

SENATE STANDING COMMITTEE ON LEGAL AND CONSTITUTIONAL AFFAIRS
AUSTRALIAN FEDERAL POLICE

Question No. 134

Senator Fierravanti-Wells asked the following question at the hearing on 26 May 2008:

- a) I refer to evidence in the Finance and Public Administration hearing on 27 May 2008 regarding various incidents involving the close personal protection team of the Prime Minister. Please provide details of an incident reported in *The Australian* on 9 May 2008.
- b) How many of the officers which were previously on the close personal protection team/s of Mr Howard and Mrs Howard are now on the team/s of Mr Rudd and Ms Rein?
- c) Please provide details of the size of the teams normally attached to Mr Howard compared to Mr Rudd?
- d) What is the nature, scope and operational requirements of the close personal protection team of Mr Rudd? Have there been any changes to these procedures since Mr Rudd became Prime Minister?
- e) Have any formal or informal complaints been made in relation to the actions of Mr Rudd's close personal protection team.

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

- a) At approximately 2.10 pm on Thursday 8 May 2008, AFP Close Personal Protection (CPP) were informed that a male person (no further details known at that time) had shot and wounded a female at the Star City (Sydney) Casino and was currently unable to be located in the area. The male was believed to be still armed with a firearm.

At this time, Prime Minister Rudd was involved in meetings at the Sydney Commonwealth Parliamentary Offices and was scheduled to attend the opening of the Fairfax Media building at 2.30 pm in an office building at 1 Darling Island Drive.

Given the proximity of the shooting location to the event venue, AFP CPP were concerned that the heightened security threat in the area presented a greater risk to the Prime Minister's safety.

At approximately 2.40 pm advice from AFP CPP members at the subject venue was that although the male had not yet been apprehended, AFP and NSW Police had sufficient resources in the area to facilitate safe passage and arrival to the event location. A short time later the Prime Minister departed the Sydney CPO for the Fairfax Media building.

Upon arrival at the Fairfax Media building the Prime Minister was met by Fairfax officials as well as a number of media representatives (from a variety of mediums and distributors). AFP CPP members had earlier advised the attending media to maintain a clear path for the Prime Minister's safe transfer from his vehicle to the event. There continued to be a heightened level of alertness due to the unknown whereabouts of the armed offender and therefore there was a need to expedite the Prime Minister's movement from the vehicle.

On the movement from the vehicle to the marquee a journalist (known to be Mr John Lyons of the Australian newspaper) approached the Prime Minister and began asking questions, the Prime

Minister offered no response and continued to walk in the same direction, however was partially blocked by Mr Lyons who was repeatedly asked by AFP CPP members to maintain a clear path before being directed out of the safe travel route of the Prime Minister.

Following the conclusion of the event, Mr Lyons again approached the Prime Minister however he did not impede the Prime Minister's path. The Prime Minister did not respond to Mr Lyons' questioning and Mr Lyons withdrew from the contact and the Prime Minister continued to his vehicle.

The Prime Minister's Office is responsible for managing media issues relating to the Prime Minister. On this occasion the AFP CPP were advised that no 'door-stop' would be provided.

- b) Two.
- c) The size of the CPP team is the same for the current Prime Minister as it was for the former Prime Minister.
- d) The NTAC Threat Assessment remains the same for the incumbent Prime Minister and there has been no variance in the CPP methodology deployed. The objective continues to be to provide for the safety and dignity of the Prime Minister.
- e) No.