

SENATE STANDING COMMITTEE ON LEGAL AND CONSTITUTIONAL AFFAIRS  
AUSTRALIAN FEDERAL POLICE

**Question No. 84**

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

In relation to Prime Minister Kevin Rudd's proposal for the Australian Government to fund detention centres and training in Indonesia, as well as intelligence sharing between Australia and Indonesia;

- a) to what extent has the Australian Federal Police been consulted on this matter
- b) what will be the AFP's involvement should the Government proceed with this proposal
- c) will AFP involvement attract additional Government funding
- d) could you provide detail on current bilateral efforts between the AFP and its counterparts in neighbouring countries to prevent people smuggling in our region, and
- e) please provide a status report on the AFP's involvement in counteracting people smuggling and the resources committed to this objective.

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

- a) The Australian Federal Police (AFP) Commissioner is a member of the Secretaries Committee on National Security and the AFP is represented on the Border Protection Taskforce and Border Protection Committee that consider such matters on an ongoing basis.
- b) - c) The AFP is not involved in the funding of Indonesian detention centres or the provision of training associated with Indonesian detention centres.
- d) The AFP works cooperatively with overseas partners in neighbouring countries to target the organisers of people smuggling ventures. The AFP supports foreign law enforcement efforts to collect criminal intelligence to identify and prevent maritime ventures destined for Australia or disrupt criminal networks offshore. The establishment of a regional anti-people smuggling network through placement of AFP intelligence and investigations resources in key source and transit countries further supports offshore disruption, regional information exchange and Australian investigations objectives.

The AFP investigates the source of people smuggling activity through the work of the People Smuggling Strike Team (PSST) and the AFP International Network. The disruption of people smuggling activities in the region has been enhanced by the recent implementation of the following AFP initiatives:

- the establishment of an AFP liaison post in Sri Lanka;
- the enhancement of the AFP's PSST capability to combat maritime people smuggling ventures; and

- the establishment of dedicated people smuggling liaison and intelligence officers in Malaysia and Sri Lanka; the establishment of a dedicated liaison officer in Pakistan; and establishment of a dedicated intelligence officer in Thailand.

The AFP is continuing the implementation of the following initiatives:

- enhancement of Indonesian National Police investigative and analytical capability to respond to people smuggling;
  - provide support to the Indonesian National Police People Smuggling Taskforce comprising 145 officers in twelve key provinces across Indonesia; and
  - expansion of the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime current computer based training facilities in Indonesia and Asia.
- e) The AFP continues to lead a multi-agency response to people smuggling investigations and prosecutions which is concentrated on the recent surge in people smuggling activity in the region, including the increased number of Suspected Illegal Entry Vessels (SIEV) intercepted in Australian waters. Since September 2008, the AFP has charged forty-eight people with offences under the *Migration Act 1958* (Cth), including forty-four alleged crew members and four alleged Australian based organisers. These offences attract a maximum penalty of twenty years imprisonment.

During 2009, the PSST has applied for three Interpol Red Notices on alleged people smuggling organisers to be extradited to Australia for prosecution. In addition, Hadi Ahamdi, an alleged people smuggling organiser, was extradited from Indonesia to Australia in May 2009. His matter continues before the Australian court system.

The AFP works cooperatively with local and overseas partners to target the organisers of people smuggling ventures. As of 19 October 2009, there have been 1,828 irregular maritime arrivals in Australia who arrived in 36 SIEV's intercepted in Australian waters.

With respect to resources, the AFP will receive a total of \$48.4 million (over four years) in additional funding from 1 July 2009 to combat the surge in people smuggling. Under this funding, enhancements are being made to Australian and foreign law enforcement through increased resource allocation and targeted training opportunities. These enhancements will further support regional cooperation to improve intelligence collection, investigational capability, legislative awareness and information exchange to disrupt people smuggling activity offshore.

This funding is comprised of the following five New Policy Initiatives (NPIs) for AFP People Smuggling measures within the region:

- Development of Regional Law Enforcement Capacity – \$4 million over four years.
- Enhancing Australia's approach to People Smuggling – \$2.7 million over four years.
- Enhancing AFP Capability to Combat People Smuggling – \$10.4 million over four years.
- Enhancing INP Capability – \$15 million over four years.
- Enhancing AFP and Regional Capacity – \$16.1 million over two years.

As at 19 October 2009, there are eighty one AFP employees (full time equivalent) assisting with the investigation of people smuggling activity. Of the eighty one AFP employees, there are:

- Sixty eight employees are located within Australia (including six employees operating on Christmas Island); and
- Thirteen members located overseas.