisation. Projects funded under Australia’s Mine Action Strategy do not distinguish between landmines and cluster munitions in demining activities. Demining projects supported by Australia in Iraq clear all explosive remnants of war including cluster munitions.

The ADF is not directly involved in battlefield clearance operations in Iraq and therefore has no catalogue of munition types being cleared. This data, including estimates of cluster munition residue, have been requested from partner nations, though they have no obligation to the Government of Australia to disclose the extent of their use of cluster munitions.

**Q7**

**Cluster Munitions Treaty**

Senator Nettle, Hansard, 4 June 2008, p41

- a) Does the Cluster Munitions Treaty allow ADF personnel to operate with their US counterparts in operations where the US may be using cluster munitions?
- b) What is the impact of the treaty in terms of the activities?
- c) Is the use of cluster munitions allowable under the treaty?
- d) Are ADF personnel embedded in US forces during joint training exercises between Australia and the US?

**RESPONSE**

- a), b) and d) The Convention—particularly *Article 21, 'Relations with States not parties to the Convention'*—appears to address the Government's concern to ensure that the ADF can continue to operate in coalition with the armed forces of other states for peacekeeping and other joint operations, including with states (such as the United States) that may not be party to the *Convention on Cluster Munitions*. Nevertheless, it is important that we carefully review all aspects of the Convention to ensure that we understand all the practical, legal and operational implications of the text for Defence prior to its opening for signature in December 2008. The Government will be doing this review over coming months.
- c) Under Article 1.1(a) of the *Convention on Cluster Munitions* each State Party undertakes not to use cluster munitions. "Cluster munition" as defined under Article 2.2 of the Convention.

**Q8**

**Defence White Paper Review**

Senator Minchin, Hansard, 4 June 2008, p43

Please provide a list of the White Paper team reviews associated with the Defence White Paper.

**RESPONSE**

The Government agreed that eight Companion Reviews would be conducted across the Defence organisation as part of the development of a comprehensive Defence White Paper;

- Defence Capability Plan Review
- Preparedness, Personnel and Operating Costs Review
- Logistics Review
- Estate Review
- Workforce Review
- Industry Capacity Review
- Information and Communications Technology Review
- Science and Technology Review

A Force Structure Review is being undertaken as a key part of the Defence White Paper. Two other related reviews are the Air Combat Capability Review and a review of Intelligence.

Other reviews being conducted into aspects of the Defence enterprise, include:

- Defence Budget Audit
- Review of the Defence Materiel Organisation being undertaken by Mr David Mortimer.



**Q9**

**Kangaroo Management in the ACT**

Senator Nettle, Hansard, 4 June 2008, p50

Please advise what it would have cost to do the translocation?

**RESPONSE**

Defence pursued two translocation options for the management of Eastern Grey Kangaroos at the former Belconnen Naval Transmitting Station at Lawson, ACT.

The first option was a management-based approach to reduce the kangaroo population by translocating animals to any available release sites without follow-up actions to monitor success of the approach.

The second option was a research-based trial translocation to measure the success of various translocation and monitoring methodologies for Eastern Grey Kangaroos, involving multiple release sites, capture techniques and extensive monitoring after release.

Both approaches required necessary approvals, capture darting and appropriate release sites.

For various reasons, Defence was left with no option but to euthanase the kangaroos. Defence therefore did not obtain an accurate estimation of the cost of a management-based translocation. However, based on cost estimates of the above elements, Defence estimated that the cost to undertake a research-based trial translocation would range up to \$3.5 million.

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**Q10**

**Fuel Excise**

Senator Minchin, Hansard, 4 June 2008, p50

Do you pay excise on your fuel and how much would Defence's fuel bill be reduced if the excise was cut by five cents a litre

**RESPONSE**

Yes, Defence pays excise as any other Australian fuel purchaser. Defence pays fuel excise on all fuel types including ground, aviation and maritime fuels. A reduction of 5 cents a litre in the fuel excise rate is estimated to generate a saving to the Defence budget of about \$1.350 million per annum based on an annual average of the last five years purchases.

