

SENATE STANDING COMMITTEE ON LEGAL AND CONSTITUTIONAL AFFAIRS
AUSTRALIAN FEDERAL POLICE

Question No. 109

Senator Humphries asked the following question at the hearing on 18 October 2010:

- a) Regarding the AFP officers that deal with people smugglers that arrive on illegal boats, have there been any instances of officers contracting illnesses or diseases from arrivals?
- b) How many officers are in the People Smuggling Strike Team and where are they currently located/posted?
- c) How many arrests of boat crew members have been made over the past 6 months?
- d) Since the May 2010 Estimates Hearings, on how many occasions have the AFP officers been called in to assist in disturbances at the Christmas Island Detention Centre?
- e) There were reports in *The Sydney Morning Herald* ('AFP Faces hard job to train corrupt candidates', Dylan Welch, 12.10.10) that the AFP will be training Afghan police who are "corrupt, obtain money from the Afghan drug trade and are often sexually abused or sexual abusers." What is the AFP's position on this report? Was this known to the AFP? If so, how long has it been known for?
- f) Report in *The Australian* on 29.9.10 (Paul Maley, 'Authorities on alert for influx of Tamil Tiger asylum seekers') suggest there is a people smuggling venture organised by former members of the Tamil Tigers trying to transport Sri Lankan asylum seekers to Canada and Australia. Has the AFP received information that this is the case?

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

- a) To date there have been no reported instances of Australian Federal Police (AFP) officers contracting illnesses or diseases from passengers on board Suspected Irregular Entry Vessel arrivals.
- b) As at 4 November 2010 there were 102 AFP employees involved in people smuggling matters nationally and internationally.

AFP Resources Nationally

Eighty-four employees are located within Australia (including Christmas Island). Those employees comprise:

- Sixty-five investigators;
- Nine intelligence officers; and
- Ten investigative assistants, training and capability support staff.

Additionally two Department of Immigration and Citizenship (DIAC) investigators and eight Australian Customs and Border Protection Service (ACBPS) investigators and intelligence officers are attached to AFP people smuggling teams.

Of these ninety-four employees (AFP and seconded officers from DIAC and ACBPS) thirteen are deployed to duties on Christmas Island.

AFP Resources Internationally

Eighteen members (investigators and intelligence officers) are posted in the following countries; Thailand (one), Sri Lanka (three), Indonesia (nine), Malaysia (three) and Pakistan (two).

- c) From 1 May 2010 to 31 October 2010 the AFP has charged eighty-four crew members with people smuggling related offences.
- d) 26.
- e) The AFP recognises that many of the issues raised in the report recently issued by The Liaison Office (TLO) in Afghanistan are relevant to the future development of the ANP. Current AFP training activities for Afghan National Police (ANP) officers at the Police Training Centre in Tarin Kowt specifically address these issues.
 - o The Focused District Development (FDD) Basic Course focuses on a range of topics including values, ethics and human rights. This is achieved through theoretical and practical training in the concepts and principles of human rights and the Constitution of Afghanistan.
 - o The FDD Basic Course is also used as a mechanism to identify potential future leaders of the ANP who have demonstrated ethical behaviour and dedication to duty. These officers then progress on to Train-the-Trainer and Non-Commissioned Officers Training.
 - o A number of ANP officers identified through this process now hold positions as trainers at the Police Training Centre. ANP officers are subjected to biometrics, drug testing and body searches prior to entering the training facility.
 - o Anecdotal reporting from members of the Dutch Police Mentoring Teams who worked with ANP in the field, suggests that ANP officers who received training under the FDD Basic Course adhered to practices learned following completion of training. Improvements include higher attendance rates, adherence to uniform standards and retention of staff.
 - o The AFP is not involved in the selection or vetting process. The selection and recruitment process is undertaken by NATO Training Mission - Afghanistan.

The AFP has been aware of the TLO report since its release in August 2010. The existence of corruption and criminality within the ANP is widely known, thus the AFP has been aware of these challenges since the commencement of AFP deployments in 2007.

In collaboration with coalition partners the AFP is supporting the ANP to address its strategic priorities, including eliminating corruption.

- f) The AFP does not comment on operational matters.