**Question 1**

Program 1.1

Topic: People smuggling

Question in writing

**Senator Fierravanti-Wells asked:**

A. Further to evidence at the hearing about the Bali process, please provide details including:

(i). please outline all Australian participation in the Bali process.

(ii). the cost of Australian participation in the process

B. Further to evidence at the hearing about UNHCR, please provide details including:

(i). please outline all Australian interaction with UNHCR over the past 5 years

(ii). Australian financial contribution over the past 5 years

C. Further to evidence at the hearing about the IOM, please provide details including:

(i). please outline all Australian interaction with IOM over the past 5 years

(ii). Australian financial contribution over the past 5 years

D. Please provide details of all DFAT activities in relation to unauthorised arrivals and people smuggling over the past 5 years.

**Answer**

A. (i). Australia and Indonesia co-chair the Bali Process on People Smuggling, Trafficking in Persons and Related Transnational Crime.

Australia co-chairs the Steering Group which provides direction to the Bali Process and senior officials’ meetings.

The Third Bali Regional Ministerial Conference was co-chaired by the Foreign Minister, Mr Smith, and his Indonesian counterpart, Dr Wirajuda in Bali from 14 to 15 April.

The Inaugural Ad Hoc Group Meeting was held in Bali from 27 to 29 July, and included 15 Australian delegates from five agencies.

A workshop on implementing information campaigns was held on 28-30 October in Bangkok.

(ii). DFAT’s participation in the Bali Process cost $28991.47 in 2008/2009.

As at 16 November 2009, DFAT’s participation in the Bali Process in 2009/2010 had cost $23,884.28.

B. (i). DFAT officers interact frequently with UNHCR and it is not possible to produce a full list of those interactions over the past 5 years.

(ii). Questions about funding to UNHCR should be referred to DIAC as the lead agency.

C. (i). DFAT officers interact frequently with IOM and it is not possible to produce a full list of those interactions over the past 5 years.

(ii). Questions about funding to UNHCR should be referred to DIAC as the lead agency.

D. DFAT officers in Canberra and at overseas Posts are engaged in work related to unauthorised arrivals and people smuggling on a daily basis. It is not possible to provide details of all DFAT activities in relation to unauthorised arrivals and people smuggling over the past 5 years.

**Question 2**

Program 1.1

Topic: Asylum seekers–policy changes

Hansard, pp. 19-20

**Senator Fierravanti-Wells asked:**

A. Further to evidence given at the hearing, please advise whether since July 2008 any changes of Australian Government’s immigration and/or border security policies and process have been raised with any Australian Government official in connection with an increase in people smuggling. If so, please provide copies of any documents, records or other material regarding the same.

B. Since the May Estimates when the AFP report entitled Strategic forecast for transnational criminal trends and threats was first raised, what inquiries were made in relation to the existence of this report. Did anyone in DFAT request a copy of the same from the AFP? If not, why not?

C. Since July 2009, particularly when Minister Evans made his speech on the changes in direction in immigration and detention values in Australia, in diplomatic circles, has our change of policy been raised with the department?

D. Is the department aware of the questioning that has happened in other committees and questions that were asked by Senator Brandis in relation to a document called “Strategic forecast for transnational criminal trends and threats?

**Answer**

A. DFAT officers in Australia and at overseas posts interact with numerous individuals in regard to immigration and border security issues on a daily basis. To provide copies of any documents, records or other material regarding any changes of Australian Government’s immigration and/or border security policies and processes which have been raised with any Australian Government official in connection with an increase in people smuggling would require an unreasonable diversion of resources.

B. No enquiries have been made in relation to the existence of the report. DFAT officers have not requested a copy of the report from the AFP. The AFP determines the distribution of its own reporting.

C. DFAT officers in Australia and at overseas posts interact with numerous individuals in regard to immigration and border security issues on a daily basis. Answering this question would require an unreasonable diversion of resources.

D. Yes.

**Question 3**

Program 1.1

Topic: Asylum seekers

Hansard, pp. 29-30

**Senator Fierravanti-Wells asked:**

A. At the hearing, the evidence appears to suggest that the 78 people who were picked up by HMAS Armidale and transferred to the Oceanic Viking were a “one off”. Please confirm this. If not, please outline the position.

B. In relation to the 78 people who were picked up by HMAS Armidale and transferred to the Oceanic Viking, please provide a detailed chronology of all Australian and Indonesia government involvement in the events to date.

C. Provide details about the Refugees and Immigration Issues section of DFAT referred to at the hearing including:

(i). When was the section established

(ii). Roles and responsibilities of the section

(iii). Staff over the various periods of time since it was established

(iv). Details of staff in the section

D. Further to evidence given at the hearing, please advise whether since July 2008 any changes of Australian Government’s immigration and/or border security policies and process have been raised with any Australian Government official in connection with an increase in people smuggling. If so, please provide copies of any documents, records or other material regarding the same.

E. There was a recent article in relation to people smuggling entitled ‘Focus on smugglers “may upset Jakarta’”. It referred to certain comments made by Ms Hoffman from the Murdoch University. She said ‘Indonesians believe that these men have been treated too harshly’. Are you aware of those comments made by Ms Hoffman?

**Answer**

A. In the case of the 78 people picked up by the HMAS Armidale and transferred to the Oceanic Viking, the Australian Government responded to a Safety of Life at Sea situation in cooperation with the Indonesian Government.

B. This question should be referred to ACBPS as the lead agency.

C. (i). The Refugees, Immigration and Asylum Section was created in the 1980s. The name of the section was changed in the 1990s to Refugees, Immigration and Transnational Crime Section and then changed again in September 2001 to People Smuggling, Refugees and Transnational Crime Section. The section was given its current name in 2002: People Smuggling, Refugees and Immigration Section in April 2002.

(ii). The People Smuggling, Refugees and Immigration Section (PRI) works to support the role of the Ambassador for People Smuggling Issues, and manage DFAT’s role in the whole-of-government response to people smuggling. This includes Australia’s co-chairmanship with Indonesia of the reinvigorated Bali Process on People Smuggling, Trafficking in Persons and Related Transnational Crime. PRI is involved in formulating DFAT’s policy on a range of refugee and immigration-related issues, including human trafficking and controversial visitors.

(iii). The section has generally been led by a Director (EL2) supported by a number of junior staff. To provide precise details of the staffing complement of the section since it was established would require a major diversion of resources.

(iv). As at 16 November 2009, PRI had 6 staff members, with the following division of responsibility:

* One officer responsible for managing the section, including staffing and budget issues
* One officer responsible for work related to the Bali Process and South Asia
* One officer responsible for work related to international organisations, trafficking, and source countries
* One officer responsible for work related to controversial visitors, protection visas and the migration and refugee review tribunals
* Two officers responsible for work related to people smuggling in transit countries.

D. DFAT officers in Australia and at overseas posts interact with numerous individuals in regard to immigration and border security issues on a daily basis. To provide copies of any documents, records or other material regarding any changes of Australian Government’s immigration and/or border security policies and processes which have been raised with any Australian Government official in connection with an increase in people smuggling would require an unreasonable diversion of resources.

