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Australia's term on the UN Security Council (2013-14)

Servicing Australia's term on the UN Security Council will be the key policy priority for ILD. S34(3)

S34(3) Whatever the outcome, there will be considerable resource implications for the department to properly service our term on the Council. The Council has a heavy agenda and meets in some form every working day of the year. UNNY is being supplemented with extra staff who will be in place by end of the year.

Expectations of our performance S33(a)(iii) are high. We can expect close scrutiny of our performance. Meeting these expectations will enhance our pursuit of broader national interests and deepen our relationships with key partners beyond our term.

With several major countries coming off the Council, we expect to be given a heavy workload. While not yet decided, it looks likely we will be allocated Germany's (outgoing) lead on Afghanistan and chairmanship of the Al-Qa'ida (AQ) and Taliban Sanctions Committees, plus one or two other subsidiary bodies.

The Council deals with issues that are of particular importance to Australia – Afghanistan, DPRK, Iran and Syria. Around 80 per cent of the work of the Council relates to Africa and the Middle East. We will be expected to contribute actively to all aspects of the Council's deliberations. S34(3)

S34(3)

Australia will hold the presidency twice during its term, in September 2013 and again towards the end of 2014. The themes for Australia's presidency will need to be decided in the first half of 2013. This timing will ensure that our approach is coordinated with other members of the Council.

The department, in regular consultation with PM&C and other agencies, is responsible for the coordination and development of government positions and media messaging on UNSC issues. Day-to-day management in Canberra will be the responsibility of UTF, which will include staff from AFP, AusAID and Defence. UTF will convene regular interdepartmental meetings with all relevant agencies. During crises we will need to be able to establish whole-of-government positions on issues, brief Ministers and provide instructions at short notice.

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