Question on notice no. 423

Portfolio question number: 87

2019-20 Supplementary budget estimates

Foreign Affairs, Defence and Trade Committee, Defence Portfolio

Senator Kimberley Kitching: asked the Department of Defence on 23 October 2019
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On 10 October 2017, Julia Talevski of ARN reported that then Minister Assisting the Prime Minister for Cyber Security, Dan Tehan, told ABC radio that federal government plans to establish a 'Cyber Reserve force', consisting of people from the industry with cyber/IT skills, who can be called on in times of national emergency to support Australian Defence deployed cyber security personnel.

(a) When was this Cyber Reserve Force established?

(b) How many people have been enlisted in the Cyber Reserve Force?

(c) How many people was the government targeting for enlistment in the Cyber Reserve Force?

(d) How many 'reservists' have been deployed to support Defence?

(e) In what cyber security incidents have 'reservists' been deployed to support Defence?

(f) What have these 'reservists' done to support Defence?

(g) How much funding has been allocated to the Cyber Reserve Force program?

(h) As a part of the renewal of the 2020 Cyber Strategy will there be a review into the way responsibility for cybersecurity and developing offensive cyber capabilities is split across ASD, Home Affairs, Defence and the Attorney General's?

Answer —
Answer attached

Supplementary Budget Estimates – 23 October 2019

ANSWER TO QUESTION ON NOTICE

Department of Defence

Topic: SSCFADT - SBE - 23 OCT 2019 – Q87 - Cyber Reserve Force - Kitching

Question reference number: 87

Senator: Kimberley Kitching
Type of question: Written
Date set by the committee for the return of answer: 6 December 2019

Question:
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(a)   When was this Cyber Reserve Force established?
(b)   How many people have been enlisted in the Cyber Reserve Force?
(c)   How many people was the government targeting for enlistment in the Cyber Reserve Force?
(d)   How many 'reservists' have been deployed to support Defence?
(e)   In what cyber security incidents have 'reservists' been deployed to support Defence?
(f)   What have these 'reservists' done to support Defence?
(g)   How much funding has been allocated to the Cyber Reserve Force program?
(h)   As a part of the renewal of the 2020 Cyber Strategy will there be a review into the way responsibility for cybersecurity and developing offensive cyber capabilities is split across ASD, Home Affairs, Defence and the Attorney General's?

Answer:

a)   Since 1 July 2017, the Department of Defence has focused on building a permanent cyber workforce capability and a supporting cyber-skilled reserve workforce.

b)   As at 5 November 2019, 110 cyber-related reserve positions have been established, of which, 77 are filled.

c)   There are no set targets for cyber-skilled reserve workforce positions.

d)   None.

e)   None.

f)   The cyber-skilled reservist workforce reinforces and supports cyber capability development and other roles in operational Army, Navy, Air Force and joint cyber units.

g)   Specific funding has not been allocated to support a 'Cyber Reserve Force' Program. Total reserve funding is set and allocated by each of the three Services, and cyber-skilled reservists are funded as part of standard reserve processes.

h)   This is a matter for the Department of Home Affairs.