**Q11**

**CMAX Contracts with the DMO**

Senator Johnston, Hansard, 4 June 2008, p54

- a) Please advise who the company officers and shareholders were when CMAX first acquired the contract with the DMO and what the changes were right up until October 2007.
- b) Was the company privy to Top Secret information?
- c) What client checks were carried out on the company prior to, and during, its contract with DMO?

**RESPONSE**

- a) In September 2005, when CMAX first acquired the contract to provide communication services to DMO's Chief Executive Officer, and the Amphibious Deployment and Sustainment Systems Project and the Air Warfare Destroyer Program Offices, Mr Christian Taubenschlag was the sole director and sole shareholder of CMAX. Up until October 2007, there were no changes.
- b) The company was not privy to Top Secret information.
- c) Client checks were not carried out. Up until October 2007, CMAX's only significant client was Defence, providing services to DMO's Chief Executive Officer, and the Amphibious Deployment and Sustainment Systems Project and the Air Warfare Destroyer Program Offices. There were no other known clients for which CMAX has undertaken work of a similar scope and size.

**Q12**

**Supplementation for Defence Operations**

Senator Minchin, Hansard, 4 June 2008, p56

Please confirm whether this is the first time that Defence has not been formally supplemented for operations.

**RESPONSE**

No, as Defence absorbs the costs of all minor operations within its annual budget. An operation is classified as minor if the cost is less than \$10 million per annum. These minor operations include ADF participation in a number United Nations peacekeeping operations in countries such as the Sudan, Sinai and the Middle East and assistance provided in response to natural disasters in the region.

**Q13**

**Funding for the Sinking of HMAS Adelaide**

Senator Minchin, Hansard, 4 June 2008, p59

Please advise if Defence has sought any contribution from, for example, the NSW Government for the sinking of HMAS Adelaide or if it is funded entirely by Defence.

**RESPONSE**

The Commonwealth (Defence) has gifted ex-HMAS Adelaide to the New South Wales Government and has agreed to provide funding up to \$3 million to assist with costs in sinking the ship to create a dive site. Defence has no detailed knowledge of what the New South Wales Government costs will be and any costs above \$3 million will be the responsibility of the New South Wales Government.

**Q14**

**Funding for the Kings Highway Upgrade**

Senator Minchin, Hansard, 4 June 2008, p59

Can you provide the Committee with objective evidence that the assessed impact upon the Kings Highway of the establishment of Defence Headquarters amounts to \$23.3 million worth of roadworks?

**RESPONSE**

In 2005, the Roads and Traffic Authority NSW (RTA NSW) commissioned a report by Brown Consulting (ACT) Pty Ltd which identified that \$40.8 million in 2005-06 dollars would be required to improve the Kings Highway between Queanbeyan and Bungendore.

If the figures in the Brown Consulting Report are disaggregated, \$23.3 million equates to the following works (including GST): Passing Lanes - \$12.2 million and Captains Flat Intersection - \$11.0 million

In addition, the Government has announced, as part of its \$23.3 million roadworks, a \$0.1 million Queanbeyan area traffic study.

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**Q15**

**Reduction in Administrative Travel**

Senator Minchin, Hansard, 4 June 2008, p59 & 60

What is the total administrative travel budget in 2008-09 and by how much are you proposing to reduce it?

**RESPONSE**

The Defence (excluding the DMO) administrative travel budget for 2008-09 (which excludes strategic lift, operations and military training exercise related travel) is \$393 million or approximately 3 per cent of the total Defence budget. The administrative travel saving announced in the 2008-09 PBS amounts to \$12.8 million or approximately a 3.3 per cent reduction.

A saving of \$1.3m in the DMO administrative travel budget (excluding project related travel) in 2008-09 has been returned to Defence. The DMO administrative travel budget for 2008-09 is now \$26.7 million, a reduction of approximately 4.6 per cent.

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**Q16**

**Funding for the Army's new Infantry Battalion**

Senator Minchin, Hansard, 4 June 2008, p62

Please advise if the Minister had been informed prior to 13 May 2008 of the cause of the underestimation and whether Defence accepted responsibility for it.

**RESPONSE**

Yes and yes.



