

SENATE STANDING COMMITTEE ON LEGAL AND CONSTITUTIONAL AFFAIRS
AUSTRALIAN CUSTOMS AND BORDER PROTECTION SERVICE

Question No. 12

Senator Ronaldson asked the following question at the hearing on 12 February 2013:

Senator RONALDSON: I presume that resourcing would have included financial resourcing—additional funds to address this issue.

Mr Pezzullo: There were internal funds made available. So, as I said in my statement, the Internal Affairs unit that had been in existence for some 30 years, going back to 1979, by the late 2000s, around 2007, it was a unit of about five. This is only anecdotal evidence—I can get more precision: it has never been more than about five. Mr Carmody made a decision to invest quite significantly additional resources. The branch that I referred to in my opening statement has something like more than 40 officers, and I am intending to deploy more officers.

Senator RONALDSON: Was there a request for additional funds?

Mr Pezzullo: I will have to check whether it was the subject of an external request or a new policy proposal, or whether we just simply made a decision upfront that, because of fiscal requirements, we would have to find the resources anyway. I suspect that we took a decision to absorb the costs upfront and to make the decision to transfer the resources internally, and to grow those resources, I should say.

The answer to the honourable senator's question is as follows:

In December 2007, internal responsibilities for Fraud Control were transferred to the Internal Affairs Unit and an Intelligence capacity was approved in 2008. In December 2009, the Security Vetting and Security Policy functions became a responsibility of the Internal Affairs Unit and its name was changed to Integrity and Professional Standards Branch. The Integrity and Professional Standards Branch is currently funded for 46 personnel. The increases in personnel since 2007 have not been the subject of an external request or a new policy proposal to Government; as the associated costs have been funded within the existing Customs and Border Protection budget allocations.