Question 1

Output: Enabling Services

Topic: Posting position descriptions

Hansard page p. 13, 21 February 2008

Senator Payne

(a) With the 20 staff positions to be cut in overseas posts, can the Department supply a position description attached to each position?

Answer

Position descriptions for the twenty positions to be withdrawn from DFAT's overseas network are listed below. They are listed according to level and function.

Athens

One BB2 level corporate/functional position

Position description: 55 per cent consular and passport services; 15 per cent general administration; 10 per cent post systems administrator; 10 per cent financial management; 10 per cent political reporting.

Beijing

One BB3 level policy position

Position description: 80 per cent Australia-China FTA advocacy, analysis and reporting; 20 per cent visits management.

Berlin

One BB2 level personal assistant position

Position description: 85 per cent management of Head of Mission office; 5 per cent general administration; 5 per cent secondary post systems administrator; 5 per cent Australia Group administration.

One SES BD1 position (Deputy Head of Mission)

Position description: 65 per cent strategic direction and management of foreign, trade and public diplomacy sections; 25 per cent post management; 10 per cent Chargé d'Affaires and representational duties.

Brussels

One EL2 policy position

Position description: 100 per cent advocacy and reporting on EU political and security developments and NATO.

Cairo

One BB2 policy position

Position description: 70 per cent analysis, reporting and advocacy on counter-terrorism, trade and foreign policy issues; 25 per cent visits management and public affairs; 5 per cent secondary post systems administrator.

Copenhagen

One BB3 policy position

Position description: 70 per cent analysis and reporting on Australia's bilateral and multilateral interests in Demark and other countries of accreditation; 20 per cent post systems administrator and post security officer; 10 per cent public affairs.

Kuwait City

One BB2 mixed duties position

Position description: 50 per cent analysis and reporting on bilateral and multilateral issues; 35 per cent administration including passport and consular services; 15 per cent post systems administrator.

London

One BB2 consular position

Position description: 50 per cent consular and passport services; 30 per cent contingency planning and travel advice; 10 per cent secondary post systems administrator; 10 per cent consular policy and representational duties.

Mexico City

One BB3 policy position

Position description: 60 per cent analysis and reporting of bilateral and multilateral interests in Mexico and other countries of accreditation; 30 per cent public diplomacy and cultural affairs; 10 per cent security and administrative duties.

Nairobi

One BB2 policy position

Position description: 85 per cent political and economic analysis and reporting of Australia's bilateral and multilateral interests in Kenya and other countries of accreditation; 10 per cent public diplomacy; 5 per cent post systems administrator.

Ottawa

One BB3 policy position

Position description: 100 per cent advocacy, analysis and reporting on Australia's multilateral interests in Canada including international security, environment and the United Nations.

Pretoria

One BB1 corporate/functional position

Position description: 40 per cent management of HOM office; 30 per cent consular and passport services; 30 per cent general administration.

Riyadh

One BB3 policy position

Position description: 75 per cent political and economic analysis and reporting on Australian trade, bilateral and multilateral interests, international terrorism and security issues; 25 per cent post management.

Rome

One BB2 corporate/functional position

Position description: 60 per cent consular and passport services; 30 per cent financial management; 10 per cent post security.

Santiago de Chile

One BB2 policy position

Position description: 90 per cent political and economic analysis and reporting on bilateral and multilateral issues in Chile and other countries of accreditation; 9 per cent visits management; 1 per cent secondary post systems administrator.

Seoul

One BB2 corporate/functional position

Position description: 35 per cent post systems administrator; 35 per cent assistant post security officer; 20 per cent records management; 10 per cent consular and administrative support.

Stockholm

One BB3 policy position

Position description: 75 per cent political and economic analysis and reporting on bilateral and multilateral developments in Sweden and other countries of accreditation; 15 per cent public diplomacy; 5 per cent visits management; 5 per cent post security officer.

The Hague

One EL2 policy position (Deputy Head of Mission)

Position description: 50 per cent political and economic analysis and reporting on bilateral and multilateral issues in the Netherlands; 30 per cent post management; 15 per cent public diplomacy; 5 per cent visits management.

Vienna UN

One BB2 corporate/functional position

Position description: 35 per cent post systems administrator; 35 per cent passports and consular services; 20 per cent financial and general administrative duties; 10 per cent assistant post security officer.

Question 2

Output 1.1.9

Topic: Mr Hyndes

Hansard pp. 28–31, 21 February 2008

Senator Ray

(a) Can Mr Hyndes' email of 16 August 2002 be tabled for the Committee?

(b) Did the Department take any action to prevent Mr Hyndes destroying any documents relevant to the Jenkins case?

(c) What steps did the Department take to protect any documents Mr Hyndes had?

(d) The answer to question 96 from the estimates committee in May 2007 revealed that Mr Hyndes should have surrendered his diplomatic passport when he commenced leave without pay in mid 1996. Why didn't the Department take steps to require Mr Hyndes to surrender his diplomatic passport while on leave without pay?

(e) Why was Mr Hyndes sanctioned for breaching the Public Service Code of Conduct with regard to only some aspects of his private sector employment in Thailand in 1996 but not others, including his failure to surrender the said diplomatic passport?

