

In recent days, I have been approached by numerous security staff expressing their dismay and disappointment about the behaviour of a small number of their “anonymous” colleagues who continue to misrepresent information about our security operations in a deliberate attempt to mislead and misinform journalists and Senators.

Our joint approach with the AFP in managing events of potential concern reflect contemporary risk-based practice—it is no longer the case that the first response is to close down operations for every instance.

If there were genuine concerns about our security procedures, which have been in place for some years, there have been various mechanisms or forums in which these concerns could have been constructively raised. These include:

- The recent Functional Review of security at Parliament House – the Loading Dock security staff were consulted
- The recent survey of security training needs conducted in late 2017 by the Director of Security Operations – no issues were raised
- a workplace consultative committee
- grievance procedures
- Senior officers of DPS or the other parliamentary departments
- Unions and
- external accountability agencies

Staff can also write to Mr Cooper and myself regarding any concerns they may have – and some do from time to time.

To my knowledge, no issues of shortfalls in training in regards to use of the Hazmat Elite device or attending to suspicious substances have been identified.

These leaks are calculated to generate publicity and create the false impression of the security operation that may undermine public confidence in the security of Parliament House.

This adverse publicity also has a significant impact on the morale of the many professional and committed staff of the Security Branch.

These leaks by certain PSS officers into the public domain certainly represent spills of security classified information and I am consulting with the Commissioner of the Australian Federal Police to investigate in this regard.

When this hearing is concluded, I will be writing to all DPS staff in similar terms and I table the text of that email for the committee’s information