

SENATE STANDING COMMITTEE ON LEGAL AND CONSTITUTIONAL AFFAIRS
AUSTRALIAN FEDERAL POLICE

Question No. 34

Senator Brandis asked the following question at the hearing on 23 February 2009:

In relation to the air security marshal program, from the inception of the program in 2002 until November 2007 was there never a year in which the number of air marshals fell, that in each of those five and a half years they either increased or remained at a constant level?

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

Between 2002 and 2007 there was not a year in which the number of AFP employees in the Air Security Officer (ASO) program fell. Instead they increased or remained at a constant level.

From inception of the ASO program in 2002, an agreed staffing level was established and from that time the number of AFP employees in the ASO program steadily increased.

Recruitment to the ASO program was supported through a workforce planning strategy which recruited at over-strength levels as it was anticipated that the program would have a higher than average attrition rate due to the specialised nature of the work.

The anticipated attrition rate was however not realised and during both the 2006-2007 and 2007-2008 financial years the program remained over strength.

During the 2008-2009 financial year, even given natural attrition and recent voluntary redundancies, the program continues to operate slightly above agreed initial establishment numbers.

The level of staff associated with initial establishment, or involved in the program today, is not able to be disclosed because of operational security.