E. Yes.

**Question 4**

Program 1.1/Program overview

Topic: Ambassador for People Smuggling Issues

Question in writing

**Senator Fierravanti-Wells asked:**

A. Further to the questions taken on notice or evidence provided at the Senate Estimates, please include the following details about the position of the Ambassador for People Smuggling Issues:

(i). When was the position established

(ii). History of the position including periods of full-time and part-time

(iii). Roles and responsibilities over the full-time and part-time periods

(iv). Staff over the various periods of time since it was established

(v). Specific responsibilities for which he alone has responsibilities

B. What are the “whole of government” duties of the Ambassador for People Smuggling Issues, including:

(i). What departments, other government authorities or other Australian or international bodies does he interact with

(ii). The nature of that work or interaction with those departments, other government authorities or other Australian or international bodies

C. What are the co-ordination activities of the Ambassador for People Smuggling Issues including:

(i). What departments, other government authorities or other Australian or international bodies does he interacts with

(ii). The nature of that work or interaction with each of those departments, other government authorities or other Australian or international bodies

D. Please provide details of the budget of the Ambassador for People Smuggling Issues including a breakdown of spending for each of his areas of responsibility.

E. Outline all committees on which the Ambassador for People Smuggling Issues has a role including either as a member or participant.

F. Please provide further details regarding the “package of cooperative measures with Indonesia on people smuggling issues” referred to by the Ambassador for People Smuggling Issues at the hearing including:

(i). When was the “package” first discussed either by the Indonesian or Australian Government or Indonesian or Australian Government officials?

(ii). What was included in the “package” when the matter was first discussed?

(iii). What is now included in the “package” and when were these additional issues added to the package?

(iv). What is the cost of the “package” when it was first discussed as opposed to what is the cost of the “package” now?

(v). In relation to the cost, was it first raised by Australia or Indonesia?

**Answer**

A. (i). 28 February 2009.

(ii). John Buckley SES Band 2, appointed first Ambassador for People Smuggling on 28 February 2002, full time position.

Caroline Millar, SES Band 2, July 2003–December 2005, held the Ambassador People Smuggling position concurrently with the position of First Assistant Secretary International Organisations and Legal Division (FAS ILD).

Lydia Morton, SES Band 2, December 2005–October 2006, held the Ambassador People Smuggling position concurrently with the position of First Assistant Secretary International Organisations and Legal Division (FAS ILD).

Michael Potts, SES Band 2, January 2007–8 June 2009, held the Ambassador People Smuggling position concurrently with the position of First Assistant Secretary International Organisations and Legal Division (FAS ILD).

Peter Woolcott, SES Band 2, full-time position from 8 June 2009.

(iii). Since Mr Buckley's appointment in 2002, the role of the position has remained constant, and includes:

* Promoting a coherent and effective international approach to combating people smuggling, particularly in the Asia-Pacific region.
* Effecting a co-ordinated, whole-of-government approach to Australia's engagement with the Bali Process on People Smuggling, Trafficking in Persons and Related Transnational Crime.
* Assisting, as appropriate, in the negotiation of high-level return, readmission and resettlement arrangements.

(iv). During the periods the position has been filled on a full time basis (February 2002–July 2003, and since June 2009) the Ambassador for People Smuggling role has been supported by a BB2 personal assistant. Since Mr Woolcott's appointment in June 2009, an additional two new positions were created to supplement existing resources devoted to people smuggling issues.

(v). The Ambassador for People Smuggling Issues is Australia’s senior official responsible for the Bali Process on People Smuggling, Trafficking in Persons and Related Transnational Crime, which Australia co-chairs with Indonesia. The Ambassador co-chairs the Bali Process Steering Group and senior official’s meetings.

B. (i). The Ambassador for People Smuggling Issues interacts with a range of departments and agencies including: agencies in the Australian Intelligence Community, the Australian Customs and Border Protection Service, AusAID, the Department of Immigration and Citizenship, the Australian Federal Police, the Department of Prime Minister and Cabinet, the Australian Maritime Safety Authority, and the Department of Defence. The Ambassador also interacts with the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, the International Organisation for Migration and officials from foreign governments.

(ii). The Ambassador for People Smuggling Issues works with other agencies to provide advice to Government on a range of people-smuggling, refugee and irregular immigration issues, and implement policy through DFAT’s overseas posts. The Ambassador provides guidance to DFAT staff at post, who lead a whole-of-government effort to implement measures which deliver practical benefits to regional operational agencies to combat people smuggling and trafficking in persons. He is Australia’s senior official responsible for the Bali Process on People Smuggling, Trafficking in Persons and Related Transnational Crime. The Ambassador for People Smuggling Issues co-chairs the Bali Process Steering Group and senior official’s meetings.

The Ambassador also plays a significant role in articulating the Australian Government’s concerns bilaterally and multilaterally about the threats posed by people smuggling in the region.

C. (i). See answer to B (i).

(ii). See answer to B (ii).

D. The Ambassador was allocated $1,367,444.00 for the 2009/2010 financial year, for travel and administration costs.

E. The Maritime Incident Management Group

The Border Protection Taskforce

Daily operations meetings chaired by ACBPS

The weekly Stakeholders’ meeting chaired by ACBPS

The Border Protection Committee of Cabinet.

F. The Government is currently in negotiations with the Government of Indonesia regarding a framework for our cooperation on people smuggling. Given that these negotiations are confidential, DFAT is not in a position to comment on their content.

**Question 5**

Program 1.1

Topic: EFIC loans

Hansard, pp. 124-126

**Senator Abetz asked:**

A. Can the department advise the number of commercial borrowers there are?

B. Are you able to tell us when in 2008 the discussions between the government and GMH commenced?

C. Was the reason that it went for cabinet approval was that you thought the risk was such that it needed that approval? It was not a decision that you would simply make on a commercial basis?

D. Was the loan referred because it was too large and too risky?

**Answer**

A. There are currently four commercial counterparties on the Australian Government’s National Interest Account (NIA): Innovonics Ltd, EW Cox Pty Ltd, Pavement Management Services Limited and GM Holden Limited (GMH). As at 13 November 2009, the maximum exposure to commercial counterparties was $202 million.

B. GMH first approached the Export Finance and Insurance Corporation (EFIC) in October 2007. On 28 October 2008, the Export Finance and Insurance Corporation (EFIC) referred a working capital line of credit to support GMH’s export programs to the Minister for Trade for consideration of support on the National Interest Account.

C. Consideration of the GMH transaction followed the convention of seeking a whole-of-government decision on NIA transactions.

D. EFIC referred the working capital line of credit to support GMH’s export programs to the Minister for Trade due to commercial risks associated with the transaction and the weak state of the autos market at the time. GMH is a subsidiary of General Motors Corporation (GM) and, at the time of the referral, there were uncertainties with respect to GM’s future and ongoing relationship with GMH. Due to continued financing facilities from GM and better than expected sales, Holden has not yet needed to draw on the NIA facility.

**Question 6**

Program 1.1

Topic: New Zealand beef exports

Hansard, p. 122

**Senator Colbeck asked:**

You made comparisons with New Zealand’s beef import protocols. Can you tell me what New Zealand’s annual beef exports are in dollar terms?

**Answer**

New Zealand’s annual beef exports were worth around **A$1.6 billion** in 2008, of which **A$17 million** were to Australia.

