

SENATE LEGAL AND CONSTITUTIONAL LEGISLATION COMMITTEE
AUSTRALIAN SECURITY INTELLIGENCE ORGANISATION

Question No. 115

Senator Ludwig asked the following question at the hearing on 25 May 2006:

Language skills:

- a) How many staff in the latest round have foreign language skills?
- b) How many of these are at i) interpreter standard; b) translator standard?

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

- a) ASIO recruited 43 Intelligence Officer (IO) trainees in 2004–05, of which 10 came from non-English-speaking backgrounds. In January 2006, 18 IO trainees commenced with the Organisation of which one came from a non-English speaking background. A further intake of around 22 trainees is scheduled for July 2006; 3 of these come from non-English speaking backgrounds. (ASIO reverted to two intakes each year to better spread the training and induction workload).

As at June 2005, 14.64% of ASIO's overall workforce came from a non-English speaking background.

- b) ASIO does not employ its IO trainees as interpreters or translators, but has a separate employment category – linguists – who perform this role. For reasons of national security ASIO does not provide the number of linguists employed.