

SENATE STANDING COMMITTEE ON LEGAL AND CONSTITUTIONAL AFFAIRS
AUSTRALIAN FEDERAL POLICE

Question No. 41

Senator Brandis asked the following question at the hearing on 26 May 2011:

Mr Colvin: The [Christmas Island riots] incident commenced on 11 March. As I said, we had 32 members there on that day—

Senator BRANDIS: Just for the sake of completeness, obviously a deployment at that level, 32, reflects a view held at the time that there was no imminent threat?

Mr Colvin: That is correct. So the 32 [officers] was commensurate with what we believed was the level of threat on the island. Between 12 April and 20 March we deployed an additional 158 members in support of this operation.

Senator BRANDIS: Is that all at the same time?

Mr Colvin: No, it was graduated and obviously some people come on the island, others come off. We need to rotate people through. There are capacities used on island as well.

Senator BRANDIS: Have you got that tabulated for us?

Mr Colvin: I think we actually do have the ons and offs. I might just have to take a moment to get it.

....

Senator BRANDIS: If you have got it ready it is probably a convenient time for you to table that document. Are you in a position to do that now?

Mr Colvin: I do not think we would be. We would need to have a look and actually go through it, because, as the commissioner said, there have been 107 movements in the last few years so we are talking about a lot of ups and downs.

Senator BRANDIS: Rather than put you at risk of giving us a document that you are not completely satisfied with, why don't you just take that on notice and if you can satisfy yourself between now and the end of your evidence perhaps you could table it then. If you cannot, just take it on notice and provide it to us. But I think you have told me largely what I was looking for.

Mr Colvin: Can I just correct one point?

Senator BRANDIS: Yes.

Mr Colvin: I did say to you that we deployed 158 members between 12 April and 20 March. That would be the wrong way around of course, but it was actually 158 members deployed between 12 March and 20 March. It was a quite intense period of eight days where we moved resources onto the island.

....

Senator BRANDIS: As part of that exercise can you also please provide the committee with a month-by-month breakdown of the number of officers deployed to Christmas Island over the past year and during the period of the riots. Obviously I would like the March period to be disaggregated on a daily basis during what you called the critical period—but, otherwise, a month-by-month breakdown for the past year of the deployments on Christmas Island.

Mr Colvin: We can do that. I am just looking at the document I have in front of me. It will take some time but I do not see any great objection to me reading it onto the record.

Senator BRANDIS: I have no objection to you doing that. What I have asked might be time consuming so why don't you do that?

Mr Colvin: How far back would you like us to go?

Senator BRANDIS: A year ago. Back to May 2010.

Mr Colvin: On 1 May 2010 the AFP deployed one person to bring our total number to 44 on island. That was a proactive measure by the AFP and part and parcel probably of normal rotation, which a lot of this will be. On 4 May we moved one person off. On 6 May we moved—

Senator BRANDIS: I do not want you to do it for a whole year on a day-by-day basis, though.

CHAIR: You asked for that so—

Mr Colvin: I did say it might take some time.

Senator BRANDIS: That is not what I understood you to be saying. I asked for a month-by-month and then during the critical incident period a day-by-day, not a day-by-day for a whole year.

Mr Colvin: I can aggregate this together. It will take me some time to do that.

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

Please see the tables below. Table one details the monthly AFP deployments to Christmas Island for the period May 2010 to May 2011. Table two contains the daily deployments for the period 11 March to 26 March 2011.

The figures for the period 11 – 26 March 2011 represent the daily count as reported in the Senior Officer on Island's daily situation report.

TABLE 1
AFP DEPLOYMENTS TO CHRISTMAS ISLAND MAY 2010 TO MAY 2011

Date	Total AFP numbers month-by-month on Christmas Island counted on first day of each month	Sworn Members	Unsworn Members
1 May 2010	44	36	8
1 June 2010	37	33	4
1 July 2010	30	26	4
1 August 2010	40	33	7
1 September 2010	35	31	4
1 October 2010	39	30	9
1 November 2010	35	29	6
1 December 2010	26	20	6
1 January 2011	48	34	14
1 February 2011	32	21	11
1 March 2011	34	26	8
1 April 2011	161	145	16
1 May 2011	70	60	10

TABLE 2**AFP DEPLOYMENTS TO CHRISTMAS ISLAND 11 - 26 MARCH 2011**

Date	Total Members on Christmas Island	Sworn Members	Unsworn Members
11 March 2011	32	26	6
12 March 2011	56	48	8
13 March 2011	86	75	11
14 March 2011	86	75	11
15 March 2011	118	106	12
16 March 2011	116	105	11
17 March 2011	117	103	14
18 March 2011	117	103	14
19 March 2011	187	169	18
20 March 2011	187	169	18

Date	Total Members on Christmas Island	Sworn Members	Unsworn Members
21 March 2011	188	172	16
22 March 2011	195	178	17
23 March 2011	198	179	19
24 March 2011	202	183	19
25 March 2011	183	168	15
26 March 2011	183	168	15

(*Table above details the increase in numbers to the peak deployment number of 202 personnel on 24 March 2011.)