**Question 7**

Program 1.1

Topic: ASNO–Uranium mining in WA

Hansard, p. 105

**Senator Ludlam asked:**

A. Has ASNO been requested by the WA government to provide briefings or information or any kind of support, formally or informally, regarding safeguard to non-proliferation measures, given that there is a proposition to introduce uranium mining in WA?

B. Are you in regular contact with the relevant departments in the WA government or was that a one-off event?

**Answer**

A. ASNO has on occasion provided advice to Western Australian Government officials on the operation of the *Nuclear Non-Proliferation (Safeguards Act) 1987* as it applies to uranium mines. ASNO also participated in two events arranged by the Western Australian Department of Mines and Petroleum that focused on providing regulatory information to government officials and stakeholders from the uranium mining and exploration industry. These events were held on 20 October 2008 and 30 July 2009. ASNO provided information on permit requirements under the *Nuclear Non-Proliferation (Safeguards Act) 1987* as they pertain to nuclear security and safeguards for uranium mines.

B. Discussions with WA Government officials will continue as required.

**Question 8**

Program: Portfolio overview

Topic: Staffing in Kabul

Hansard, p. 100

**Senator Trood asked:**

How many DFAT staff are at the Australian Embassy in Kabul?

**Answer**

As at 2 November 2009, there were seven A-based and locally-engaged DFAT staff at the Australian Embassy in Kabul.

**Question 9**

Program 1.1

Topic: Condition of camps in North-East Sri Lanka

Hansard, pp. 96-99

**Senator Trood asked:**

A. How many camps are the Sri Lankan people in?

B. When was the last visit by an Australian government official to the camps?

C. Is there a detailed report on the state of the camps?

D. You have received representations from the Tamil community. Have you received representations from the international community, the NGO community, about the condition in camps.

**Answer**

A. The United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), which assists the Government of Sri Lanka as the lead humanitarian agency for the protection of conflict-affected internally displaced persons (IDPs) in Sri Lanka, places IDPs in Sri Lanka into three groups for statistical purposes:

(i). IDPs displaced from 1 April 2008;

(ii). IDPs displaced between 1 January 2006 and 1 April 2008; and

(iii). IDPs displaced before 2006.

IDPs live either in camps (also termed “welfare centres”, temporary accommodation centres, emergency sites and temporary site), with host families or other arrangements.

According to UNHCR, as of 13 November 2009, IDPs displaced since 1 April 2008 remain in 20 camps, while IDPs displaced prior to 1 April 2008 live in 91 camps.

B. On 11 November 2009, Australia’s newly appointed Special Representative to Sri Lanka, Mr John McCarthy, and Acting Director General, AusAID, Peter Baxter, visited Menik Farm near Vavuniya in the north of Sri Lanka and met with representatives of UNICEF, the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, and International Organization for Migration.

C. UN agencies regularly report on the IDP situation in Sri Lanka.

D. Yes.

**Question 10**

Program: Portfolio overview

Topic: Staffing–SES Band 3 staff

Hansard, p. 57

**Senator Ferguson asked:**

How many officers does DFAT have at the SES Band 3 level?

**Answer**

As at 23 November 2009, the department has the following officers at SES Band 3 level:

* One Acting Secretary;
* Three Deputy Secretaries;
* One officer on pre-posting training;
* Six Heads of Mission;
* Two officers on leave prior to retirement.

In addition, the department has one notional SES Band 3 officer who is currently in a statutory appointment outside the department. The department also employs four Heads of Mission who are former Secretaries or Directors-General of Australian Government agencies.

**Question 11**

Programs 1.1 and 2.1

Topic: Sea Shepherd

Hansard, p. 56

**Senator Trood asked:**

A. I understand that Paul Watson, the captain of the *Sea Shepherd* has had his visa issued just in the last few days. Did the Australian government receive any representations from the Japanese government on that subject?

B. Has he been given a visa for limited purposes–for a single visit–to visit Australia?

**Answer**

A. Yes. The Japanese Government raised the issue of visas for *Sea Shepherd* crew members with the Australian Government on 4 November 2009 and on 23 November 2009.

B. According to the Department of Immigration and Citizenship (DIAC), Mr Watson was granted a multiple entry Business (Short Stay) Visa (Sub-Class 456) on 19 October 2009, valid for 12 months. DIAC advises that this visa enables its holder to attend to business activities in Australia for periods of up to 3 months.

**Question 12**

Programs 1.1 and 2.1

Topic: Stern Hu

Hansard, pp. 53-54

**Senator Ludlam asked:**

A. When did the Prime Minister last discuss Stern Hu’s case with somebody?

B. Can the department confirm whether the Prime Minister met with Mr Hu Jintao and spoken to him about the subject?

C. Has the Foreign Minister made any representations on this matter?

D. Is the Australian government in contact with Rio Tinto about the case on a regular basis?

E. Are the officials present during visits from the justice system or the penal system? Do you know where they come from?

F. How much notice do you have to give before you are allowed to have a visit?

G. Are you able to decide the length of the visit or are you obliged by Chinese authorities to restrict your access?

**Answer**

A. This question should be directed to the Department of Prime Minister and Cabinet.

B. The Prime Minister publicly confirmed on 25 September that he and President Hu agreed during their brief discussion on the sidelines of the G20 Summit in Pittsburgh that consular matters of mutual interest would continue to be worked on through both countries’ foreign ministries.

C. Yes.

D. Since Mr Hu’s arrest, the Department has communicated with representatives of Rio Tinto on several occasions in relation to welfare issues concerning Mr Hu.

E. Consular visits to Mr Hu are conducted in the presence of Chinese law enforcement and detention centre officials.

F. The period varies from four days to a week.

G. In practice, consular visits to detainees in China normally last between 30 to 45 minutes, the length of the visit often depending on the number and nature of issues the detainee wishes to raise with our consular officials. In Mr Hu’s case, consular visits have varied from 40 to 70 minutes in length.

**Question 13**

Program 1.1

Topic: China–Sun Xiaodi

Hansard, p. 49

**Senator Ludlam asked:**

Can the department provide the status of an environmental activist, Sun Xiaodi, who was sentenced in July 2009 to two years of re-education through labour? His daughter, Sun Haiyan, was sentenced to one and a half years of re-education through labour. These are two environmental activists who raised very serious concerns about radioactive contamination of Chinese uranium mines. They have not been heard from since their imprisonment, and I am wondering whether the department has made any representations or whether the department is aware of the status of either of those individuals?

**Answer**

According to non-governmental organisations which monitor human rights in China, Sun Xiaodi and Sun Haiyan (also known as Sun Dunbai) were detained by Public Security officials of Diebu County, Gansu Province on 16 June 2009. According to these sources, on 16 July Mr Sun Xiaodi was committed to re‑education through labour for two years and Ms Sun Haiyan was sentenced to one and a half years re-education through labour. As at 16 November 2009, the Australian Embassy in Beijing was unable to confirm the current status of Mr Sun Xiaodi or Ms Sun Haiyan from official Chinese Government sources or human rights contacts. However, our Embassy previously has made representations on behalf of Mr Sun on 7 June 2006 and 12 February 2007.