(f) Did the Thai authorities advise the Department of the charges they wanted to adduce against Mr Hyndes?

Answer

(a) A copy of the email is attached.

(b) No action was taken.

(c) No action was taken.

(d) Mr Hyndes circumstances in not returning to Australia were unusual. At the time, Mr Hyndes transferred from his diplomatic passport to his private passport, and his diplomatic passport was left to expire in early 1998. The department's processes for ensuring the return of diplomatic passports did not at that time cover these situations. The department has since revised its processes to cover situations such as Mr Hyndes'.

(e) Mr Hyndes was not charged with failure to return his diplomatic passport because the department's guidelines and processes at the time did not cover his particular circumstances.

(f) Yes.

Question 3

Output: Enabling Services

Topic: Appointments made by the Government

Written question

Senator Minchin

(a) Can the Department provide a list of all appointments which have been made by the Government (through Executive Council, Cabinet and Ministers) to Statutory Authorities, Executive Agencies and Advisory Boards, and provide a brief outline of the respective appointee's credentials.

(b) Can the Department provide a list of all vacancies which remain to be filled by Ministerial (including Cabinet and Executive Council) appointments.

Answer

DFAT

(a) Refer to part (1) of the response to Senate Question on Notice 117.
(b) Refer to part (2) of Senate Question on Notice 124 and 125.

Question 4

Output: Enabling Services

Topic: Grants

Written question

Senator Minchin

(a) Can the Department provide a list of all grants which have been approved by Ministers from within their portfolio.

Answer

(a) Please refer to part (3) of Senate Question on Notice 124 and 125.

Question 5

Output: Enabling Services

Topic: Funds reallocation within portfolio

Written question

Senator Minchin

(a) Can the Department provide details of requests it has made to the Department of Finance and Deregulation to move funds within the portfolio.

Answer

(a) Refer to part (4) of the response to Senate Question on Notice 129.

Question 6

Output: Enabling Services

Topic: Election promises

Written question

Senator Minchin

(a) Can the Government provide a complete list of election promises made during the campaign and which department is responsible for the administration of each of these commitments.

Answer
Refer to answer given to Senate Question on Notice numbers 160 and 161.

Question 7

Output 1.1.1

Topic: China—CITIC Group

Written question

Senator Stott Despoja

(a) What is the Government's assessment of allegations that the CITIC Group of China has been involved in arms trading and commercial espionage and maintains close links with the general staff of China's Military Commission?

Answer

We are aware of broad allegations that emerged in the late 1990s (including in a RAND report and US Congressional hearings relating to the activities of CITIC-linked companies in North America). We are not aware of the detail on which the allegations are based and thus cannot offer an assessment.

Question 8

Output 1.1.1

Topic: China—Human Rights

Written question

Senator Stott Despoja

(b) When China was awarded the Olympic Games in 2001, the Executive Director of the Beijing Organising Committee stated that the Games would "…speed up reform". Is it DFAT's assessment that this has actually occurred in the area of human rights? If so, what improvements have taken place?

(c) What sort of representations has the Australian Government made to the Chinese Government on the following issues?

(i) The arrest of human rights activist Hu Jia in December 2007?

(ii) Resolution of the conflict in Darfur?

(iii) The 2007 crack-down on pro-reform groups in Burma?

(d) With the recent arrest of Hu Jia as an example, is there any danger, in the Department's view, that China may actually crack down on dissent in the lead-up to the Olympic Games?

(e) In the department's view, is there any danger that hosting the Olympic Games will legitimise the policies of the Chinese Government?

Answer

(a) China has improved its human rights record in some areas over recent years, but serious shortcomings remain. The Chinese Government has made most progress in improving the social and economic rights of its people. The United Nations Development Program estimates the number of Chinese living in poverty decreased from 85 million in 1990 to 26.1 million in 2004 and China's infant mortality rate decreased from 32.2 per cent in 2000 to 19 per cent in 2005. Increasing access to communications such as the internet and mobile phones has bolstered China's growing civil society and Chinese people are increasingly aware of their rights and willing to exercise them. Legislative efforts to improve labour standards and impose a higher level of judicial review on death sentences are encouraging.

(b)

(i) The Australian Government has been following Mr Hu's case (and that of his family) closely. We raised Mr Hu and his wife, Ms Zeng Jinyan, as cases of concern at the most recent Australia-China Human Rights Dialogue (held in July 2007) and urged Chinese authorities to release Mr Hu and Ms Zeng from house arrest. Our Embassy in Beijing made further representations to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs on behalf of Mr Hu and his family on 22 February 2008.

(ii) The Australian Government is appalled and disturbed by the ongoing humanitarian crisis in Darfur and we strongly support international efforts to resolve the situation. The Foreign Minister, the Hon Stephen Smith MP, raised Darfur with China's Foreign Minister, Mr Yang Jiechi during the Australia China Strategic Dialogue on 5 February 2008. Officials have also raised with China our concerns about Darfur, most recently on 27 February 2008.

