

A-1738/04 (G1/155)

RMC:KT

22 April 2004

Ms Louise Gell  
Legal and Constitutional Legislation Committee  
Australian Senate  
Parliament House  
CANBERRA ACT 2600

Dear Ms Gell

**PROVISIONS OF THE ANTI-TERRORISM BILL 2004**

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the abovementioned Bill.

The Bill proposes to extend from 4 hours to 20 the current period permitted for interviewing suspects for Commonwealth offences. It is Tasmania's long-held position that specifying a fixed time period for investigations is inappropriate. In Tasmania, that time is not fixed, but must be reasonable. Although the extension of the '4-hour rule' is an advance, it does not deal with the possibility that investigations for complex matters could take much longer. It is acknowledged that the time for questioning excludes the 'dead time' for making enquiries, but it is still considered that specifying a time is an unnecessary requirement that has the potential to curtail what might be an extensive, complex and delicate investigation. Prematurely releasing a suspect/witness, or bringing them before a court, could prejudice an investigation.

I trust these comments will provide useful in your considerations.

Yours sincerely

**R McCREADIE**  
Commissioner of Police