**Question 14**

Program 1.1

Topic: Tibet

Hansard, pp. 47-48

**Senator Ludlam asked:**

A. Was advice sought from DFAT on the advisability of meeting with His Holiness the Dalai Lama later this year?

B. Do the Chinese object in those dialogues to the stance taken by Australia on what they term the ‘territorial integrity of China’? Are we asked to back off on issues such as autonomy for Tibet?

**Answer**

**A.** DFAT provided advice to the Minister for Foreign Affairs on the Dalai Lama’s visit to Australia.

**B.** China’s view, as put to Australia, is that both countries should respect and accommodate each other’s core interests and major concerns so as to safeguard the overall interests of bilateral cooperation. The Tibet issue is one such concern for China. The position of successive Australian governments since 1972 has been to respect China’s sovereignty and territorial integrity, including over Tibet.

**Question 15**

Program 1.1

Topic: Aid for cross-border support for Thai-Burma border

Hansard, p. 46

**Senator Ludlam asked:**

A. Is the department aware of any propositions to move a fraction of Australia’s aid budget up into cross-border support on the Thai-Burma border?

B. What degree of involvement does DFAT have?

**Answer**

A.Yes, the Department is aware of this issue, which has been the subject of representations by non-government organisations.

B.DFAT is involved in providing legal and policy advice on this issue.

**Question 16**

Program 1.1

Topic: UN Secretary-General’s Group of Friends on Burma meeting

Hansard, p. 46

**Senator Ludlam asked:**

A. Can the department advise what role the Australian Ambassador to the UN has played in this group?

B. Has the group published any forward program or work?

**Answer**

A. The UN Secretary-General’s Group of Friends on Myanmar/Burma meets in New York, generally at Ambassador-level, at the Secretary-General’s request. The Australian Ambassador to the UN regularly represents Australia at these meetings. The last meeting of the Group of Friends was convened at ministerial-level in New York on 23 September 2009. Mr Smith represented Australia at that meeting.

B. The purpose of the Group of Friends is to support and advise the Secretary-General on his ‘good offices’ mission on Burma. The Secretary-General, together with his Special Adviser on Myanmar, set the general policy direction of the group. In a public statement on 23 September 2009 following the High-Level Meeting of the Group of Friends, Secretary-General Ban set out three key areas of work for the Group:

* To urge Burma to work with the United Nations to ensure an inclusive process of dialogue and create the necessary conditions for credible elections;
* To uphold the role of the United Nations with regard to Burma’s immediate and long-term challenges, particularly in relation to fostering national reconciliation, promoting respect for human rights, supporting sustainable development and making the transition to democracy; and
* To signal the international community’s willingness to help the people of Burma address the political, humanitarian and development challenges they face, and in particular to advance the Millennium Development Goals.

**Question 17**

Program 1.1

Topic: Burma–human rights

Hansard, p. 45

**Senator Ludlam asked:**

Can the department advise what information gathering is undertaken on human rights abuses in Burma, past and present? What do we actually do to inform ourselves?

**Answer**

The department informs itself about human rights abuses in Burma from a range of sources. The department monitors open source material, including from the United Nations Special Rapporteur on the Situation of Human Rights in Myanmar/Burma, and other United Nations specialist bodies. The department also consults international non-government organisations focusing on human rights issues, as well as Burmese community groups in Australia.

The Australian Embassy in Rangoon gathers information from sources inside Burma, and the Australian Embassy in Bangkok also monitors the situation on the Thai-Burma border.

**Question 18**

Program 1.1

Topic: Burma–arms exports

Hansard, p. 45

**Senator Ludlam asked:**

A. I understand that the two largest exporters of arms into Burma are Russia and China. Can the department describe what representations have been made to those two countries in that regard?

B. If Russia and China are not the two largest exporters, can the department advise which country is the largest exporters of arms into Burma?

C. Can the department advise the order of size of weapon exports being made and what representations the Australian government has either made or plans on making?

**Answer**

A. Reliable information on arms exports to Burma, including origins and quantities, is difficult to obtain so the Department is not able to confirm that Russia and China are the two largest exporters of arms. There are no UN prohibitions on arms exports to Burma. Australia has implemented a national ban on the export of arms to Burma. The Australian Government has not made representations to Russia and China on arms exports to Burma, nor are we planning to do so.

B. See answer to A above.

C. See answer to A above.

**Question 19**

Program 1.1

Topic: Asia Pacific Community Conference

Hansard, p. 36

**Senator Trood asked:**

A. Can you provide the estimated cost of the APC conference?

B. Has there been an allowance made in the budget for costs associated with the APC?

C. Can the department provide the amount of additional costs that were related to departmental expenditure, for example, for the officer who accompanied Mr Woolcott on his travels and any other kind of administrative support that he was given during the course of his inquiries?

**Answer**

A. The conference took place in Sydney on 3-5 December 2009. The final cost of the conference is yet to be determined.

B. The department will absorb the costs of the conference.

C. Mr Richard Woolcott’s regional consultations on the Asia Pacific community cost the government around $413,000 between 2 September 2008 and 12 November 2009. This amount is made up of around $126,000 in consultancy fees for Mr Woolcott and around $287,000 in incidental costs, including travel costs for Mr Woolcott and his accompanying officer. This amount does not include costs incurred by posts in supporting Mr Woolcott or indirect costs, such as time spent on the initiative by departmental officers, as these costs are difficult to quantify.

**Question 20**

Program: Portfolio overview

Topic: Expenditure by Mr Richard Woolcott, Asia Pacific Community Special Envoy

Hansard, pp. 40-42

**Senator Trood asked:**

A. In regard to the Asia Pacific Community Special Envoy’s contract from 18 September 2009 – 31 December 2009, can the department advise whether or not expenditure has so far been incurred in relation to travel or other matters outside the contract beyond the stated $75,000?

B. Did Mr Woolcott charge the department for hours of work relating to APC activity in the course of any private travel?

C. Can the department provide details of all costs associated with salary and any ancillary payments related to travel or any other expenses for Mr Woolcott from the time of his first contract?

D. Have there been any payments related to the second contract?

**Answer**

A. Between 1 July and 12 November 2009, DFAT has incurred expenditure of $5,845 under Mr Richard Woolcott’s second contract, mainly related to Mr Woolcott’s travel between Sydney and Canberra to attend planning meetings for the Asia Pacific community Conference.

B. No.

C. Mr Richard Woolcott’s regional consultations on the Asia Pacific community cost the government around $413,000 between 2 September 2008 and 12 November 2009. This amount is made up of around $126,000 in consultancy fees for Mr Woolcott and around $287,000 in incidental costs, including travel costs for Mr Woolcott and his accompanying officer. This amount does not include costs incurred by posts in supporting Mr Woolcott or indirect costs, such as time spent on the initiative by departmental officers, as these costs are difficult to quantify.

D. No.

**Question 21**

Program 1.1

Topic: Balibo Five

Hansard, p. 33

**Senator Trood asked:**

A. Can the department advise whether or not the Australian government has received any assurances from the Indonesian government that it will cooperate with the Australian Federal Police investigation with regard to the Balibo Five?

B. Can the department advise whether or not there has been a reaction from the Indonesian government as to the proposal that this investigation should take place?

C. Did the AFP contact the department to advise relevant areas about plans to undertake the investigation?

**Answer**

A. The conduct of the investigation is a matter for the AFP, including the question of whether it chooses to seek assistance from other governments.