(iii) Maintaining international pressure on the Burmese regime to engage in a genuine process of political reform and national reconciliation has been a top foreign policy priority for the Australian Government. Mr Smith discussed Burma with his Chinese counterpart, Mr Yang, during the Australia China Strategic Dialogue on 5 February 2008, noting that pressure from China would be essential to efforts towards reform in Burma. The Australian Embassy in Beijing, has raised Burma with the Chinese Ministry for Foreign Affairs regularly, including at Ambassador-level, since the September 2007 protests.

(c) We are concerned there have been additional restrictions in some areas of human rights in China, such as freedom of expression, in the lead up to the Olympics. Increasing external commentary and focus on human rights issues have also drawn greater attention to human rights issues (including not directly related to the Olympics). The Government is concerned about human rights abuses regardless of their rationale and timing and we have told China that its treatment of human rights in the context of the Olympics will influence international perceptions of China and its Olympics.

(d) No.

Question 9

Output 1.1.1

Topic: Japanese policy on whaling

Hansard p. 52, 21 February 2008

Senator Payne

(g) What was the precise timing of Japan's decision to not hunt Humpback whales?

(h) If the announcement was made towards the end of December, can you advise whether that was the date of the decision or whether a decision had been made earlier?

Answer

On the afternoon of 21 December 2007, Japan's Chief Cabinet Secretary Machimura announced during a press conference that Japan would not take humpback whales as part of Japan's current 'scientific whaling' program in the Southern Ocean (JARPA II) during the 2007/08 summer. We are not aware of the exact date the Japanese Government made the decision not to hunt humpback whales.

Question 10

Output 1.1.1

Topic: Quadrilateral dialogue

Hansard p. 57, 21 February 2008

Senator Trood

(i) Did the Foreign Minister discuss with the Japanese Foreign Minister the issue of Australia not pursuing the Quadrilateral Dialogue?

(j) Was this issue discussed with senior officials of the Japanese government?

Answer

Mr Smith outlined the Government's position on the quadrilateral dialogue in a media conference on 1 February in Tokyo. It is not DFAT's practice to comment on the content of Ministers' confidential discussions with their overseas counterparts.

Question 11

Output 1.1.2

Topic: Burma—Human rights

Written question

Senator Stott Despoja

(f) What is the department's assessment of the human rights situation in Burma since the crack-down on pro-democracy protests last year?

(g) What policy does the new government intend to adopt towards Burma? ill the Australian Government pursue additional punitive measures given the deep flaws in the constitutional reform process?

Answer

(a) The people of Burma suffer from systematic and serious abuses of their fundamental human rights and freedoms. Such abuses are an intrinsic part of the wider political framework in Burma, under which the regime denies any political role to groups outside the military and maintains its rule by comprehensive repression. Several thousand protesters, monks and democracy activists were detained immediately prior, during and after the September 2007 protests. Most were subsequently released, but the Australian Government believes that approximately 400 are still being held, of whom less than 20 have been tried. Nearly six months after the protests, detentions (usually short-term) continue as a method of intimidation. Daw Aung San Suu Kyi remains under house arrest. Around 1,100 political prisoners have also been held by Burmese authorities since before the 2007 protests.

(b) The Australian Government deplores the Burmese regime's disregard for the democratic aspirations of its people and its disrespect for their human rights. The Government has made discussions with other key countries on the political, economic and humanitarian situation in Burma an early high priority. The Government strongly supports action on Burma by the United Nations, including the Secretary-General's use of his good offices to start a meaningful dialogue between the Burmese regime and Aung San Suu Kyi.

The Government has expressed its concern that Burma's 'roadmap to democracy', including the planned constitutional referendum in May 2008, is a fundamentally flawed process designed to perpetuate the military's dominant position. In addition to its international diplomatic efforts, the Government maintains pressure on Burma through imposing a ban on defence exports and targeted financial sanctions and visa restrictions against senior regime figures, their associates and supporters.

Question 12

Output 1.1.2

Topic: West Papua

Written question

Senator Nettle

(h) Can you provide an update on the situation in West Papua?

(i) What is DFAT's assessment of the progress of Special Autonomy?

(j) What does DFAT do to monitor the situation in West Papua?

(k) How many visits have Australian officials made to West Papua?

(l) Have DFAT officials met with West Papuan leaders, either in West Papua, Indonesia or Australia?

(m) If special autonomy fails, what alternatives would the Australian government support?

(n) What is the current situation in regard to media access to West Papua?

(o) What representations has the Australia government made to Indonesia regarding West Papua?

(p) What is DFAT's assessment of military conflict in West Papua? Has DFAT received any reports of OPM activity?

Answer

(a) On 4 March 2008, following a meeting with Papuan political leaders in Jakarta, the Indonesian Government announced authorities would prepare a Government Regulation in Lieu of Legislation (Perpu) to address the status of West Papua province under the 2001 Special Autonomy Law. The Indonesian Government's announcement was welcomed by Papuan leaders.

(b) Implementation of the Special Autonomy Law is ongoing.

(c) DFAT engages with a range of government and non-government interlocutors on Papuan issues and officials make regular visits to the Indonesian region of Papua.

(d) In 2007, Australian officials, from a range of agencies, made 12 separate visits to the Papuan provinces. Four separate visits have been made so far in 2008.

