

SENATE LEGAL AND CONSTITUTIONAL LEGISLATION COMMITTEE  
AUSTRALIAN FEDERAL POLICE

**Question No. 160**

**Senator Ludwig asked the following question at the hearing on 17 February 2006:**

**People Smuggling:**

- a) Could you indicate the full budget for the People Smuggling Strike Team in 2005-06?
- b) Could you indicate how much of this has been expended so far?
- c) Is this on budget? If not, could you indicate how far it is off budget?
- d) What was the full budget for the Strike Team in 2004-05 and how much of this budget was expended?
- e) Could you indicate what resources are allocated to this strike team, from both the government and other sources?
- f) How many officers are allocated to this strike team?
- g) Could you indicate how many investigations the strike team undertook in 2004-05 and so far in 2005-06?
- h) Of those investigations that it undertook, can you indicate how many of them resulted in charges being laid?
- i) Of the people smuggling charges laid by the PSST, could you indicate how many were via the air and how many were via sea?

**The answer to the honourable senator's question is as follows:**

- a) The 2005-06 PSST budget is \$800,000.00 (not including staff salaries).
- b) Up to the end of February 2006, \$251,655 of the PSST budget had been expended.
- c) The amount expended represents an under spend of \$281,673 for the period. Although expenditure is slightly under budget on a straight line basis, it is considered that the PSST will complete the year on budget.
- d) The 2004-05 PSST budget was \$721,000. Total expenditure for 2004-05 was \$773,391.
- e) The PSST operates within the AFP flexible team's model, drawing resources from other areas of the AFP as required.
- f) Currently there are 12 AFP members and 2 DIMA investigators allocated to the PSST.

- g) In 2004-2005 the PSST was involved in 8 major criminal investigations. In 2005-2006 the PSST was/is involved in 7 ongoing major criminal investigations. In addition to these investigations the People Smuggling Intelligence Team, in partnership with the AFP International Network, as part of the Whole of Government approach, has conducted a number of intelligence projects in relation to off-shore people smuggling activities. These projects have resulted in at least 4 people smuggling ventures, suspected of being destined for Australia, being disrupted by law enforcement agencies in other countries, including Indonesia and Thailand.
- h) All of the investigations undertaken by the PSST have resulted in charges being laid. Arrest warrants have also been issued in respect to additional offenders who's current whereabouts are either unknown, or are known but are believed to be in a country where extradition to Australia is not possible. These are all protracted investigations and are at various stages of the criminal justice process, ranging from active investigations, through to before court or subject to appeal.
- i) All investigations conducted by the PSST were in relation to People Smuggling by sea over the past 6 years.