

SENATE LEGAL AND CONSTITUTIONAL LEGISLATION COMMITTEE  
AUSTRALIAN FEDERAL POLICE

**Question No. 259**

**Senator Heffernan asked the following question at the hearing on 31 October 2005:**

- (a) Is the AFP guidelines on police liaison available to the Committee?
- (b) Are bilateral agreements available to the Committee?

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

- (a) Yes, the AFP International Operations Policy is attached below.
- (b) No, bilateral agreements would require the approval of both parties prior to disclosure to third parties.

## **International Operations Policy**

The principal responsibility of the Australian Federal Police (AFP) is the prevention, investigation and presentation for prosecution of crime which impacts on the Commonwealth's interests. Government expectations of the AFP are set out in Ministerial directions issued under the *Australian Federal Police Act 1979*.

The AFP supports the Government's international responsibilities through the provision of a range of law enforcement services. The primary AFP objectives are to facilitate an effective contribution and response to international law enforcement efforts and to provide an effective contribution to Australia's United Nations missions and other negotiated Government to Government bilateral or multilateral agreements for law and order restoration and capacity building programs.

The delivery of the AFP's International Services has been significantly influenced by the changing globalised security and criminal environment. There has been an increase in the offshore deployment of AFP members in response to terrorist and other transnational criminal activity. The AFP also continues to support the Government's obligations under UN treaties and conventions, and regional assistance missions through the establishment of the International Deployment Group (IDG).

The IDG also builds upon and complements the government's commitment to the AFP's Law Enforcement Cooperation Program (LECP) which is successfully delivering mutually beneficial law enforcement outcomes and capacity building initiatives throughout our region. The IDG will be an important component of the Government's commitment to regional security.

The AFP's International Network is vital to the AFP's commitment to security and combating transnational crime groups that operate at the local, national and international levels. The International Network acts to:

- represent Australia's law enforcement interests internationally;
- fulfill a critical role in establishing relationships of confidence with international law enforcement and other agencies;
- gather intelligence on criminal activities or groups in support of AFP crime management strategies and national intelligence collection priorities;
- share intelligence on criminal activities and groups in support of international law enforcement efforts;
- broker collaboration with international law enforcement for multi-agency investigations; and
- provide advice and coordination, where appropriate, on training and technical measures for international law enforcement to combat transnational crime.

The AFP is Australia's international policing representative for Interpol, the International Criminal Police Organisation. The AFP operates Australia's National Central Bureau for all Australian law enforcement agencies in coordinating international inquiries through the Interpol network.