(e) Yes. Australian Government officials meet Papuan leaders and officials during visits to the Papuan region. From time to time, DFAT meets Indonesians from Papua at their request in Australia.

(f) Not appropriate to speculate.

(g) The process for gaining media access to Papua is a matter for the Indonesian Government. The Australian Government continues to raise with Indonesia the importance of access to Papua for credible observers, including by foreign journalists with appropriate visas.

(h) The Australian Government regularly discusses with the Indonesian Government the importance of access to Papua for credible observers and urges the Indonesian Government to investigate alleged human rights abuses and ensure the human rights of all Indonesians are respected.

(i) There have been few reports of alleged Papua Freedom Movement (OPM) activity recently. In December 2006, suspected OPM members allegedly murdered two Indonesian military (TNI) members in Puncak Jaya District, Papua. On 10 April 2006, suspected OPM members allegedly attacked a TNI border post in Wutung Keerom District, Papua, resulting in the deaths of two TNI members and two civilians.

Question 13

Output 1.1.2

Topic: Burma—Positions on constitutional reform

Written question

Senator Stott Despoja

(q) What are the respective positions of India, China and ASEAN towards the constitutional reform process currently being undertaken by the State Peace and Development Council?

(r) What is the nature of Australia's support for training of police and security officials through ASEAN? How many Burmese officials have benefited from this training?

Answer

(a) The Indian Government has stated that the process of national reconciliation and political reform in Burma should be inclusive, broad-based and taken forward expeditiously, so as to bring about genuine reconciliation and progress towards democracy. The Chinese Government has said that the Burmese Government is determined to speed up the implementation of the Seven Point Roadmap and has fixed a timetable accordingly, which should be affirmed and welcomed. ASEAN foreign ministers met in Singapore in February. Singapore's Minister for Foreign Affairs, George Yeo, who chaired the meeting, said afterwards that the ASEAN foreign ministers responded positively to Burma's announcement of a timetable for the roadmap but that there remained considerable scepticism about the details of implementation.

(b) Australia does not train, or support training for, Burmese police and security officials through ASEAN.

Question 14

Output 1.1.2

Topic: Burma—Australian investment

Written question

Senator Stott Despoja

(s) To the department's knowledge, are there any Australian companies operating in Burma or providing products or services under contract to the SPDC?

(t) To the department's knowledge, do SPDC officials maintain any financial investments in Australia or with Australian companies?

Answer

(a) The department is aware that a few Australian companies conduct business in Burma.

(b) The department does not monitor foreign investment in Australia. The Foreign Investment Review Board examines proposals by foreign interests for investment in Australia and advises the Government on foreign investment matters generally.

Australia's financial sanctions, introduced in October 2007, have the effect of restricting certain transactions involving the transfer of funds or payments to, by the order of, or on behalf of specified members of the Burmese regime and their supporters and associates, without the specific approval of the Reserve Bank of Australia. These measures are implemented by the Reserve Bank through instruments made under the *Banking Act 1959* and *Banking (Foreign Exchange) Regulations 1959*. Australia's list of 418 sanctioned individuals includes all members of the SPDC.

Question 15

Output 1.1.3

Topic: Mr Smiths' speech to the Financial Services lunch

Hansard pp. 43 & 57–58, 21 February 2008

Senator Payne

(k) Was there any transcript or recording by officials of Mr Smith's speech to the Financial Services lunch in New York?

(l) Has the Department, the Minister's Office, the Post in New York or the Embassy in Washington received any comments or complaints as a result of the reported remarks made by the Minister at the Financial Services lunch?

Answer

(a) No.

(b) No. The only correspondence received by the Department was from an attendee at the lunch expressing appreciation for having met the Minister.

Question 16

Output 1.1.5

Topic: Sudan

Written question

Senator Stott Despoja

(a) What is the Department's assessment of the situation in Darfur, Sudan?

(b) How is the combined UN/African Union force progressing in its application of UN Security Council Resolution 1769?

(c) How many of the 26 000 personnel called for to implement this Resolution have now been secured and deployed?

(d) I understand that the UN force was having difficulty securing the necessary helicopters to perform its mission—is this still the case?

(e) What obstacles has the UN/AU force encountered in conducting its mission?

(f) What is this Government's policy towards the Australian contribution of personnel and resources to Sudan? Is the Government intending to consider the UN Secretary-General's appeal for additional resources, particularly helicopters?

Answer

(a) The Government is very concerned by the ongoing crisis in Darfur, particularly its appalling humanitarian cost. We strongly support international efforts to resolve the conflict in Darfur and welcome the deployment of the joint United Nations/African Union (UN/AU) peacekeeping operation (UNAMID), which took over responsibility for peacekeeping in Darfur from the AU Mission in

Sudan (AMIS) at the end of 2007. The Government urges all parties to the conflict in Darfur to facilitate the deployment of UNAMID and work towards a comprehensive settlement of the conflict.

(b) The latest report of the UN Secretary-General on the deployment of the African Union-United Nations Hybrid Operation in Darfur of 25 March 2008 (S/2008/186) is available at http://www.un.org/Docs/sc/sgrep08.htm.

