

**Select Committee on Foreign Affairs Written Evidence****Memorandum from the Office of National Assessments, Government of Australia**

LETTER TO THE CHAIRMAN OF THE COMMITTEE FROM THE ACTING DIRECTOR-GENERAL, OFFICE OF NATIONAL ASSESSMENTS, AUSTRALIA, 18 JUNE 2003

In view of your intention to seek evidence from Mr Andrew Wilkie to the Foreign Affairs Committee on the subject of the decision to go to war in Iraq, there are several points I should draw to your attention.

Mr Wilkie's views on intelligence about Iraq and its WMD programmes do not reflect the views of the Office of National Assessments (ONA).

Some media reports of Mr Wilkie's credentials on the subject of Iraq are in part misleading. His recent work in ONA as a senior analyst principally concerned illegal immigration and related transnational issues. Prior to his resignation on 11 March 2003 he produced only one written report about Iraq, an assessment in December 2002 of the possible humanitarian consequences of military intervention.

Mr Wilkie was one of several analysts who as the Iraq crisis intensified were asked and offered to be available to provide additional analyst capacity on Iraq when needed. On his return from two weeks' overseas travel (11-27 February 2003) researching immigration and transnational issues, he was rostered to be part of analyst teams in ONA's watch office on Iraq. But he resigned before contributing to any assessment as part of an analyst team.

Like other ONA analysts he had access to a range of current and stored intelligence reporting on Iraq. But on the subject of Iraq's WMD programmes, access within ONA to some important relevant material was restricted. Those with access to that material did not include all those on the watch-office roster and did not include Mr Wilkie.

*Acting Director-General*

Office of National Assessments

Australia

LETTER TO THE CHAIRMAN OF THE COMMITTEE FROM THE DEPUTY DIRECTOR-

FAC/3/0226

GENERAL, OFFICE OF NATIONAL ASSESSMENTS, AUSTRALIA, 20 JUNE 2003

On 18 June I sent you a letter intended to correct some misleading media reports of Mr Andrew Wilkie's credentials on the subject of Iraq's WMD capability. In view of the answers he gave in testimony to your committee on 19 June, I would like to clarify further some points concerning his credentials.

Mr Wilkie said that the amount of relevant intelligence reporting to which he did not have access was small. In fact the set of sensitive reports to which he did not have access contained a substantial part of the most important intelligence relating to Iraqi WMD capability.

After an earlier period at ONA as a military analyst, Mr Wilkie was recruited and assigned late in 2001 to work on illegal immigration. This remained his principal work assignment until he resigned in March 2003.

*Deputy Director-General*

Office of National Assessments

Australia

20 June 2003

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