

SENATE STANDING COMMITTEE ON LEGAL AND CONSTITUTIONAL AFFAIRS
AUSTRALIAN FEDERAL POLICE

Question No. 184

Senator Heffernan asked the following question at the hearing on 27 May 2009:

I understand that until Sydney Airport was privatised the AFP was in charge of security at Sydney Airport:

- a) Can you clarify who is in charge of security at Sydney Airport?
- b) What is the role of the AFP now that Sydney Airport is privatised?
- c) Is it true that private security officers are not able to contact their federal police counterparts directly but must radio their head office which in turn notifies the police?

At the time of the Sydney Airport incident that resulted in a death:

- d) How many AFP and airport security guards were on hand at Terminal Three?
- e) Was this number in line with appropriate regulations?
 - i) If so, will numbers of security be increased to avoid a repeat of this?
 - ii) If not, why was there a shortfall?
- f) How many AFP are required to patrol Sydney's Domestic and International terminals at any one time?
- g) How many airport security guards, combined with AFP are on duty at any one time?
- h) Which type of weapons are typically carried by:
 - i) airport security guards
 - ii) AFP
- i) Are the current weapons adequate?
- j) If there was a coordinated terrorist attack at a major airport would current security arrangements be able to deal with it?

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

- a) The security layers at Sydney Airport are threefold:
 - The Australian Federal Police (AFP), under the Command of the Airport Police Commander, has responsibility for the safety and security of the airport environment under services delivered through a Unified Policing Model (UPM) at each of the major Australian airports;

- In accordance with existing Memorandum of Understanding arrangements, the New South Wales Police will assume responsibility for serious crime and emergencies at the airport in accordance with State Emergency Plans and Airport Emergency Plans; and
- Private security is managed under commercial contracts between security companies and the terminal owners (Sydney Airport Corporation Limited for the International Terminal and Domestic Terminal 2; and QANTAS for Domestic Terminal 3).

b) The AFP commands a unified policing model at the airport which provides safety and security and a broad range of general policing services within the airport environs.

c) Direct access to the AFP is provided by a range of mechanisms including direct telephone access via 131AFP (131237), duress alarms, a secure radio network and other localised arrangements.

d) There was a full complement of twenty-two AFP officers working at Sydney Airport on the day of the incident. In total, nineteen officers responded to Terminal 3 in relation to this incident.

The numbers of private security guards present on the day is a matter for Qantas and SNP security.

e) Yes. The number of AFP officers in attendance to this incident and the response times were commensurate with or better than in the general community. An independent review by Mr Roger Wilkins AO concluded that the AFP response was undertaken in accordance with existing standards, procedures and protocols.

In accordance with a procedural recommendation made by Mr Wilkins, the AFP will continually assess whether the best formula for patterns of police and security deployments (law enforcement) is being used at Sydney airport. This will inform future resourcing at the airport.

f) There are 207 AFP members making up the command at Sydney airport. Daily shift patterns and deployment patterns are determined in accordance with local requirements, intelligence and threat assessments. Uniform police numbers are agreed between the AFP and New South Wales Police.

g) The numbers of private security guards present at Sydney airport is a matter which should be referred to the Sydney Airport Corporation Limited, Qantas and SNP security.

h) i) Questions in relation to whether security guards carry weapons should be referred to Sydney Airport Corporation Limited, Qantas and SNP security.

ii) AFP officers carry the standard accoutrements as follows:

- o 9mm Glock pistol;
- o extendable baton;
- o Mark IV 'Saf-Lok' handcuffs; and
- o Mark III Oleoresin capsicum spray.

- i) In accordance with broader AFP policy and procedures, the current weapons are adequate.
- j) Yes. Current policing and security arrangements agreed between the AFP and state / territory police services are designed to deal with any coordinated terrorist attack based upon current threat levels and intelligence and complement broader national counter terrorism arrangements. Procedures and protocols are continuously amended and improved to cater for any change in threat level or intelligence.