(c) According to the UN Secretary General's report of 25 March 2008, as at 29 February the total strength of UNAMID was 9,212 uniformed personnel; including 7,467 military personnel, 1,605 police officers, and one formed police unit; and a total of 1,312 civilians.

(d) The UN Secretary General's report of 25 March 2008 notes the process of generating aviation (and transportation) units has not yet been successful. The Department of Peacekeeping Operations received pledges from Ethiopia for four attack helicopters, but the mission is still short of credible offers for three military aviation units (18 helicopters in total) and additional attack helicopters to meet the full operational requirement (two attack helicopters in addition to the Ethiopian pledge).

(e) See (b).

(f) On 30 March 2008, Prime Minister Rudd announced Australia would make available up to nine military officers to assist UNAMID, and to provide a further $5 million in humanitarian assistance to Darfur. This is in addition to aid provided since mid-2004, comprising $71 million in humanitarian aid to Sudan (more than $57 million has been for Darfur and $13 million for Southern Sudan) and $11 million to address spill-over effects in neighbouring countries. Australia also provides 15 Australian Defence Force and 10 Australian Federal Police personnel to the UN Mission in Sudan (UNMIS) implementing the north-south Comprehensive Peace Agreement of 2005.

Question 17

Output 1.1.5

Topic: WA sandalwood industry

Hansard p. 108, 21 February 2008

Senator Cormann

(m) Is the Department aware of the challenges the sandalwood industry is facing in its efforts to export to India and have these ever been raised with Indian officials?

(n) If not, is that something the Department would give consideration to in the future?

Answer

The Department is aware of the challenges facing the sandalwood industry in exporting to India.

The Australian High Commissioner has written to the Secretaries of the Indian Ministries of Commerce and Finance to seek the removal or reduction of India's tariff on sandalwood oil. The Department will continue to follow up these representations.

Question 18

Output 1.1.5

Topic: Zimbabwe

Written question

Senator Stott Despoja

(g) What is the Government's assessment of the stability of Zimbabwean President Mugabe's hold on power?

Answer

(a) Presidential and Parliamentary elections were held in Zimbabwe on 29 March 2008. As at 4 April 2008 final results were only available for the 210-seat House of Assembly, which indicated that the ruling ZANU–PF party had lost its majority. The opposition Movement for Democratic Change (MDC—Tsvangirai group) won 99 seats, ZANU–PF 97 seats, MDC (Mutambara group) 10 seats and one seat for an independent candidate, with by-elections to be held for the remaining three seats. The outcome of the Presidential election is unknown at this time.

Question 19

Output 1.1.6

Topic: Solomon Islands—RAMSI

Written question

Senator Stott Despoja

(h) What is the Government's view of the extent to which RAMSI has been successful in achieving its mandate?

(i) What remains to be achieved by RAMSI and what is the anticipated timeframe for the achievement of these goals?

(j) What is the Government's assessment of the extent to which the successful achievement of the RAMSI mandate will contribute to lasting stability and development in the Solomon Islands?

(k) A report by the Centre for Independent Studies criticised the RAMSI mission for not focusing more on the economic development needs of the Solomon Islands. I understand that RAMSI's mandate is dependent on the approval of the Solomons Government but has the Australian Government made any representations to the Solomons Government seeking an expansion in the mandate of RAMSI to include a greater focus on economic development? If so, what was the response? If not, why not?

(l) Is it the Government's assessment that the inclusion of broader range of economic development activities in RAMSI's mandate would in fact improve the prospect of RAMSI's mission ultimately being successful? If not, why not?

Answer

(a) RAMSI's record of achievement in four years in Solomon Islands is significant. RAMSI's mandate, agreed between the Solomon Islands and Pacific Islands Forum Leaders, is to restore civil order; stabilise government finances; promote longer term economic recovery and rebuild the machinery of government. RAMSI has assisted the Solomon Islands Government make considerable improvements in each of these mandated areas, including by:

- restoring law and order throughout Solomon Islands
- removing 3,600 guns from the community
- improving access to income generation opportunities and social services and supporting the rehabilitation of key roads and bridges in Guadalcanal and Malaita,
- supporting trials for crimes committed during the 'ethnic tensions' over 50% of which have been completed
- supporting the capacity building of the Solomon Islands Police Force, including through the graduation of 332 new police recruits
- supporting the training of 2,000 public servants, and
- in 2006/07, helping the Solomon Islands achieve an economic growth rate of 6.1%, creating new jobs and new opportunities for Solomon Islanders.

(b) RAMSI is working hard to achieve its goals in partnership with Solomon Islands, but recognises much work needs to be done. The achievement of its goals should be measured through jointly agreed indicative and conditions-based timelines for phasing the Mission down. Until these conditions are met, RAMSI will remain in Solomon Islands as long as it is welcome and has a job to do.

(c) Implementation of the RAMSI mandate is making a critical contribution to lasting stability and development in Solomon Islands.

(d) No. The Australian Minister for Foreign Affairs participated in the inaugural meeting of the Pacific Islands Forum Ministerial Standing Committee on RAMSI (comprising the Foreign Ministers of Tonga, Papua New Guinea, Niue, Solomon Islands and Australia), which was held in Honiara on 22 February 2008. This meeting marked the beginning of a new phase in the partnership between RAMSI and Solomon Islands.