**Q17**

**Superannuation for Same Sex Couples**

Senator Nettle, Hansard, 4 June 2008, p67

Has the Department conducted any estimates of the number of people to whom this will apply?

**RESPONSE**

The precise number of members of the ADF that are in same-sex couple relationships is not known.

The estimates for the same-sex measures were developed on the basis of advice from the Australian Government Actuary and 2006 Census data provided by the Australian Bureau of Statistics. The 2006 Census figures indicated that there are around 25,000 same-sex couples in Australia, and included an age and income breakdown for these couples. While these figures are based on Census data, they may be underestimations because of the limitations surrounding how the Census obtains information about family relationships and reluctance on the part of same-sex couples to formally identify their relationship.

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**Q18**

**Operation Testament – World Youth Day 2008**

Senator Nettle, Hansard, 4 June 2008, p68

- a) Does the \$7 million provided for the Army assistance and logistics associated with World Youth Day also cover the military pilgrims program?
- b) What proportion of the 370 ADF personnel is part of the response element?
- c) What is the cost for the subsidisation of the military pilgrims program?

**RESPONSE**

- a) Yes.
- b) 264 personnel (consisting of a Security Task Group of 230 personnel and an Underwater Search and Explosive Ordnance Demolition Task Group of 34 personnel) are tasked to directly respond to any Operation Testament incidents.
- c) As part of early scoping of possible ADF support of World Youth Day 2008, the ADF was advised that in previous World Youth Day events foreign military pilgrims were provided administrative assistance by the host nation's military. In December 2007, the ADF undertook to provide assistance for a maximum of 500 foreign and 500 ADF military pilgrims. To date, less than 200 foreign and ADF military pilgrims have registered. Support to ADF and foreign military pilgrims will not exceed \$1.0 million and it is expected that the final cost will be significantly less than this.

**Q19**

**Operation Outreach**

Senator Minchin, Hansard, 4 June 2008, p73

Is there a formal end date to the ADF's involvement?

**RESPONSE**

The ADF has been progressively drawing down personnel from Operation Outreach since January and legacy tasks in support of the Northern Territory Emergency Response will be completed in the second half of 2008.

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**Q20**

**MK46 Torpedos**

Senator Johnston, Hansard, 4 June 2008, p82

- a) How many MK46 torpedos did the DMO purchase?
- b) Was it anticipated that the Seasprites would carry a MK46 at some stage?

**RESPONSE**

- a) No additional MK 46 torpedoes were purchased for the Seasprite helicopter project.
- b) The Seasprite acquisition contract required the Seasprite to be capable of carriage and launch of the MK 46 torpedo.

**Q21**

**Seasprite Integrated Tactical Avionics System**

Senator Johnston, Hansard, 4 June 2008, p83

What is the value of the ITAS?

**RESPONSE**

The Integrated Tactical Avionics System (ITAS) design, development and integration is \$US50.132 million in base date 1996 dollars. It was intended to replace most existing avionics as well as providing a tactical management system.

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**Q22**

**Drug Testing in the ADF**

Senator Hogg, Hansard, 4 June 2008, p99

Please table the data on the yearly drug testing of 10 per cent of the ADF.

**RESPONSE**

The data relating to the yearly drug testing of 10 per cent of ADF members dating back to when drug testing commenced in 2005 is shown below.

<b>Period</b>	<b>Tests Conducted</b>	<b>Negative Results</b>	<b>Positive Results</b>	<b>Refusals</b>
16 Jun 05 – 30 Jun 06	6923	6795	128	3
1 Jul 06 - 30 Jun 07	8004	7858	146	3
1 Jul 07 - 31 May 08	7939	7812	127	2

**Q23**

**Mental Illness and Suicide Rates in the ADF**

Senator Hogg, Hansard, 4 June 2008, p99 - 100

- a) Please provide the following for the three Services;
  - i) How many recruits in training have committed suicide;
  - ii) How many regular personnel who have not served overseas have committed suicide;
  - iii) How many regular personnel who have served overseas have committed suicide.
- b) For those personnel who return from a tour of duty overseas and are identified with a mental health problem, is treatment also made available to their families if their families are affected as a result of that mental illness?

