

## QUESTION TAKEN ON NOTICE

### ADDITIONAL BUDGET ESTIMATES HEARING: 21 FEBRUARY 2011

#### IMMIGRATION AND CITIZENSHIP PORTFOLIO

#### **(145) Program 3.1: Border Security**

Senator Cash (L&CA 68) asked:

With reference to an article dated 29 January 2011 written by Russell Skelton in The Age newspaper where he states that the Afghan community in Australia is aware and can identify people smuggling rings operating in their community including Heydar Khani the man responsible for the SIEV 221 boat. What is the department's compliance role in identifying these criminals and passing this information on to the AFP?

*Answer:*

The Australian Federal Police (AFP) has portfolio responsibility for the investigation of people smuggling offences under the *Migration Act 1958* and the Commonwealth *Criminal Code*. The department has a very close, productive and effective working relationship with the AFP and passes on any information it receives about people smuggling matters.

In addition to this, the department contributes staff to the People Smuggling Strike Team (PSST) located in AFP Headquarters in Canberra. The presence of DIAC officers within the PSST provides a means for the immediate communication of information about people smuggling activities between the agencies.

If information about the presence of people smuggling organisers in Australia or the overseas remittance of funds associated with people smuggling came to the attention of the department it would be immediately be passed to the AFP for their consideration.