The Committee underlined the importance of consultation between the Solomon Islands Government and RAMSI to prepare jointly agreed development strategies, including economic development, and endorsed the proposal for a Solomon Islands Government-RAMSI Partnership Framework. The Framework will provide a mechanism for mutual responsibility in setting priorities to achieve the Solomon Islands Government's broader policy objectives. It will develop mutually-agreed, conditions-based timelines with a view to reducing the

Mission's engagement in critical areas of government as the capacity of the Solomon Islands Government continues to grow.

(e) The Australian Government considers that RAMSI has been very successful in facilitating the restoration of law and order in Solomon Islands and is making good progress in working with Solomon Islands in strengthening institutions. In addition, RAMSI, through development programs, provides significant support for the economic development of Solomon Islands by funding rural development and transport infrastructure, assisting with the implementation of economic reforms to improve the investment environment and facilitating macroeconomic stability. Given RAMSI's current mandate, agreed by the Pacific Island Forum, and current resourcing, RAMSI considers that bilateral donors, including Australia, are better placed to fund additional economic development activities through longer-term funding commitments. The Prime Minster, in his 8 March 2008 meeting with the Solomon Islands Prime Minster Dr Sikua, offered an additional $14.5 million over the next two years through the Australian aid program. The funds are directed at supporting further work in priority areas including rural infrastructure, tsunami relief, health, technical education and reforestation.

Question 20

Output 1.1.8

Topic: Trade policy review

Hansard p. 105, 21 February 2008

Senator Cormann

(o) Can the Minister provide some detail on when Messrs Mortimer and Edwards were approached to be part of the Review of Trade Policies?

Answer

The Minister made contact with both Mr Mortimer and Dr Edwards in the period leading up to his 21 February public announcement that launched the review of export policies and programs. The purpose of those contacts was to seek an indication of their availability and for the Minister to outline the key elements of the review.

Question 21

Output 1.1.8

Topic: Market access barriers: olive Oil

Hansard p. 102, 21 February 2008

Senator Fierravanti–Wells

(p) Are there any market access barriers in place which impact on Australia's ability to export olive oil to countries in the European Community?

Answer

Australia (along with other exporting countries) is required to ensure olive oil for export to the European Union meets particular technical compositional requirements. These technical compositional requirements have resulted in the rejection of several shipments of high quality Australian olive oil by Italy and other EU member states in recent years.

The European Union and its Member States argue that these restrictive compositional requirements found within the European standards (and Codex standards) are necessary to guarantee the integrity of olive oils. They claim these protect consumers from fraudulent oil products being sold as "olive oil", particularly given the high value of olive oil relative to other vegetable oils.

The compositional limits work to the advantage of large European producers because if their oil product does not meet the limits, they can blend olive oils until they achieve the compositional limit. This avenue is not generally available to smaller Australian producers aiming for a high end niche market.

Data on the composition of Australian olive oils indicate that a significant proportion of authentic Australian olive oils do not meet at least one of the compositional requirements set in the European Standard (and current Codex Standard). As a result, Australian olive oils may be rejected or producers may be required to accept a lower price. It is expected that import rejections by European member countries based on technical standards will be an ongoing issue while the current European technical requirements remain in place.

Australia has and will continue to negotiate within the Codex Alimentarius Commission to change the compositional requirements to truly reflect global variation in olive oil composition. Support for Australia's position is growing amongst non-European olive oil producing countries.

In addition to these standards requirements, the EU imposes tariffs on imports of olive oil ranging from 122.6 €/100 kg/net (approx A$205.63) for Virgin Lampante olive oil to 134.6 €/100 kg/net (A$225.72) for non-virgin olive oil. Australia has been pushing for reduced agricultural tariffs, which include olive oil, in the WTO Doha negotiations. While the outcome on Doha remains unclear, it is expected that there will be some reduction in olive oil tariffs should the World Trade Organisation's Doha Round successfully conclude. Imported olive oil is subject to EU labelling standards and importers must hold an EU import licence.

Question 22

Output 1.1.9

Topic: Mamdouh Habib: Report of Pakistan Meeting October 22, 2001

Hansard p. 33, 21 February 2008

Senator Nettle

(q) Did the Department receive any reports about the meeting that occurred on 22 October, 2001 in Pakistan regarding Mamdouh Habib?

(r) If there was a report, was that report provided to the Minister for Foreign Affairs?

Answer

(a) We understand that the AFP representative who was at that meeting in Pakistan recalls that he had briefed the former Australian High Commissioner to Pakistan and the former Australian Consul. The Department does not have any record of that briefing.

(b) The Department does not have any record indicating that the briefing was reported to Canberra or to the Minister for Foreign Affairs.

Question 23

Output 1.1.10

Topic: US program of rendition

Hansard p. 33, 21 February 2008

Senator Nettle

(a) When did the Department first become aware of the United States program for the rendition of prisoners?

