

SENATE STANDING COMMITTEE ON LEGAL AND CONSTITUTIONAL AFFAIRS
AUSTRALIAN FEDERAL POLICE

Question No. 80

Senator Barnett asked the following question in writing, following the hearing on 19 October 2009:

The Government has not committed to the Air Security Officer Program beyond June 2010.

- a) How will the discontinuation of the program affect aviation security
- b) are you concerned by the discontinuation of the program
- c) are the flight crew informed when ASOs are on their flights
- d) if a threatening situation arises, how would the flight crew communicate this to an ASO, if one were on board the flight, and
- e) are pilots confident that ASOs are present on their flights?

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

a) As noted in the Federal Audit of Police Capabilities, a number of bilateral arrangements, in addition to obligations under the Convention on International Civil Aviation, require Australia to maintain an Air Security Officer function. The effective deployment of Air Security Officers can only be coordinated at a national level due to the interstate and international nature of their work.

The Government has no intention of discontinuing the Air Security Officer program at this time.

b) Refer to answer a).

c) The AFP does not disclose sensitive operational information that may compromise the safety of Air Security Officers, airline crew or passengers.

d) Refer to answer c).

e) Refer to answer c).