
On 16 May 2011, on the ABC Lateline program, three former contractors employed as data entry operators with the Defence Security Authority (DSA), made allegations of inappropriate vetting practices by using workarounds when entering information into the Defence electronic Personnel Security Assessment Management System (PSAMS). On 29 May 2011, the Prime Minister, The Hon Julia Gillard, requested that the Inspector-General of Intelligence and Security (IGIS) conduct an inquiry into the allegations. The IGIS made 13 recommendations, including a recommendation that the Defence Chief Audit Executive (CAE) conduct a series of annual reviews into the Australian Government Security Vetting Agency’s (AGSVA) compliance with Government security vetting policy.

The CAE completed the first assessment in 2012, and concluded that, at this time, the AGSVA is not fully compliant with Government security vetting policy. None of these non compliance issues, either individually or collectively, compromise the vetting processes.

In regard to the 13 recommendations made by IGIS, the CAE assessed that four recommendations have been fully completed, four are currently being implemented, and five are in the development stage. All recommendations that are yet to be completed are being actively managed, and progress towards their implementation is reported on a regular basis to senior management within the AGSVA and the Defence Security Authority.

The CAE noted that the AGSVA is implementing a reform program based on sound business processes to ensure its future compliance. Intelligence and Security Group senior management have allocated additional resources, and is actively engaged in addressing the issues raised in the IGIS inquiry. When implemented, this reform and the new security assessment management system should improve the efficiency and effectiveness of the AGSVA, as well as its compliance with Government security vetting policy.

Dated: June 2012