Answer

It is not possible to specify an exact date on which the Department first became aware of the United States program for the rendition of prisoners. The Department notes that the extradition and rendition of terrorists to the United States was referred to in the United States' State Department report 'Patterns of Global Terrorism' 1998.

Question 24

Output 1.1.10

Topic: Services to military deployments

Written question

Senator Stott Despoja

(a) What role does DFAT play in coordinating Australian missions overseas that require input from a number of Government and non-government agencies, for example, AusAID, the Australian Defence Force, the Australian Federal Police, etc?

(b) Has the Department taken any steps to improve how multi-agency missions, such as our assistance to Timor Leste or Afghanistan, are coordinated? If so, what steps are these?

Answer

(a) In Canberra and overseas, the Department coordinates Australia's 'whole of government' overseas deployments. In recent years, this has included assistance to East Timor, the deployment of the Regional Assistance Mission to the Solomon Islands (RAMSI) and Australia's engagement in Afghanistan. The Department has a framework for managing these missions, which is based around a DFAT-chaired standing interdepartmental committee (IDC) process which engages all relevant agencies, including the Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet, AusAID, the Australian Defence Force, the Australian Federal Police. The DFAT-chaired IDC process falls under the broader national security decision-making framework, at the apex of which sits the National Security Committee of Cabinet. On the ground Australian diplomatic missions play a key role in ensuring the approaches of the various Australian government agencies are coordinated.

(b) DFAT in consultation with relevant agencies maintains a close watch on other overseas missions to ensure the effectiveness of coordination between relevant agencies. The Standing IDC process provides a venue for discussion between DFAT and other relevant agencies of all issues surrounding these multi-agency deployments. DFAT-chaired Standing IDCs allow also for adjustments to be made to the approaches taken by missions once they have deployed in response to local circumstances and other factors.

Question 25

Output 3.1.2

Topic: Australia on the World Stage

Written question

Senator Stott Despoja

(m) On what basis was the decision taken to axe the cultural relations fund, *Australia on the World Stage*? What were the factors that led to this program being cut as opposed to other DFAT programs?

(n) What strategies will the Government employ to mitigate the impact of this loss of funding for the promotion of Australian culture?

Answer

(a) The reversal of the *Australia on the World Stage* was an election commitment.

(b) The Government believes cultural diplomacy is a useful means of engendering a wider and deeper understanding of Australian values and ideas overseas, and generating demand for more exports. It has therefore decided to retain core elements of the cultural diplomacy programs which are administered by the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade under the auspices of the Australia International Cultural Council (AICC).

Key elements of AICC programs will continue:

- An extensive presentation of cultural activities in Indonesia under the focus country program, which was launched on 6 March 2008, is being resourced to the same extent as previously planned. Programs will proceed in the United States in 2009 and China in 2010 on a more modest but still effective scale.
- The Embassy Film Roadshow, which promotes Australian film through stand-alone mini film festivals, will continue to be supported at pre-*Australia on the World Stage* levels.
- The Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Program, which promotes greater awareness of Indigenous cultures internationally, and two programs which tour visual arts and music to South East Asia, will be funded at levels that applied before the reversal of *Australia on the World Stage.*
- The International Cultural Visits Program, which hosts visits to Australia by decision-makers in the cultural industries of other countries, will continue next financial year with a reduced level of funding.
- A modest grants scheme for international touring will be made available in 2008-09.

Question 26

Output 3.1.2

Topic: Australia on the World Stage

Hansard pp. 13 & 14, 21 February 2008

Senator Brandis

(s) How many Australian performing arts companies were recipients of funding under the *Australia on the World Stage* program in the last year of its operation?

(t) How many international performances were involved in each case?

(u) What is the amount by which each of those performances was subsidised from the program?

Answer

(a) Thirty-three performing arts projects were supported as a result of the 2007/08 *Australia on the World Stage* budget measure, which provided increased funding to the Australia International Cultural Council (AICC):

- Eleven performing arts projects were supported under the new AICC grants program—8 of these were for companies and 3 for individuals. Other artforms were also supported.
- Six performing arts groups and one musician were supported to be included in the Paris Festival quartier d'été 2007.
- Five music groups were supported to tour to the Jakarta International Java Jazz Festival under the AICC's focus country program for Indonesia.
- Five physical theatre companies performed in Beijing and Shanghai in October-November 2007 as part of the Festival of Australian Theatre.
- Three music groups were supported under the Fine Music Touring Program of the AICC.
- One musical group was supported to tour to India as a follow-up to the 2006-07 AICC AusArts India program.
- One musician was supported under the AICC's Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander program.

(b) The exact number of international performances is difficult to determine as many projects are either still underway or yet to commence. The attached table provides additional information, where known.

(c) See attached table.