**RESPONSE**

- a) For the period 2000 – 2007:
  - i) RAN – 0  
Army – 1 (Australian Defence Force Academy cadet)  
RAAF - 0
  - ii) RAN – 16  
Army – 20 (includes the recruit suicide)  
RAAF - 5
  - iii) RAN – 3  
Army – 9  
RAAF - 2
- b) Defence Health Services does not provide treatment to families of members. Where, in the pursuit of a holistic approach to treatment of a member with a mental health problem, it becomes obvious that consultation with the family will ensure optimal treatment and management, the family will be engaged with the member's permission. ADF mental health services are based on the principle that an individual Australian Defence Force member cannot be treated or supported independently from their social and personal circumstances. Where direct assistance to the family is required, this may be provided through the Defence Community Organisation, or, for eligible members, through the Veterans and Veterans' Families Counselling Service.

**Q24**

**Defence Community Organisation Assistance to ADF Families**

Senator Hogg, Hansard, 4 June 2008, p100 & 101

- a) Do you have any statistics on the number of spouses or children who access DCO assistance in Darwin or Townsville?
- b) Can you also give an idea of the waiting time to access these services in Darwin and Townsville?
- c) What is the cost to DCO of providing this service to spouses and children?
- d) Does it place a cost burden on the DCO and is there a need for further funding for these facilities in the future?

**RESPONSE**

- a) Yes. From 1 January to 31 May 2008 DCO's statistics management system records the following numbers of direct approaches by spouses and children in Darwin and Townsville:

<u>Darwin</u>	<u>Townsville</u>
Partner: 915	Partner: 1215
Child: 309	Child: 397

- These approaches are for a wide range of support services, including education assistance, partner employment assistance, deployment support, and community information as well as critical incident and crisis support.
- b) Waiting times are determined by urgency and the nature of services being sought. All calls and approaches to DCO for assistance are dealt with by an intake social worker. Urgent matters are dealt with immediately. For non-urgent matters clients are generally seen within one week of the initial approach.
- c) The DCO does not have a breakdown of the costs of these particular services. The services are covered in DCO's service delivery national budget of \$6.8 million for 2007-08. This includes funding for the Services Workforce Access Program for Partners, Defence Schools Transition Aides, the Safe Accommodation for Emergencies (SAFE) program and other DCO programs and products, but is exclusive of staff costs.
- d) DCO has ongoing funding to allow for the provision of these services into the future.



**Q25**

**Disposal of Property**

Senator Minchin, Hansard, 4 June 2008, p105

- a) When is Bringelly Radio Receiving Station site scheduled for disposal?
- b) What is the cause of delay in the sale of Ingleburn and is it related to the environmental assessment?
- c) What is the status of the Belconnen Naval Transmitting Station site and can you provide a sale date?

**RESPONSE**

- a) The Bringelly Radio Receiving Station is currently scheduled for disposal on the open market in 2011-12.
- b) The Government is considering a number of issues associated with the proposed sale of the Ingleburn site. One major issue is identifying the areas of the environmentally sensitive and protected Cumberland Plain Woodland that should be preserved following the sale. Ingleburn is currently programmed for disposal in 2009-10.
- c) Environment and heritage investigations and assessments are now complete. Soil contamination remediation works are scheduled to begin in late 2008. The site is currently programmed for disposal in 2009-10.

**Q26**

**Reprogramming of Scientific Support Programs**

Senator Payne, Hansard, 4 June 2008, p117

Please provide a more detailed response in terms of those matters which DSTO determines are of a low priority, and what is the impact on DSTO facilities around Australia of your decisions.

**RESPONSE**

As part of DSTO's overall program planning process the details of the reductions to scientific support programs are still under review.

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**W1**

**Senator Fierravanti-Wells**

**Quasi-Autonomous Non-Governmental Organisations**

- a) What appointments have been made to boards, advisory committees, or any other quangos within the Defence portfolio's responsibility since 24 November 2007?
- b) Please list all quangos within the Defence portfolio's responsibility.

