

Appendix 3

WHAT OUR INTELLIGENCE AGENCIES DO

(The following draws on material from the agencies' official web sites)

The Office of National Assessments (ONA) produces reports on international political, strategic and economic matters in order to assist the Prime Minister, Ministers and Departments in the formation of policy and plans. ONA bases its assessments on information available to the Australian Government from all sources, whether inside or outside the Government. It draws on information from intelligence, as well as diplomatic reporting and open source material including news media and other publications. ONA also advises the Government on the adequacy and coordination of Australia's foreign intelligence activities and maintains close consultation with the intelligence agencies of other countries.

The Defence Intelligence Organisation (DIO) provides all-source intelligence assessment at the national level to support Defence and Government decision-making and the planning and conduct of Australian Defence Force operations. DIO's assessments focus on the Asia-Pacific region and cover strategic, political, defence, military, economic, scientific and technical areas.

The Defence Signals Directorate (DSD) is Australia's national authority for signals intelligence and information security. DSD has two principal functions: one is to collect and disseminate foreign signals intelligence (known as Sigint); the other is to provide Information Security (Infosec) products and services to the Australian Government and its Defence Force.

The Defence Imagery and Geospatial Organisation (DIGO) provides geospatial intelligence, from imagery and other sources in support of Australia's defence and national interests. DIGO defines geospatial intelligence as the collection, exploitation and analysis of imagery and geospatial information to locate, describe, assess and visualise physical features, observable phenomena and geographically referenced activities over time and space.

The Australian Secret Intelligence Service (ASIS) is Australia's overseas intelligence collection agency. Its primary function is to obtain and distribute intelligence information, not readily available by other means, about the capabilities, intentions and activities of individuals or organisations outside Australia, which may impact on Australian interests, and the well-being of its citizens.

The Australian Security Intelligence Organisation (ASIO). ASIO's main role is to gather information and produce intelligence that will enable it to warn the government about activities or situations that might endanger Australia's national security. The ASIO Act defines 'security' as the protection of Australia and its people from espionage, sabotage, politically motivated violence, the promotion of communal violence, attacks on Australia's defence system, and acts of foreign interference.