Individual/ Organisation	Project	Number of performances	AICC Funding	AICC Funding as % total budget
AICC Grants Program				
Ross Edwards	Participating in the Tucson Winter Festival and other promotional activities in West Coast US centres in March 2008	A range of performances of Edwards' compositions, including the opening and closing ceremonies of Tucson festival and a performance at Yale University	$4,093	100%
Auspicious Arts	Touring *We Don't Dance for No Reason* to Port Moresby in March 2008	Season at the Moresby Arts Theatre and a free community performance	$38,000	67%
Tony Yap Company	Australian contemporary dance artists collaborating with South Korea's Nottle Theatre Company and Singapore's The Necessary Stage from December 2007 to February 2008	Extensive cultural collaboration culminating in showings in Seoul and Singapore	$21,000	35%
White Cockatoo Performing Group	Touring to South Africa in May 2008 for a range of public events	Number of performances not yet confirmed	$49,400	100%
Sydney Theatre Company	Presenting *The Convict's Opera* by Sydney Theatre Company in the UK in October 2008	Five-city tour of the UK; number of performances not yet confirmed	$65,000	20%
Alister Spence Trio	Touring the Alister Spence Trio to the 2008 Tokyo Jazz Festival	2-4 performances at the festival	$7,971	54%
Australian Art Orchestra	Touring *Into the Fire* by the Australian Art Orchestra to major cities in India in May 2008	Tour to four cities; number of performances not yet confirmed	$57,620	43%

Individual/ Organisation	Project	Number of performances	AICC Funding	AICC Funding as % total budget
Elision Ensemble	Performing *The Navigators* at the Paris Opera House as part of the Festival d'automne in 2008	Number of performances not yet confirmed	$52,300	38%
Christine Anu	Performances by Christine Anu at various events for G'day USA in Los Angeles and New York in January 2008	Various events including gala dinner and 'Australia Plays Broadway' show	$53,363	100%
Richard Walley	Performances by Richard Walley at various events for G'day USA in Los Angeles and New York in January 2008	Various events including gala dinner and 'Australia Plays Broadway' show	$19,870	100%
MAAP – Multimedia Art Asia Pacific Inc	To present Australian performance artists Stelarc and Transmute Collective in Beijing at the National Art Museum of China in the China International New Media Art Exhibition in June-July 2008	Number of performances not yet confirmed	$30,000	28%
AICC Indonesia Focus Country Program				
Julien Wilson Trio	Tour to Jakarta International Java Jazz Festival March 2008	2 performances	$11,205	80%
Katalyst	Tour to Jakarta International Java Jazz Festival March 2008	2 performances	$27,050	80%
Kristin Berardi and Band	Tour to Jakarta International Java Jazz Festival March 2008	3 performances	$22,215	80%

Individual/ Organisation	Project	Number of performances	AICC Funding	AICC Funding as % total budget
Mike Nock Trio	Tour to Jakarta International Java Jazz Festival March 2008	2 performances	$11,025	80%
Coda	Tour to Jakarta International Java Jazz Festival March 2008	3 performances	$24,460	80%
Festival of Australian Theatre (Grant paid to project managers Hirano Productions)				
Chunky Move	Presentation of *Glow* at Chaoyang Cultural Centre, Beijing, and Shanghai Dramatic Arts Centre	12 performances	$100,000 as a contribution to performance fees for the five companies	32%
Strange Fruit	Free performances of *Synchroswing* at Chaoyang park in Beijing	4 performances		
The Blue Grassy Knoll	Performed an original score to a 1922 Chinese silent movie 'Labourer's Love' and a 1924 Buster Keaton film 'Sherlock Jr' in Beijing and Shanghai	7 performances		
Men of Steel	*The Beginning, The Cinema, The Forest* at Beijing Oriental Pioneer Theatre	6 performances		
Uncle Semolina and Friends	Presentation of the play *Gilgamesh* at Chaoyang Cultural Centre, Beijing and Shanghai Dramatic Arts Centre	8 performances		

Individual/ Organisation	Project	Number of performances	AICC Funding	AICC Funding as % total budget
AICC Fine Music Touring Program				
Tigramuna	Tour to Singapore and Brunei, July-August 2007	2 performances	$6,900	54%
Monsieur Camembert	Tour to Thailand October 2007	2 performances	$12,000	58%
The Idea of North	Tour to Malaysia November 2007	3 performances	$14,000	51%
AICC Program at the Paris Summer Festival (Grant paid to Paris Festival quartier d'été as event manager)				
William Barton	Public concerts in July 2007 in parks around Paris	4 concerts	$119,887	N/A
The Presets	Australian Music Week at Montmarte Arenas, Paris	1 concert		
The Art of Fighting	Australian Music Week at Montmarte Arenas, Paris	1 concert		
David Chesworth Ensemble	Australian Music Week at Montmarte Arenas, Paris	1 concert		
Paul Grabowski Trio	Australian Music Week at Montmarte Arenas, Paris	1 concert		
Architecture in Helsinki	Australian Music Week at Montmarte Arenas, Paris	1 concert		
Back to Back Theatre Company	Performances of *Small Metal Objects* in August 2007	5 performances		

Individual/ Organisation	Project	Number of performances	AICC Funding	AICC Funding as % total budget
AICC Follow-up to AusArts India				
Downsyde	Perth-based hip hop group Downsyde tour to New Delhi January 2008	Final number of performances not yet known	$38,977	Not yet known
Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Program				
William Barton	Tour to Brussels for Anzac Weekend concert as part of the Battle of Passchendaele remembrance ceremony.	1 concert and 2 school workshops	$3,500	70%