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**Australian Security
Intelligence Organisation**

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Director-General of Security

Senator Crossin
Chair
Senate Standing Committee on Legal and Constitutional Affairs
Parliament House
Canberra ACT 2600



Dear Senator,

Clarification: Security Assessments

I refer to the recent public meeting of the Senate Standing Committee on Legal and Constitutional Affairs in May 2010 regarding budget estimates for the Attorney-General's portfolio.

On Monday 24 May 2010, during my appearance before the Committee, I responded to questions from Senator Parry on the circumstances under which an irregular maritime arrival (IMA) would not be referred to the Australian Security Intelligence Organisation (ASIO) for assessment. I responded that current practice is for every adult IMA to be referred to ASIO for security assessment, but that ASIO would not carry out security assessments on children.

I should like to clarify that it is not an ASIO requirement to undertake security assessments for detained children. Should, however, a case be referred to us by DIAC, we are required to provide an assessment in order to fulfil the requirements under the *Migration Act* for the granting of a visa. In these circumstances, a non-adverse security assessment is provided as quickly as possible. While it is theoretically possible that a child may pose a security threat, it is difficult to conceive of a situation, based on experience to date, in which ASIO would judge it necessary to produce an adverse assessment on a child in immigration detention. Indeed, no adverse assessments have been provided to date for any children arriving in Australia as irregular maritime arrivals.

Yours sincerely



David Fricker
Acting Director-General