

COMMITTEE INQUIRY QUESTION

(Question No.23)

Senator the Hon. Penny Wong asked the Department of Defence, upon notice, on 15 October 2021:

There have been reports about US military equipment such as aircraft and armoured vehicles left behind in Afghanistan, and how these capabilities may be utilised by the Taliban or states they work with. Has Defence conducted an audit of Australian equipment? Was any left behind?

a. [If NO assessment] Will Defence conduct an assessment? What assurances do you have that Australian equipment has not fallen into the hands of the Taliban or others?

b. [If YES to an assessment] How did Defence audit Australian equipment taken to Afghanistan? Please detail what was left behind?

The Department of Defence has provided the following answer to the Honourable Senator's question:

Defence has assessed the Australian equipment left in Afghanistan. The ADF left no combat equipment in Afghanistan.

After the evacuation operation in August 2021, four ADF-owned road vehicles and some general stores remained in Kabul. The vehicles were passed to Japanese and UK partners to support their evacuation operations. It was not possible due to the situation on the ground to extract the vehicles on our last flight.