

SENATE STANDING COMMITTEE ON LEGAL AND CONSTITUTIONAL AFFAIRS  
AUSTRALIAN FEDERAL POLICE

**Question No. 59**

**Senator Brandis asked the following question at the hearing on 26 May 2009:**

In relation to the Maritime Incident Management Group:

- a) how many times has the Group been convened for ad hoc meetings to deal with developing situations since 1 January 2009,
- b) from which agencies does the Group receive information from in relation to an incident, and
- c) did the AFP contribute any information to the Group that convened in response to the events of 16 April on SIEV 36?

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

a) Australian Customs and Border Protection Service - Border Protection Command chairs the Maritime Incident Management Group and is therefore best positioned to provide definitive advice on how many meetings have been convened since 1 January 2009. The Australian Federal Police (AFP) has attended five Maritime Incident Management Group meetings since 1 January 2009.

b) The Maritime Incident Management Group is advised by each of its standing members on matters relevant to their respective roles and functions. Australian Customs and Border Protection Service – Border Protection Command as chair, articulates the existing situation and arising issues and is best placed to provide further advice on the workings of the Maritime Incident Management Group.

The information provided by respective agencies varies depending on the specific situation or incident requiring management. The Maritime Incident Management Group also invites other relevant stakeholders to participate and provide guidance relating to their respective area of responsibility or expertise.

The standing composition of the Maritime Incident Management Group is:

- Australian Customs and Border Protection Service;
- Australian Federal Police;
- Australian Security Intelligence Organisation;
- Attorney-General's Department;
- Australian Defence Force;
- Defence Signals Directorate;
- Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade;
- Australian Secret Intelligence Service;
- Department of Immigration and Citizenship;
- Office of National Assessment; and
- Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet.

c) The AFP attended two meetings in respect of SIEV 36. The AFP contributed information relevant to its roles and functions which could and subsequently did, support the whole-of-government response to the incident.

The AFP informed the Maritime Incident Management Group that:

- the AFP was imbedded into the Northern Territory Police (NTPOL) Crisis Centre and could provide information released by the NTP to responding agencies;
- the AFP would be assisting the NTPOL with their investigation in the provision of immediate deployment to Darwin of :
  - nine investigators;
  - two intelligence officers;
  - two forensic officers (Disaster Victims Identification/Chemical Criminalistics);
  - one family investigative liaison officer;
  - one administration officer; and
  - six interpreters.
- to assist with planning efforts, the AFP would assist with Department of Immigration and Citizenship transfer of passengers and crew including reception at Darwin and Perth.

The AFP subsequently provided the assistance proposed as outlined.