**RESPONSE**

- a)
- |   |  |
|---|--|
| Australian Defence College Advisory Board             | LTGEN David Hurley - Member<br>RADM James Goldrick - Member<br>BRIG Barry Mc Manus - Member<br>BRIG Wayne Goodman - Member             |
| Australian Defence Force Academy Consultative Council | Mr Mark Priddle - Member<br>Associate Professor C Woodward - Member<br>BRIG Wayne Goodman – Member<br>RADM James Goldrick – Member     |
| Australian Defence Human Research Ethics Committee    | Hon Chief Justice Terence Higgins - Reappointed<br>Monsignor (AC) Peter O’Keefe AM - Reappointed<br>Mrs Kaye Hogan AM, PSM – Appointed |
| Australian Maritime Defence Council                   | Mr David Sterrett - Member   |
| Australian Military Forces Relief Trust Fund          | WO1 Burns – Member   |
| Australian Strategic Policy Institute Limited         | Mr S Loosley - Reappointed as Prime Minister's Representative  |
| Defence Audit Committee                               | Mr Paul Rizzo – Chair<br>Mr Alan Beckett – Member<br>LTGEN David Hurley – Member<br>Mr Stephen Merchant – Member                       |

Defence Families Australia	<p>Mrs Brie McNab - Central NSW appointee</p> <p>Mrs Kym McKay - Southern QLD appointee</p> <p>Mrs Penny Davison – WA appointee</p> <p>Mrs Annaliese McCammon – NT appointee</p> <p>Mrs Trish Richards - VIC &amp; TAS appointee</p>
Defence Force Retirement and Death Benefits Authority	<p>Mr Brian Paule - Deputy Chairperson</p> <p>Ms Emily Canning - Deputy of the Chairperson</p> <p>Mr Adrian Wellspring - Deputy of Deputy Chairperson</p> <p>CAPT Jay Banister - Navy Member</p> <p>LCDR Roslyn Fletcher - Deputy to the Navy Member</p> <p>GPCAT David Richardson - Air Force Member</p> <p>SQNLDR Andre Bobets - Deputy to the Air Force Member</p> <p>COL Scott Hicks - Army Member</p> <p>LTCOL Martin McKone - Deputy to the Army Member</p>
Defence Health Limited	<p>LTGEN Ken Gillespie – Constitutional member</p> <p>AM Mark Binksin – Constitutional member</p>
Defence Housing Australia Advisory Committee	<p>MAJGEN D Morrison – Member</p>
Defence Reserve Support Council	<p>Hon Daryl Manzie - Chair NT committee</p> <p>Mr Rodney Cavalier – Chair NSW committee</p> <p>Mr Adrian Beresford-Wylie – Australian Local Government Association representative</p> <p>Mr Bruce Fadelli AM – Australian Chamber of Commerce and Industry representative</p> <p>LTCOL Peter Hall – New Zealand Observer</p> <p>SBLT Christina Rogerson - Youth representative</p>
Materiel Audit Committee	<p>Mr John Meert – Member</p> <p>Mr David Karpin – Member</p>

Military Superannuation and Benefits Board of Trustees No. 1	BRIG Robert Brown - Officer Member Representative trustee MAJ Kirk Lloyd - Officer Acting Member Representative WOFF Robert Swanwick - Other Ranks Member Representative Trustee
Navy Health Limited RAAF Welfare Recreational Company (Trustee of the RAAF Welfare Trust Fund)	CMDRE Robyn Walker - Director GPCAPT Peter Brennan – Director
Royal Australian Air Force Veterans’ Residences Trust Fund	AIRCDRE Kenneth Watson - Deputy Trustee
Royal Australian Air Force Welfare Trust Fund	Chaplain (Air Commodore) Murray Earl – Member, Board of Trustees
Royal Australian Navy Central Canteens Board	CAPT Ian Murray - Member LT CMDR Hugh Cameron - Member LEUT Emma Gaudry - Member
Royal Australian Navy Relief Trust Fund	CAPT M D Hill - Trustee

b) “Quango” is a term which does not have an official definition. The Department of Finance and Deregulation has interpreted that quangos are those bodies which are not departmental bodies or statutory bodies recognised in legislation, as identified in the *List of Australian Government Bodies and Governance Relationships*. The following bodies within the Defence portfolio (excluding the Department of Veterans’ Affairs) accord with this understanding of quangos.

