Government Response
to the
Fourth Report of the Parliamentary Joint Committee on
Intelligence and Security

*'Review of Administration and Expenditure: Australian
Intelligence Organisations Recruitment and Training'*

Department of Defence   **August 2007**

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of the Parliamentary Joint Committee on Intelligence and Security

Review of administration and expenditure: Australian Intelligence Organisations Recruitment and Training

The Government has considered the Committee's report on its review of Australian Intelligence Organisations' administration and expenditure. The Government has decided to implement two of the Committee's three recommendations. This response sets out the action taken to deal with each of the recommendations.

Recommendation 1
That the Government provide the Committee with separate financial statements for DSD, DIGO and DIO to enable the Committee to fulfil its statutory obligations regarding oversight of the administration and expenditure of the intelligence and security agencies.

Response:
Accepted. The Department of Defence is engaging with ANAO representatives and the Committee Secretariat to discuss how the Defence Intelligence Agencies can best address the Committee's desire for greater detail in the financial statements, given that the Defence Intelligence Agencies are not statutory reporting entities.

Recommendation 2
The Committee recommends:

- *that the Government identify methods to address the security clearance backlog of the agencies; and*
- *that the agencies be required to report every year on the backlog and the methods being used to address it in their Annual Reports.*

Response:
Accepted. The Government supports this recommendation and notes that the backlog issue is being addressed by the Department of Defence and the Inter-Agency Security Forum.

Recommendation 3
The Committee recommends that the Government enquire into the feasibility of establishing a combined facility for basic training in intelligence either in an existing academic institution or as a separate college.

Response:
Not Accepted. At this stage AIC agencies believe that most training needs are effectively addressed by each agency being able to shape its own training for its specific needs. This takes place in a context in which AIC-wide training programmes have also been established. An AIC training secretariat has been established, funded by all AIC agencies, in response to a recommendation in the Flood Review. As a need is identified for an AIC-wide approach to training in a discrete area the AIC responds

to that need - the most recent example being a proposal to provide an AIC-wide course on counter-proliferation.

For the most part, agencies' training benefits are maximised by each agency being able to tailor its training programme to fit its specific professional needs along with the timing and participation numbers that best suit it. While there are some skills that are common across the community each agency tends to have a core of skill requirements that is unique to that agency. It is not a matter of unnecessary duplication taking place across the AIC.

Exposure to other parts of the AIC is part of agencies' existing training programmes. Secondments already take place across the AIC, to which a combined training facility would not necessarily add value.

The Report does not elaborate on its reference to 'current training difficulties', so we are not clear as to what the Committee believes needs to be remedied by a combined training facility.