

SENATE STANDING COMMITTEE ON LEGAL AND CONSTITUTIONAL AFFAIRS
AUSTRALIAN FEDERAL POLICE

Question No. 11

Senator Brandis asked the following question at the hearing on 18 October 2011:

Senator BRANDIS: In the 2009 budget the government provided \$41.6 million over four years to fund additional AFP officers for the People Smuggling Strike Team and for other purposes. I am reading from Budget Paper No. 2 of that year on page 93. In 2011-12 and 2012-13 that appropriation tailed off to respectively \$5.7 million and \$5.4 million. That was the projection at the time of the 2009 budget. Can you tell me what the funding position of the People Smuggling Strike Team is currently, please?

Mr Colvin: I may have to take that on notice to give you an exact figure because there were a number of government funding lines that support the people-smuggling effort of the AFP.

Senator BRANDIS: Okay. You might have to take that on notice.

...

Senator BRANDIS:... If you have Budget Paper No. 2 for that year you will see the aggregate of those various measures over four years was, as I said, \$41.6 million, which did include what is described as:

... to fund additional Australian Federal Police (AFP) officers for the People Smuggling Strike Team; establish a technical investigation unit in Indonesia; and deploy AFP liaison officers to Sri Lanka, Pakistan, Indonesia, Malaysia and Thailand.

I am keen to know whether the level of deployment of those officers that was provided for under that four-year program has been kept at that level, whether it has increased or whether it has decreased.

Mr Colvin: I will take that on notice, but I am quite confident that the level has been kept at the level it was then.

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

a) People Smuggling Strike Team funding

The People Smuggling Strike Team is funded through two sources:

1. *Unauthorised Arrivals in Australia – additional resourcing to investigate and detect organised people smuggling* (Budget Paper No. 2 of 2000-2001)

This forms part of the core budget funding for the AFP of approximately \$4.6m per annum.

2. *Border Protection – combating people smuggling – enhancing Australian Federal Police and regional capability* - (Budget Paper No.2 of 2009-2010) contained 3 elements totalling funding of \$41.5m;
 - i). *Enhancing AFP People Smuggling Strike Team (PSST) Capability* - this element allocated \$10.4 million over 4 years (\$2.6m per annum) to the AFP to increase Australian Customs and Border Protection Service and Department of Immigration and Citizenship's investigative capability and intelligence resources in the PSST. This funding has also allowed for the development of a PSST rapid response capability to Christmas Island to respond to unauthorised boat arrivals and for prosecution of crew.
 - ii). *Enhanced INP Technical & Surveillance Capability* - provided with funding of \$15.0 million over 4 years to enhance Indonesian National Police (INP) technical and surveillance capability.
 - iii). *Enhancing AFP and Regional Capability to Combat People Smuggling* - provided \$16.1 million over 2 years for deployment of investigators and intelligence officers to

key countries as standing liaison support officers as well as financing local law enforcement operations, capability development, training and operational support.

The overall funding allocated to the AFP for the People Smuggling Strike Team is comprised the segments outlined in points 1. (\$4.6m) and 2.i) (\$2.6m) above, totalling approximately \$7.2m per year. The level of funding has remained constant since the \$2.6m increase funded under the 2009-10 measure.

b) International Deployments

As at 1 July 2009, the AFP had 9 members offshore funded by People Smuggling budget measures including in Thailand (1), Sri Lanka (2), Pakistan (2), Indonesia (2) and Malaysia (2).

As at 1 July 2010, the AFP had 12 members offshore funded by People Smuggling budget measures including in Thailand (1), Sri Lanka (3), Pakistan (2), Indonesia (4) and Malaysia (2).

As at 1 July 2011, the AFP had 10 members offshore funded by People Smuggling budget measures including in Thailand (1), Sri Lanka (1), Pakistan (1), Indonesia (6) and Malaysia (1).