

SENATE STANDING COMMITTEE ON LEGAL AND CONSTITUTIONAL AFFAIRS
AUSTRALIAN SECURITY INTELLIGENCE ORGANISATION

Question No. 90

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

In relation to ASIO's business liaison unit, provide information concerning the role and objective of the unit, who can apply and, if so, on what criteria?

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

The Business Liaison Unit (BLU) was established within ASIO in October 2005 following a Prime Ministerial directive to provide an interface between the private sector and the Australian Intelligence Community. The focus is to raise awareness about national security and contribute to Australian companies' risk-management planning.

The intended objective of the BLU is to equip corporate security managers with credible, intelligence-backed reporting that enables them to authoritatively brief executive management and staff and to use the knowledge gained for their risk management and business continuity planning.

The BLU has established an easy-to-access information resource for business security managers, underpinned by the password-secured BLU website. Access to the BLU website is provided to companies on a subscription basis and is free of charge.

The BLU regularly presents to industry forums that have a focus on security awareness and risk management and provides a contact point for business to use on a day-to-day basis.

The BLU also runs an 'Executive Program' that arranges meetings between the Director-General of Security and company CEOs. This provides visibility of the partnership ASIO is creating with business at the executive levels within Australia's largest corporations.

While the BLU does not have specific criteria as to eligibility for application, it is envisaged that those seeking to have access to BLU product would be personnel undertaking security or risk management roles in large Australian companies.

Any company wishing to find out more information on any of the BLU's functions should email blu@asio.gov.au.