B. Indonesia has stated its position that it considers the case “closed”.

C. The Department was advised by the AFP on 24 August 2009 that the AFP had decided to commence an investigation into the Balibo matter.

**Question 22**

Program 1.1

Topic: PM’s visit to Indonesia

Hansard, p. 8

**Senator Trood asked:**

A. How many occasions has the PM visited Indonesia?

B. When were those dates?

C. Is this the first time he has been to Jakarta?

D. Has he undertaken a bilateral state visit to Indonesia since becoming Prime Minister?

**Answer**

A. The Prime Minister has visited Indonesia four times since taking office.

B. The Prime Minister visited Bali to attend the COP-13 Climate Change Meeting in December 2007; Jakarta and Aceh on 12-14 June 2008; Bali to Co-Chair the Bali Democracy Forum (BDF) on 10 December 2008; and Jakarta to attend President Yudhoyono’s inauguration on 19-20 October 2009.

C. No, see response to B.

D. Yes, on 12-14 June 2008.

**Question 23**

Program: Portfolio overview

Topic: Language aptitude

Hansard, p. 7

**Senator Trood asked:**

Can the department advise how many officers have more than one language capability?

**Answer**

As at 22 October 2009, 184 departmental employees hold language proficiency as tested by the department in more than one language.

**Question 24**

Program: Portfolio overview

Topic: Head of Mission Appointments

Hansard, p. 7

**Senator Trood asked:**

Can the department provide the notional designated level of Head of Mission positions?

**Answer**

Appointments of Heads of Mission are decisions of Government.

The notional level of Head of Mission positions can change over time depending on particular demands at the post, the bilateral relationship and staffing situation in the department. At present, Head of Mission positions are filled by officers at the following levels:

Former Agency Head

Jakarta, Washington, Wellington, New Delhi

SES Band 3

Beijing, Brussels, Geneva WTO, London, Singapore, Tokyo

SES Band 2

Athens, Bangkok, Berlin, Brasilia, Geneva UN, Holy See, Hong Kong, Kuala Lumpur, Manila, New York CG, New York UN, Ottawa, Paris, Paris OECD, Port Moresby, Rome, Seoul, Suva, The Hague, Vienna, Warsaw

SES Band 1

Ankara, Baghdad, Bali, Beirut, Buenos Aires, Chicago, Colombo, Copenhagen, Dhaka, Dili, Dublin, Hanoi, Ho Chi Minh City, Honiara, Honolulu, Islamabad, Lisbon, Los Angeles, Madrid, Mexico City, Moscow, Nairobi, Phnom Penh, Port Vila, Pretoria, Rangoon, Riyadh, Santiago de Chile, Shanghai, Stockholm, Taipei, Tehran, Tel Aviv

EL2

Abu Dhabi, Abuja, Accra, Amman, Apia, Belgrade, Bandar Seri Begawan, Budapest, Cairo, Guangzhou, Harare, Kabul, Kathmandu, Kuwait, Malta, Nauru, Nicosia, Noumea, Nuku’alofa, Pohnpei, Port Louis, Port of Spain, Tarawa, Vientiane, Zagreb.

**Question 25**

Program 1.1

Topic: Teachers resource kit

Question in writing

**Senator Kroger asked:**

The following questions relate to AusTender Contract Notice CN196930:

A. Has this project commenced, and if so, at what stage is it and when is it scheduled for completion?

B. How many copies of this Teachers Resource Kit will $690,315 provide?

C. Is this Teachers Resource Kit being developed with internal Curriculum Corporation resources, or have outside experts been employed to provide subject matter expertise? If so, who are these outside experts and what are their credentials on the subject of the Arab World?

D. Why was a project intended for dissemination in Australian schools done through the auspices of DFAT and not DEEWR?

E. Would it be possible to obtain a copy of this Teachers Resource Kit when its development is completed?

F. If the development of the Teachers’ Resource Kit is completed, please provide it.

**Answer**

A. The project has commenced and is at the stage of design and development of the layout and content of the resource kit. The kit is scheduled for completion in late 2010, for subsequent launch and distribution to secondary schools in late 2010 or the start of the 2011 school year. The contract provides for two subsequent evaluations of resource kit usage by schools, up to 12 months after the launch and distribution of the kit.

B. The contract provides for 5,000 resource kits.

C. The resource kit is being developed with both internal Curriculum Corporation and external resources. These resources include content specialists, writers and audio-visual/website producers.

External contributors to the project, including subject experts on the Arab world, include:

* Professor Abdullah Saeed (PhD), Associate Professor Richard Pennell (PhD) and Dr Christina Mayer (PhD)–National Centre of Excellence for Islamic Studies, University of Melbourne/Griffith University/University of Western Sydney;
* Dr Susan Aykut (PhD)–Deputy Director of the Institute for Public History at Monash University until the end of 2008, and former lecturer on the modern Middle East, the Islamic world and Ottoman History;
* Dr Julie Hamston (PhD)–previous experience as an academic consultant to the Higher Colleges of Technology in the UAE. Co-ordinated annual cultural exchange programs for Emirati student teachers to the University of Melbourne;
* Ms Judy Mraz (B.Ed)–an education author with over 45 publications ranging from secondary Geography textbooks, an atlas, educational resources, kits, booklets, broadsheets and CD-ROMs. Also Director of Projects at the Geography Teachers Association of Victoria (GTAV);
* Representative/s of the Australian Federation of Societies for Studies of Society and Environment.

A Project Advisory Committee (PAC) is being established, which will review and provide ongoing guidance on all components of the project including the design and development of the kit. The PAC will comprise representatives of CAAR, Curriculum Corporation, Asia Education Foundation, Australian Federation of Societies for Studies of Society and Environment, Victorian Department of Education and Early Childhood Development, Qld Department of Education Training and the Arts, NSW Department of Education and Training, and nominees from the Catholic and Independent Schools sectors. DFAT, through the Council for Australian-Arab Relations, will have final approval of all aspects of the project.

D. The project is an initiative of the Council for Australian-Arab Relations (CAAR), which is one of a number of councils established by the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT) to promote key bilateral or regional relations. CAAR’s budget is funded by DFAT. The Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations was consulted on the project.

E. Yes.

F. See E.

**Question 26**

Program 1.1

Topic: China

Question in writing

**Senator Kroger asked:**

The following questions relate to allegations of ‘cyber‐spying’ on DFAT staff:

A. Please describe the virus which was sent to DFAT computers. What was it designed to do? What sort of information was it programmed to collect?

B. Can DFAT confirm that no sensitive information was extracted from DFAT computers?

C. Is this incident still being investigated? If so, what is the current status of investigations?

D. Can DFAT confirm that the emails containing the virus originated from China?

E. Presumably, DFAT is protected by some sort of security system. How was it therefore possible for this serious threat getting through?

F. What is being done to prevent similar instances in the future?

**Answer**

Consistent with the practice of successive governments, I do not intend to comment on intelligence or security matters.

**Question 27**

Program 1.1

Topic: Accreditation Scheme for Wool

Question in writing

**Senator Fierravanti-Wells asked:**

I understand that DFAT is reviewing the certificate of origin accreditation scheme for wool. Please provide details including the nature and extent of the change and the expected date of implementation.

