

QUESTION TAKEN ON NOTICE

ADDITIONAL BUDGET ESTIMATES HEARING: 25 February 2014

IMMIGRATION AND BORDER PROTECTION PORTFOLIO

(AE14/175) PROGRAM – 4.5: Regional Cooperation and Associated Activities

Senator Carr (Written) asked:

Is DIBP aware of whether the Australian Government has any formal or informal agreements with the Indonesian Government or bureaucracy relating to: border protection policies generally; allowing Australian Defence forces (in particular the Navy) into Indonesia's contiguous zone; returning asylum seekers to Indonesia (including on lifeboats and tow-backs); customs, defence and search and rescue cooperation.

Is DIBP aware of the any intentions the Government has to discuss any such arrangements (above) with the Indonesian Government?

Answer:

Close cooperation between Australia and Indonesia on security matters is underpinned by the Lombok Treaty (2006), which provides a treaty-level framework for addressing traditional and non-traditional security challenges.

Australia and Indonesia signed a Defence Cooperation Arrangement in September 2012, which formalises the defence relationship and provides a framework for engagement activities.

Indonesia and Australia co-chair the Bali Process on People Smuggling, Trafficking in Persons and Related Transnational Crime. Australia and Indonesia also co-manage the Bali Process Regional Support Office, which is an implementing mechanism for the Bali Process.

Bilateral cooperation on immigration issues is coordinated through the Australia-Indonesia Working Group on Immigration Cooperation.

In April 2004, Australia and Indonesia entered into an arrangement for the co-ordination of search and rescue. This is an operational arrangement between the relevant search and rescue authorities. It provides that the normal diplomatic clearance processes for a party's aircraft or vessel to enter the airspace or territorial sea of the other party will not be required for a search and rescue facility to respond to an incident. This arrangement is managed by the Australian Maritime Safety Authority and is only activated where a search and rescue incident has arisen.