AAF Company (Army Amenities Fund) (Trustees for the Messes Trust Fund/Army Amenities Fund)  
Army and Air Force Canteen Service (Frontline Defence Services)  
Australian Centre for Posttraumatic Mental Health  
Australian Military Forces Relief Trust Fund  
Australian Ocean Data Centre Joint Facility  
Australian Strategic Policy Institute Limited  
Centre for Military and Veterans’ Health  
Cooperative Research Centre for Advanced Composite Structures Limited  
Defence Health Limited  
Defence Housing Australia  
Military Superannuation and Benefits Board of Trustees No. 1  
Navy Health Limited  
RAAF Welfare Recreational Company (Trustee of the RAAF Welfare Trust Fund)  
Royal Australian Air Force Veterans’ Residences Trust Fund  
Royal Australian Air Force Welfare Trust Fund  
Royal Australian Navy Central Canteens Board  
Royal Australian Navy Relief Trust Fund  
Spire Innovations Pty Limited

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**W2**

**Senator Fierravanti-Wells**

**Rudd Government Election Promises**

- a) Please advise if the list of items under policy heading on the ALP website [www.alp.org.au](http://www.alp.org.au) constitutes the total sum election “promises” made by the Rudd Government to Defence.
- b) Please provide a comprehensive list of all Defence-related promises referred to on the ALP website and also include those that were made, but are not referred to.

**RESPONSE**

As indicated in previous answers on this issue (answer to Questions on Notice 153 to 188 of 12 February 2008), the election commitments made by Federal Labor are on the public record. Those measures implementing commitments that are funded through Budget appropriations to the Defence portfolio are detailed in the Department’s Portfolio Budget Statements.

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**W3**

**Senator Fifield**

**VIP Aircraft**

- a) Was a VIP aircraft used by any Members of Parliament on Wednesday 4 June 2008?
- b) Which Member or Members of Parliament were passengers on any VIP flights?
- c) Please detail the flights undertaken by VIP aircraft on Wednesday, including flight schedules, take off and landing times, origins and destinations.
- d) Were commercial alternatives available?
- e) How much did these flights cost?
- f) What was the purpose of each flight?
- g) Please provide the guidelines for use of VIP aircraft by Members of Parliament.
- h) Is it usual for a return VIP flight to be used when appropriate and timely commercial alternatives are available?

**RESPONSE**

- a) Yes.
- b) This information, as for all Defence Special Purpose Aircraft tasks, is tabled twice annually in Parliament in *The Schedule of Special Purpose Flights*. In accordance with normal practice, the details for flights between 1 January and 30 June 2008 will be tabled in December 2008.
- c) See response to b) above.
- d) Guidance for approving the use of Special Purpose Aircraft is contained in paragraphs four and five of the *Revised Principles for the use of Special Purpose Aircraft*, issued by the Special Minister of State on 23 September 2002, and takes into account the timing, the size of the party, and the availability of Defence aircraft and commercial services.
- e) See response to b) above.
- f) The flights were provided for official purposes.
- g) See response to Question W12 from the Defence Portfolio Additional Estimates hearing in February 2007.
- h) See response to d) above.

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**W4**

**Senator McDonald**  
**Medical and Dental Care**

What is being spent at Tindal and Cairns and how does that reconcile with the commitment made prior to the election.

**RESPONSE**

The Government initially identified 12 locations as recipients of health clinics for Defence dependants, with a budget of \$33 million. In line with the Government's commitment to evidenced-based policy, a decision was made to conduct a smaller trial at five regional and remote locations. \$12 million has been allocated for this smaller trial.

Tindal and Cairns are two of the five regions targeted for the trial. In these regions, dependants will be able to access free medical and dental care from providers within the community, and receive free medical and dental care, with dental capped at \$300 per dependant per year. This model of care will not require dependants to travel to Defence-specific clinics. In addition, the decision to provide care from within the community allows dependants to stay with their doctor or dentist of choice, and negates the need to "poach" professionals from community to staff Defence-specific clinics. The evaluation of this trial in December 2009 will inform the expansion of this initiative to other Defence locations.