**Answer**

The Government’s review of certificate of origin accreditation has been in relation to certain requirements under Australia’s free trade agreements (FTAs).

The Government has decided to establish a new scheme to accredit bodies to issue Certificates of Origin (COO) under those Australian FTAs which require such COO to be issued by an authorised body. This scheme is currently being developed and will provide for the Joint Accreditation System of Australia and New Zealand (JAS-ANZ) to administer the accreditation process. The scheme is expected to commence in early 2010.

Under the scheme, bodies interested in being an authorised body for the purpose of issuing COO will be able to apply to JAS-ANZ for accreditation. It is expected that completion of the accreditation process will take several months. When a body has been successful in achieving accreditation, JAS-ANZ will notify DFAT, which will undertake any necessary approval or notification requirements under relevant FTAs and advise the body when it can begin issuing COOs for particular FTAs.

COO issued by an authorised body are required under Australia’s existing FTAs with Thailand and Singapore and under the Agreement establishing the ASEAN-Australia-New Zealand Free Trade Area (AANZFTA), which will enter into force on 1 January 2010. Under these FTAs, such certificates, which demonstrate the origin of the goods, are required in order to claim preferential tariff treatment.

Pending the establishment of the FTA COO Accreditation Scheme, the Minister for Trade, Mr Crean, has decided to designate the Australian Chamber of Commerce and Industry (ACCI) and the Australian Industry Group (AIG) as Australia’s Issuing Authorities/Bodies under the AANZFTA for an interim period of twelve months following the Agreement’s entry into force. These two organizations already have responsibility for issuing COO under the Singapore-Australia FTA and the Thailand-Australia FTA, and therefore are experienced with procedures for issuing COO under FTAs. To continue as Issuing Authorities/Bodies for the AANZFTA beyond the twelve month interim arrangements, ACCI and AIG will need to obtain accreditation under the FTA COO Accreditation Scheme during this period. Other bodies which are successful in obtaining accreditation will also be able to become an Issuing Authority/Body under the AANZFTA, including during the period of the interim arrangements.

**Question 28**

Program 1.1

Topic: G20

Question in writing

**Senator Trood asked:**

How many Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade staff were involved in the recent G20 Summit in Pittsburgh?

**Answer**

No DFAT staff from Canberra attended the Pittsburgh Summit. Twenty-one staff (eleven A based and ten locally engaged) from the Embassy in Washington travelled to Pittsburgh to support Australia’s participation in the Summit. DFAT staff from Canberra, the Embassy in Washington and other posts were involved in preparations leading up to the Summit.

**Question 29**

Program 2.1

Topic: Merauke Five

Question in writing

**Senator Trood asked:**

A. Were representations made by the Australian Government to the Indonesian Government on the behalf of the Merauke Five?

B. In the previous Senate Estimates hearings in June, Mr Ritchie referred to the consular resources provided in this instance as a “major act of consular assistance to those people”. How many consular officials assisted the five Australians in Merauke?

C. Is the Department able to provide a breakdown of the total number of hours spent on this case?

D. How did Australian officials assist the Merauke Five?

E. Would the same high level assistance be given to Australians detained elsewhere in the world or was this just a special case because it was Indonesia?

F. How much was spent by the Department in this instance?

**Answer**

A. Yes.

B. One, sometimes two, Australian Embassy consular staff maintained a continuous presence in Merauke from 15 September 2008 until 29 January 2009. Consular staff were rotated periodically. After 29 January 2009, one consular staff member made regular visits from Jakarta to Merauke to check on the welfare of the Australians. Immediately after the Supreme Court’s decision quashing the Australians’ convictions, an Australian Embassy consular official travelled to Merauke to assist the Australians until their departure for Australia on 24 June 2009.

C. It is not possible to calculate with any reasonable degree of accuracy the total time spent on this case by departmental staff in Jakarta, Merauke and Canberra.

D. Australian officials assisted the five Australians in a number of ways. In particular, they provided consular assistance to ensure the Australians’ health and welfare were safeguarded while they remained in Merauke and they maintained close communication with Indonesian officials in an effort to secure an expeditious resolution of the case.

E. Our guiding principle is to treat all Australians detained overseas equally. In practice, the level of assistance provided may vary according to the circumstances of each case, including the requirements of the Australian or Australians in detention in the context of the local environment and conditions.

F. As with the answer to C, it is not possible to calculate with any reasonable degree of accuracy the total cost to the Department of providing consular assistance to these Australians.

**Question 30**

Program 2.1

Topic: Travel advisories–Sri Lanka

Question in writing

**Senator Trood asked:**

A. Why was the whole of Sri Lanka not classified in the ‘do not travel’ category in the recent internal conflict?

B. Is it common practice for the Department to only advise ‘do not travel’ to certain areas of a country rather than the country as the whole?

**Answer**

A. For some time we have advised travellers to reconsider their need to travel to Sri Lanka because of the very high risk of politically motivated violence and the volatile security situation. This level of advice for Sri Lanka overall was based on our assessment of the safety and security situation throughout the country. We reached this overall assessment by drawing on a range of sources of information, including:

* advice from our High Commission in Colombo
* intelligence reports, and in particular ASIO’s National Threat Assessment Centre (NTAC) threat assessments
* the advisories prepared by our consular partners (US, UK, New Zealand and Canada) for Sri Lanka.

The north and east of Sri Lanka were directly affected by recent conflict and continue to be assessed as presenting a more dangerous security environment. As a result, these regions are classified as “Do not travel” areas. We advise travellers not to travel:

* north of the highway between Puttlam, Anuradhapura and Polonnaruwa, including Wilpattu National Park due to the intense fighting in the north, particularly in the Mullattivu district and surrounds
* east of Polonnaruwa on the A11 road or to points east of a straight line between Polonnaruwa and the south coast, passing through Badulla, including Yala National Park due to the security situation remaining tense and unpredictable and violent incidents and attacks occurring frequently.

Access to the north of Sri Lanka remains restricted by the Sri Lankan military and the region continues to be subject to heavy security measures, including a daily curfew in some areas. We also continue to advise “Do not travel” to the east as the security situation remains unpredictable.

The “Do not travel” level for the northern and eastern areas of Sri Lanka (including Wilpattu and Yala National Parks) reflects our assessment of the safety and security situation in those areas. The “Reconsider your need to travel” level reflects our assessment of the safety and security situation in Sri Lanka as a whole, excluding the northern and eastern areas.

B. It is not uncommon for the Department to only advise “Do not travel” to certain areas of a country, rather than the country as a whole. In addition to Sri Lanka, other examples where this approach has been adopted in the relevant travel advisory includes countries such as Burma, Ethiopia, Georgia, Morocco, Nicaragua, Pakistan and Venezuela. All travel advisory levels are reviewed at least every quarter.

**Question 31**

Program: Portfolio overview

Topic: Freedom of information

Question in writing

**Senator Trood asked:**

A. What is the Department’s policy on requests for Freedom of Information?

B. How many Freedom of Information requests has the Department received and processed in the last financial year?

C. How many Freedom of Information requests have been denied?

D. Is all non-exempt information made available to the public?

E. How many complaints has the Department received about failed Freedom of Information requests?

F. What is the policy/procedure for applying for charges to be waived?

G. Is the Department aware of complaints made by Ms Trudy Wieden in relation to a fee waiver with regards to the release of documents in relation to two Australian yachtsmen arrested more than 30 years ago in Cambodia?

