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Mr David Sullivan
Secretary
Senate Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs, Defence and Trade
Parliament House
CANBERRA ACT 2600

Dear Mr Sullivan,

I write to clarify evidence that I gave at the Foreign Affairs, Defence and Trade Senate Estimates hearing held on Wednesday, 26 February 2014.

In answer to a question from Senator Conroy concerning the nature of activities being conducted by Australian Defence Force (ADF) personnel in Afghanistan recorded on page 11 of *Proof Hansard* 26 February 2014, I confirmed that Australian service personnel do not continue to participate in military offensive activities in Afghanistan. My response was offered in the context of the activity of deployed ADF units in Afghanistan.

On reflection, and for the purpose of completeness, I wish to provide further clarification on my original answer to Senator Conroy's question. ADF units presently deployed to Afghanistan do not continue to participate in offensive activities. On occasion, however, ADF personnel may be embedded within coalition forces but not as part of an Australian unit. These personnel, as part of their employment with coalition elements, may become directly involved in offensive activities conducted by that coalition force. At the time of the Senate Estimates hearing there were ADF personnel embedded with British and United States coalition forces in Afghanistan, and in the Combined Air Operations Centre, who may have become directly involved in offensive activities as part of their employment.

I apologise for any misunderstanding that may have arisen.

Yours sincerely,

D. HURLEY, AC DSC
General
Chief of the Defence Force

7 April 2014