Within Defence the DSA has confirmed that none of the Defence Investigative Authorities (DSA, IGD, ADFIS and the Service Provost Marshals) has conducted any covert or surveillance operations against either the Minister or Ms Liu.

In the course of investigating whether Defence has had authorised or unauthorised access to personal information including the Minister’s telephone contact numbers, the DSA re-examined a 2008 investigation into a leak of classified information.

As part of this investigation, the DSA contacted the Minister’s then Chief of Staff, Mr Daniel Cotterill, and gained his agreement to this investigation incorporating the Minister’s office, including both Defence and Parliament House IT systems.

Defence CIO Group undertook searches of the Defence ICT gateway to determine whether a leaked document had left the Defence network, which includes accounts operated within the Minister’s office. This was a global gateway search looking for a specific document and not a search of any individual account.

The DSA also asked the Parliament House security team to ascertain if the leaked document had left the Parliament House IT network. The Parliament House security team subsequently advised DSA that there was no evidence that the Minister for Defence’s office had emailed or faxed the leaked document. Today, Mr David Kenny (Deputy Secretary, Department of Parliamentary Services) confirmed that email and fax gateway tracking logs were investigated. Email accounts were not accessed in the course of these enquiries.

The DSA Investigation did not involve searches of other electronic office equipment or storage media in the Minister’s office.

The DSA Investigation included a similar search of Defence-owned telephone systems, including mobiles. This search was designed to reveal contact with specific numbers of interest to the investigation, and did not target specific Defence-owned numbers. No search was conducted of any Parliament House phone records.

Checks of the Defence Restricted Network and Defence telephone records described above are standard procedures when the DSA investigates unauthorised disclosures of information.

Next Steps

The DSA intends to conduct further activities to ascertain whether there is any substance to the media articles. These will include:

- determining what, if any, ICT checks can usefully be conducted to establish unauthorised access to the Minister’s computer accounts;
- interviewing relevant members of the Defence Investigative Authorities and the Defence Signals Directorate to confirm the initial assessment that the media article is unfounded; and
- interviewing DRN administrators with system-wide access to confirm they have not accessed the Minister’s DRN accounts.