H. Has the Department responded to her request? When will that occur?

I. Is the Department aware of complaints made by Mr Peter Wilson in relation to the release of documents in relation to his son’s death in Cambodia in 1994?

J. How many requests has he made? How many Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade reports has he been given?

K. Why has the Department denied Mr Wilson access to at least 600 reports?

L. Does the Department intend to release any of the additional 600 reports to Mr Peter Wilson? If not, why not?

**Answer**

A. The Department’s policy on requests for Freedom of Information is to deal with them in accordance with the Freedom of Information (FOI) legislation and the guidelines supplied by the Department of Prime Minister and Cabinet (PM&C), which set out how DFAT and other Commonwealth agencies should approach FOI requests.

B. The Department received 85 requests in the 2008-09 financial year and closed 90.

C. The Department refused one request during the last financial year on the grounds that processing the request would have substantially and unreasonably diverted the Department’s resources from its other operations under section 24 of the FOI Act.

D. The Department makes all non exempt information captured by a request available to an applicant. The Federal Court has confirmed that release of non exempt information to an applicant is regarded as disclosure to the general public.

E. Consistent with the FOI Act and the PM&C guidelines, the Department advises applicants of their rights to internal review of a primary decision in relation to an FOI request under section 54, and of their rights to make a complaint to the Ombudsman concerning actions taken by an agency in the exercise of its powers or, more specifically, the performance of its functions under the FOI Act. On completion of an internal review, the Department advises applicants of their rights to apply for review under section 55(1) to the AAT. Figures for internal reviews, applications for review to the Ombudsman and AAT appeals are provided in the Department’s Annual Report. For 2008-09 there were five applications for internal review, no applications to the Ombudsman and three appeals to the AAT.

F. The FOI Act (section 29) requires agencies to consider reduction or remission of charges if release of the documents is in the general public interest or the interest of a substantial section of the public, or payment would cause the applicant financial hardship, or for other reasons. The Department’s policy usually is to waive the charge for requests for an applicant’s personal information.

* We have also generally extended this principle to requests made by family members of deceased persons for information concerning the deceased.
* Under the FOI Act, an applicant’s reasons for seeking documents are not relevant to the release of those documents, but the applicant’s reasons may be relevant to the decision whether to reduce or remit charges.

G. The Department has not received a FOI request from a Ms Wieden for material relating to two yachtsmen arrested more than 30 years ago in Cambodia. It has however, received a request from a Ms Trudy Weideman in relation to the same matter and, following consultations with her, has granted a waiver of the charges in respect of her request.

H. The Department has acknowledged receipt of Ms Weideman’s request and processing has commenced. A decision on the release of material is expected to be made shortly.

I. Yes.

J. Mr Wilson obtained a large number of documents from the Department under the FOI Act in 1995, 2000 and 2003.

K. Certain documents which fell within the scope of Mr Wilson’s requests were decided to be exempt from release under the applicable provisions of the FOI Act.

L. Currently there is an ongoing Coronial Inquest into the death of Mr Wilson’s son David with which the Department is cooperating fully. It is inappropriate to provide further comment on this matter.

**Question 32**

Program: Portfolio overview

Topic: Ambassador to Sweden

Question in writing

**Senator Trood asked:**

A. I note that on the 3 July 2009, Mr Stephen Smith announced in a media release that Mr Hugh Borrowman was unable to proceed with his appointment as Ambassador to Sweden and that the government would appoint an Ambassador to Sweden ‘in the near future.’ Has a new Ambassador to Sweden been appointed? If not, why not?

B. Is it normal for a diplomatic post to go unfilled for so long?

C. In the previous Senate Estimates hearings in June, Mr Ritchie disclosed that the previous Ambassador, Mr Brown, left in ‘late February or early March’ and that a ‘temporary occupant’ Trevor Peacock would ‘fill in in Stockholm until Mr Brown’s successor was ready to take up the position.’ Is Mr Peacock still acting in the role?

D. When does the Department expect to appoint a new ambassador?

**Answer**

A. Yes.

B. The position has not gone unfilled. The department deployed Mr Trevor Peacock, a career diplomat and most recently Australia’s Ambassador to Jordan, to the post to act as the head of mission until the new Ambassador could commence.

C. No.

D. The Government announced the appointment of Mr Paul Stephens as Ambassador to Sweden on 20 November and he presented his credentials to the King of Sweden on 2 December 2009.

**Question 33**

Program: Portfolio overview

Topic: Diplomatic appointments

Question in writing

**Senator Trood asked:**

A. At the previous Senate Estimates hearings in June, Mr Ritchie indicated that there were 11 posts where consideration was being given to the appointment of a new Head of Mission. How many of these appointments remain unresolved?

B. Where are those posts?

C. When will decisions be made about these appointments?

D. How long have these appointments been pending?

E. How many Heads of Mission and Assistant Heads of Mission are staying on in their positions longer than contracted for or are in an acting capacity? Where are these missions? How long have their appointments being in an acting capacity?

F. What is the average processing time for new diplomatic appointments?

**Answer**

A. – D. Due to the sensitivities associated with ambassadorial appointments, which require approval from the host government and by the Governor-General in Executive Council, the department is not able to provide details of Head of Mission appointments until they are announced. This is consistent with long-standing practice. The Government decides Head of Mission appointments and the timing of their announcement.

E. Head of Mission and Deputy Head of Mission appointments are notionally for three years at most posts. On occasions, this Government, like previous Governments, has extended Head of Mission appointments for a variety of reasons. Similarly, the department, which determines Deputy Head of Mission appointments, extends these appointments on occasions and for a variety of reasons. Heads of Mission in the following posts have been extended: Apia, Beijing, Copenhagen, Jakarta, Malta, Nuku’alofa, Tel Aviv, Tokyo, Washington. Deputy Heads of Mission in the following posts have been extended: Baghdad, Bangkok, Beijing, Buenos Aires, Copenhagen, Manila, Moscow, Rangoon, Singapore, Tokyo.

F. Head of Mission positions are normally advertised in the department twice a year for vacancies occurring four to ten months into the future.

**Question 34**

Program: Overview

Topic: Diplomatic Missions in Africa

Question in writing

**Senator Trood asked:**

A. In the answers provided to Questions on Notice from the June Senate Estimates hearings, the consolidated list of Australia’s missions in Africa and their diplomatic accreditations did not include Somalia. Am I correct in my understanding of this?

B. Does the absence of Somalia from the list have implications for the Australian Nigel Brennan who is detained in Somalia?

C. According to answers from Questions on Notice four out of the seven missions in Africa have three or less staff? Is this correct?

D. Please identify these missions?

E. How many staff (A-based and Locally-Engaged Staff) are employed at each of Australia’s seven missions in Africa?

F. What is the reasoning behind the increase in establishment of diplomatic relations with a number of African countries since 2008?

G. How is it in Australia’s national interest to have increased diplomatic relations with the following countries in Africa: Republic of Congo, Niger, Sao Tome and Principe, Togo and Equatorial Guinea?

