

**Senate Finance and Public Administration Legislation Committee**

**ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON NOTICE**

**Prime Minister and Cabinet Portfolio**

**Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet**

Budget Estimates Hearing 24 May-3rd June 2010

**Question: PM98**

**Topic: Counter Terrorism White Paper**

**Type of Question: Written**

**Date set by the committee for the return of answer: 9 July 2010**

**Number of pages: 3**

- a) Which agencies were responsible for the writing of the Counter Terrorism White Paper?
- b) What role (if any) did the Prime Minister have in the design and the content of the Counter Terrorism White Paper?
- c) Was the Prime Minister, or his office, responsible for a hardening of the language of an earlier version of the white paper and for insisting that the final version include an announceable?
- d) Was there any discussion about the inclusion of the word "jihadist" in the document?
- i. Why was this term included? Does it give justification to a "just" war?
- e) According the Counter-Terrorism White Paper '[a] second shift apparent since 2004 has been the increase in the terrorist threat from people born or raised in Australia, who have become influenced by the violent jihadist message.' I note that the Government will provide \$9.7m over four years for targeted programs to reduce violent extremism in Australia. Is the \$9.7m the only funding/strategy to counter violent extremism in Australia? If not, what other measures are in place? What do they cost?
- f) According to the Prime Minister '[t]he Government is committed to concrete action to combat terrorism. We will continue to ensure that agencies are appropriately resourced, that responses are agile and can meet changing threats, and that all necessary and practical action is taken to protect Australia and Australians.' Does \$9.7m ensure that agencies are appropriately resourced to counter violent extremism (home grown terrorism) in Australia?

**Answer:**

- a) Which agencies were responsible for the writing of the Counter Terrorism White Paper?

The Counter Terrorism White Paper (the White Paper) was coordinated by the Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet (PM&C), and involved input from a range of Commonwealth agencies and officials from State and Territory governments. The White Paper was informed by a steering group chaired by the Deputy National Security Adviser and comprised senior Commonwealth officials from 14 agencies, including:

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- Attorney-General's Department;
- AusAID;
- Australian Customs and Border Protection Service;
- Australian Federal Police;
- Australian Security Intelligence Organisation;
- Australian Secret Intelligence Service;
- Australian Transaction Reports and Analysis Centre (AUSTRAC);
- Department of Defence;
- Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade;
- Department of Infrastructure, Transport, Regional Development and Local Government (the Office of Transport Security);
- Department of Immigration and Citizenship;
- Office of National Assessments;
- Treasury; and
- Department of Finance and Deregulation.

**b) What role (if any) did the Prime Minister have in the design and the content of the Counter Terrorism White Paper?**

**c) Was the Prime Minister, or his office, responsible for a hardening of the language of an earlier version of the white paper and for insisting that the final version include an announceable?**

The White Paper was developed through a rigorous process of consultation to ensure that the Government had robust advice. As is the normal practice, PM&C worked closely with the Prime Minister's office prior to the release of the White Paper.

**d) Was there any discussion about the inclusion of the word "jihadist" in the document?**

**i. Why was this term included? Does it give justification to a "just" war?**

The White Paper was informed through consultation with a range of government agencies and this included discussion about key descriptors. The language used to describe terrorism is accurate.

**e) According the Counter-Terrorism White Paper '[a] second shift apparent since 2004 has been the increase in the terrorist threat from people born or raised in Australia, who have become influenced by the violent jihadist message.' I note that the Government will provide \$9.7m over four years for targeted programs to reduce violent extremism in Australia. Is the \$9.7m the only funding/strategy to counter violent extremism in Australia? If not, what other measures are in place? What do they cost?**

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As well as the \$9.7 million allocated to the Attorney-General's Department in the 2010-11 Budget for countering violent extremism, in 2009 the Government agreed that \$2 million per annum of National Counter-Terrorism Committee administered funding would be reserved for state and Commonwealth projects to counter violent extremism.

**f) According to the Prime Minister '[t]he Government is committed to concrete action to combat terrorism. We will continue to ensure that agencies are appropriately resourced, that responses are agile and can meet changing threats, and that all necessary and practical action is taken to protect Australia and Australians.' Does \$9.7m ensure that agencies are appropriately resourced to counter violent extremism (home grown terrorism) in Australia?**

Every new policy proposal is considered and scrutinised in line with government priorities and value for money. Ongoing funding for measures to counter violent extremism in Australia has been determined in the context of broader national security priorities and budget.