



Hon. Robert McClelland MP
Attorney-General

MEDIA STATEMENT

Friday, 2 September 2011

RELEASE OF UNREDACTED CLASSIFIED MATERIAL

STATEMENT FROM THE ATTORNEY-GENERAL ROBERT McCLELLAND:

It appears that a very significant number of US classified cables held by WikiLeaks have been distributed across the internet over the past 48 hours.

On occasions before this week, WikiLeaks redacted identifying features where the safety of individuals or national security could be put at risk.

It appears this hasn't occurred with documents that have been distributed across the internet this week and this is extremely concerning.

I am advised that many of these documents contain identifying information. I am aware of at least one cable in which an ASIO officer is purported to have been identified, as reported in *The Sydney Morning Herald* and *The Age* today.

ASIO and other Government agencies officers are working through the material to see the extent of the impact on Australian interests.

I will not provide a running commentary on WikiLeaks, however this disturbing development confirms the Government's position regarding WikiLeaks and others disseminating classified material.

In the modern age of global electronic communications, this material may be available on a number of sites on the internet.

I am confident Australian media outlets will exercise caution in identifying individuals or reproducing information that could put their safety at risk.

This prudence was exercised in relation to stories published today in *The Sydney Morning Herald* and *The Age* newspaper.

Section 92 of the ASIO Act makes it a crime to publish, or cause to be published, the identity of an ASIO Officer.

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