H. Has this increase in diplomatic relations coincided with an increase in diplomatic staff?

I. Has the increase in diplomatic relations also coincided with an increase in budgetary allocation to these missions?

**Answer**

A. Australia does not have diplomatic relations with Somalia and therefore there is no Australian Ambassador accredited to Somalia. The Australian High Commission in Nairobi has consular responsibility and bilateral liaison responsibility for Somalia.

B. No.

C. Yes.

D. For security reasons, the department does not identify the number of DFAT A-based staff at any individual location overseas.

E. As at 16 November, Australia’s missions in Africa employed the following number of DFAT staff (A-based and locally-engaged):

Abuja – 10

Accra – 16

Cairo – 31

Harare – 15

Nairobi – 15

Port Louis – 7

Pretoria – 23.

F. The only states recognised by Australia with which it does not have diplomatic relations are in Africa. Addressing that gap is consistent with the Government’s commitment to enhancing engagement with the countries and continent of Africa. The establishment of diplomatic relations places a bilateral relationship on a formal footing, and facilitates high-level access for diplomatic missions. Such access makes it easier for our missions to pursue Australian interests, including on trade and investment and consular cases, and in advocating Australian positions in multilateral organisations and negotiations. Our commercial, consular and multilateral interests in Africa have increased significantly in recent years.

G. Refer to answer at F.

H. The 2008-09 Budget provided funds for five new A-based positions in Africa.

I. Yes.

**Question 35**

Program: Portfolio overview

Topic: Staffing of overseas posts

Question in writing

**Senator Trood asked:**

A. In the previous Senate Estimates hearings in June, Mr Wise stated that “out of our 91 posts, 33 have three or fewer Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade A-based staff”. Is the Department able to list of the names of the 33 missions that are comprised of three or fewer Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade staff?

B. Is the Department able to provide a breakdown for each of these missions detailing how many A-based and Locally-Engaged Staff are employed?

C. Can the Department explain why there are 13 missions in Europe who employ three or fewer Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade staff?

D. Does the Department intend to boost the staffing numbers to any of these missions? If so where and when?

**Answer**

A. For security reasons, the department does not identify the number of DFAT A-based staff at any individual location overseas.

B. See response to A.

C. The department maintains staffing levels at DFAT-managed missions, including in Europe, which reflect current departmental priorities and operational requirements.

D. The Department keeps staffing levels at posts under review.

**Question 36**

Program 1.1

Topic: Asylum seekers

Hansard, p. 13

**Senator Trood asked:**

Can the department advise when the Australian government made the request to the Indonesian government for asylum seekers aboard the *Oceanic Viking* to be allowed to disembark in Indonesia?

**Answer**

This question should be directed to the Australian Customs and Border Protection Service as the lead agency in responding to the rescue of passengers aboard the Oceanic Viking.

**Question 37**

Program 1.1

Topic: Chinese nuclear power fleet

Hansard, p. 104

**Senator Ludlam**

Do we know at which Chinese plants the uranium is intended to be enriched?

**Answer**

Pursuant to Annex B of the Agreement between the Government of Australia and the Government of the People’s Republic of China on the Transfer of Nuclear Material, the facilities on the Delineated Chinese Nuclear Fuel Cycle Program eligible to enrich Australian obligated nuclear material are:

* Shaanxi Uranium Enrichment Plant; and
* Lanzhou Gaseous Centrifuge Uranium Enrichment Plant.

**Question 38**

Program 1.1

Topic: Appointment of AusAID Director-General

Hansard, p. 70

**Senator Payne asked:**

What progress has been made on the appointment of a permanent Director General of AusAID?

**Answer**

A permanent Director General of AusAID is yet to be appointed.

**Question 39**

Program 1.1

Topic: BSE and foot and mouth

Hansard, p. 116

**Senator Heffernan asked:**

How many countries have the status that Australia has, being BSE and foot and mouth free?

**Answer**

The following countries have been officially assessed by the World Organisation for Animal Health (which has 175 members) as both 'Negligible Bovine Spongiform Encephalopathy risk' and 'Foot and Mouth Disease free where vaccination is not practised': Australia, Chile, Finland, Iceland, New Zealand, Norway, Singapore and Sweden. In addition, Uruguay has been officially assessed by the World Organisation for Animal Health as both 'Negligible BSE risk' and 'Foot and Mouth Disease free where vaccination is practised'.

It should be noted that a past case of Bovine Spongiform Encephalopathy or Foot and Mouth Disease does not preclude the categorisation of a World Organisation for Animal Health member as ‘Negligible BSE risk’ or ‘FMD free where vaccination is not practised’ by the World Organisation for Animal Health.

**Question 40**

Program 1.1

Topic: Direct Aid Program (DAP)

Hansard, p. 99

**Senator Ferguson asked:**

How are Direct Aid Program (DAP) grants awarded?

**Answer**

DAP is funded through AusAID and managed by the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade at 54 Australian overseas missions for over 80 countries. DAP funding is awarded predominantly to small-scale, community-based projects otherwise overlooked by larger aid programs.

The Head of Mission is responsible for overall management of DAP. A Committee comprising at least three members administers the DAP program at posts.

Posts decide individually on how to call for DAP applications. They may, for example, advertise in one or two tranches per year, or encourage specific organisations to apply.

Applicants apply in writing for DAP funding according to the eligibility criteria set out in DAP Guidelines and on application forms. The DAP Committee uses these criteria, together with the Post’s risk management strategy to assess projects for funding.

Eligibility criteria include the following:

* Projects are to be consistent with Australian bilateral policy, the post’s DAP strategy and the post’s public diplomacy objectives;
  + - * Individuals, groups and organisations engaged in development activities on a not-for-profit basis in the post’s countries of accreditation may apply;
      * Small-scale, sustainable development projects and activities are favoured, which are participatory in nature. Ideally these projects should engage the beneficiaries in the project design, development, and implementation;
      * A special focus is placed on activities which:
* alleviate poverty and contribute to developmental outcomes;
* address womens’ issues and participation;
* focus on the needs of children, youth, and other disadvantaged groups; and
* have an environmental focus;
  + - * Projects should have an identifiable outcome by the end of the financial year in which the money has been granted; and
      * Project funding should range between $5,000 and $30,000, but can be higher in value if approved by the Canberra DAP Secretariat.

**Question 41**

Program 1.1

Topic: Dolphin slaughter in Taiji Japan

Question in writing

**Senator Siewert asked:**

A. Have there been any diplomatic communications to Japan regarding the annual slaughter of dolphins in Taiji Japan?

B. If so, please detail.

**Answer**

There have not been any bilateral diplomatic communications to Japan regarding its annual dolphin drives in Taiji.

Australia has made very clear our deep concern relating to the conservation status of small cetaceans in the International Whaling Commission (IWC). Most recently, the Hon Peter Garrett AM MP, Minister for the Environment, Heritage and the Arts, released the Global Cetaceans Status Report at the June 2009 annual meeting of the IWC, highlighting the fact that small cetaceans are among the most threatened group of mammals in the world. Australia has also successfully pushed for the inclusion of small cetacean conservation as one of the 33 issues under consideration in ongoing discussions on the future of the IWC.