

SENATE STANDING COMMITTEE ON LEGAL AND CONSTITUTIONAL AFFAIRS
BUDGET ESTIMATES 2017

Attorney General's Department

Program: 1.2 AGD Operating Expenses - National Security and Criminal Justice

Question No. BE17-174

Senator Hanson asked the following question on 02 June 2017:

- (a) It is the terrorists, who self-identify as Muslims, who make the link between Islam and terrorism. How can the Australian community have confidence in the head of ASIO when he fails to acknowledge this indisputable fact?
- (b) The head of ASIO Duncan Lewis has been the subject of much comment by the media in respect of his denial between the refugee program and terrorism. How can the Australian community have confidence in the head of ASIO when he has been so broadly and widely criticized for answers given during the Additional Senate Estimates process?
- (c) Given the damage done to the reputation of ASIO by Duncan Lewis, on what basis should the current head of ASIO continue to hold that position?

The response to the honourable Senator's question is as follows:

- (a) The Director-General of Security has repeatedly acknowledged that the principal terrorist threat in Australia emanates from the small number of Australia-based individuals who remain committed to anti-Western violent Sunni Islamist extremist ideology. The Government rejects the premise of the question in relation to the Director-General.
- (b) The Government rejects the premise of the question. The Director-General of Security is doing an outstanding job. The Government has complete confidence in the Director-General's ability to perform his role to the highest standard.
- (c) The Government rejects the premise of the question. The Director-General of Security is doing an outstanding job. The Government has complete confidence in the Director-General's ability to perform his role to the highest standard.