

Senate Finance and Public Administration Legislation Committee —Supplementary Budget Estimates Hearing—October 2014

Answers to Questions on Notice

Parliamentary departments, Department of Parliamentary Services

Topic: Security screening
Question: 185
Hansard Reference p 84, 20 October 2014

Date set by the committee for the return of answer: 31 December 2014

Mr Skill: Full screening was re-established ahead of the visit by the Prime Minister of Japan. I would have to check the exact date, but the Prime Minister of Japan visited on 7 and 8 July, and we reinstituted about a week ahead.

Senator FAULKNER: If we said early July, that would be accurate.

Mr Skill: Yes, that would be accurate.

Senator FAULKNER: Perhaps you can take the precise date on notice. And then the security arrangements were significantly enhanced. That is true too, is it not?

Mr Skill: I think it is fair to say that the full screening was never ceased, so this was once we had gone back to the full screening process, ahead of the Prime Minister of Japan's visit.

Senator WONG: That is not right.

Senator FAULKNER: But since the decision to re-establish full screening in early July—since that time—we have had an enhancement of security arrangements.

Mr Skill: Absolutely, Senator.

Senator FAULKNER: So when did that date from—2 October?

Mr Skill: No, Senator. It was earlier than that. The national terrorism public alert level was raised to high on 12 September. That was a Friday. And we increased some of the security procedures immediately; sorry, within days of that announcement, following appropriate approval.

Senator FAULKNER: So if we said mid-September, that would be accurate.

Mr Skill: That would be reasonable; yes Senator.

Answer

On 2 July 2014, full screening was reinstated at all entry points at Parliament House in preparation for the visit by Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe.

Full screening remains in place. The DPS Information Circular released at 5.52pm on 9 July 2014 via email stated: *The Presiding Officers have determined that, effective immediately, the current full physical security screening arrangements for all building occupants will continue until further notice.*