

SENATE STANDING COMMITTEE ON LEGAL AND CONSTITUTIONAL AFFAIRS
AUSTRALIAN SECURITY INTELLIGENCE ORGANISATION

Question No. 180

Senator Rhiannon asked the following question at the hearing on 24 May 2012:

- a) Why has the new headquarters building required further funding on numerous occasions?
- b) What have been the main overruns?
- c) How much is this project now over budget?

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

- a) Reviews of the estimates costs required to complete the building are undertaken on a regular basis. In August 2011, it was identified that there was a potential shortfall. This shortfall was met from within both ASIO's and the Department of Finance and Deregulation's (DoFD) existing budgets.

As the project approaches its completion, there are fewer opportunities to offset elements that end up costing more or taking longer to complete than originally estimated.

The most recent cost review undertaken in March 2012 identified a further shortfall of \$31.9 million. ASIO's share of this overrun is \$14.6 million which will be met from ASIO's existing capital budget. DoFD sought and obtained Expenditure Review Committee approval for an additional \$17.3 million to meet Finance's share of the overrun.

- b) Some of the additional costs for the new building are to fund additional scope. This includes \$5.8 million from ASIO to fit out audio-visual equipment, and \$10 million from DoFD to remove asbestos that was found on the site.
- c) The total cost of overruns identified to date is \$41.6 million, which equates to seven per cent of the approved budget of \$589.2 million set in 2008. ASIO's total contribution to cost overruns is \$24.3 million which has been met from ASIO's existing capital budget. Further questions on the budget for this project should be directed to the Department of Finance and Deregulation.