

s 22(1)(a)(ii)

From: Paul Schofield
Sent: Tuesday, 20 August 2024 9:01 AM
To: s 22(1)(a)(ii)
Cc: s 22(1)(a)(ii)
Subject: RE: QTB update - Qinling base in Antarctica [SEC=OFFICIAL]

OFFICIAL

s 22(1)(a)(ii)

P

From: s 22(1)(a)(ii) @dfat.gov.au
Sent: Monday, August 19, 2024 10:41 AM
To: Paul Schofield <Paul.Schofield@dfat.gov.au>
Cc: Adam Mccarthy <Adam.McCarthy@dfat.gov.au>; s 22(1)(a)(ii) @dfat.gov.au; s 22(1)(a)(ii) @dfat.gov.au
Subject: RE: QTB update - Qinling base in Antarctica [SEC=OFFICIAL]

OFFICIAL

Hi Paul

As agreed, I've updated background only (what s 22(1)(a)(ii) was expecting from her call this morning) on both the ASPI and ABC articles. I understand she received points on the former on Friday.

We've worked with EAD, and they're not including points in their QTB – s 47E(d)

Its up at the office now.

Thanks

s 22(1)(a)(ii)

s 22(1)(a)(ii)

s 22(1)(a)(ii)

Assistant Director | Antarctica Section
International Law Branch II | Legal Division
Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade
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From: Paul Schofield <Paul.Schofield@dfat.gov.au>
Sent: Monday, August 19, 2024 9:20 AM
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Cc: Adam Mccarthy <Adam.McCarthy@dfat.gov.au>; s 22(1)(a)(ii) @dfat.gov.au; s 22(1)(a)(ii) @dfat.gov.au
Subject: FW: QTB update - Qinling base in Antarctica [SEC=OFFICIAL]

OFFICIAL

Hi ^{s 22(1)(a)(ii)}

As discussed.

P

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Subject: QTB update - Qinling base in Antarctica [SEC=OFFICIAL]

OFFICIAL

Hi Paul

As discussed, grateful if you can advise if you'll update the Antarctica QTB based on this article?

China has expanded its presence in Antarctica with its new Qinling base. Should Australia be worried?

ABC News By Henry Zwartz
Sunday 18 August 2024, 1:02pm AEST

It might look like an ice-bound resort but China's latest Antarctic station, Qinling, has Australia's intelligence community concerned.

Potential Audience: 1,126,000

[VIEW ONLINE](#)

We have drafted the following to update the China bilateral QTB:

ABC report on Qinling station

- The Australian Government actively monitors and responds to emerging trends and risks in respect of Australia's national interests in Antarctica.
- Australia encourages all Parties to continue to support the Antarctic Treaty system, its rules and norms of freedom of scientific investigation, international cooperation, environmental protection and non-militarisation.

If raised: Antarctic inspections

- Inspections of other nations' facilities in Antarctica under the Antarctic Treaty System are an important transparency and compliance mechanism
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- Australia conducted inspections of China's Taishan Station and its Qingling (fifth) Station in January 2020 and found both to be compliant with China's obligations under the Treaty.
- **s 33(a)(iii)**

Background

On 18 August, ABC News published an article entitled 'China has expanded its presence in Antarctica with its new Qinling base. Should Australia be worried?'

On 16 August, APSI released a Special Report entitled "Ice panda: navigating China's hybrid Antarctic agenda". [Ice panda: navigating China's hybrid Antarctic agenda | Australian Strategic Policy Institute | ASPI](#). The report claims Australia is failing to do the bare minimum to protect the status quo ensured by the Antarctic Treaty System. It recommends making Antarctica a higher priority in Australia's strategic thinking; establishing a specific Antarctic group in the Department of Defence; and establishing a special envoy / Ambassador for Antarctic in the Prime Minister's portfolio.

Regards

s 22(1)(a)(ii)

Assistant Director | China Strategic Section (CSS)
East Asia Political Branch (EAB) | East Asia Division (EAD)

T s 22(1)(a)(ii) Ms 22(1)(a)(ii)

s 22(1)(a)(ii)

From: s 22(1)(a)(ii)
Sent: Thursday, 8 February 2024 1:12 PM
To: s 22(1)(a)(ii)
Cc: s 22(1)(a)(ii)
Subject: RE: China MFA Press Conference - ref to AU -7 February 2024- CN-Antarctic station, s 22(1)(a)(ii)

SEC=OFFICIAL]

OFFICIAL

Hi s 22(1)(a)(ii)

Propose something using previously cleared words s 22(1)(a)(ii)

Are you aware of the remarks that Foreign Ministry Spokesperson Wang Wenbin at his regular press conference [7 February] made regarding the opening of China's new Ross Sea station?

- Yes.
- We encourage all Parties to continue to support the Antarctic Treaty system, particularly its rules and norms of freedom of scientific investigation, international cooperation, environmental protection and non-militarisation.

I've found a smattering of the reporting for the background.

The opening of new Chinese station Qinling on 7 February 2024 was announced by Foreign Ministry Spokesperson Wang Wenbin. [Reuters](#) reporting noted the Center for Strategic and International Studies report from 2023 which noted it would be well situated to collect signals intelligence over Australia and New Zealand. [Xinhua](#) reported that President Xi Jinping on Wednesday commended the opening of the station and urged station workers to "better know, protect and utilise the polar region". ([Global Times](#), [Canberra Times](#), [Yahoo](#), [9News](#))

Please let me know if theres any concerns

Thanks

s 22(1)(a)(ii)

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From: s 22(1)(a)(ii) @dfat.gov.au>
Sent: Thursday, February 8, 2024 12:58 PM
To: s 22(1)(a)(ii) @dfat.gov.au>; s 22(1)(a)(ii) @dfat.gov.au>; s 22(1)(a)(ii) @dfat.gov.au>; s 22(1)(a)(ii) @dfat.gov.au>
Cc: s 22(1)(a)(ii) @dfat.gov.au>
Subject: RE: China MFA Press Conference - ref to AU -7 February 2024- CN-Antarctic station, s 22(1)(a)(ii)

[SEC=OFFICIAL]

OFFICIAL

Hi all

Looks like it has been reported by the Global times: [China opens fifth Antarctic research station, to provide platform for scientific cooperation - Global Times](#) and Xinhua: [China's Qinling Station in Antarctica starts operation-Xinhua \(news.cn\)](#)
'some Western media have hyped "intelligence concerns" by claiming that the station is located in an "excellent position" to gather intelligence information about Australia and New Zealand.' (Global Times).

s 47E(d)

Kind regards
s 22(1)(a)(ii)

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East Asia Political Branch | East Asia Division
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From: s 22(1)(a)(ii) @dfat.gov.au>
Sent: Thursday, February 8, 2024 12:42 PM
To: s 22(1)(a)(ii) @dfat.gov.au>; s 22(1)(a)(ii) @dfat.gov.au>; s 22(1)(a)(ii) @dfat.gov.au>
Cc: s 22(1)(a)(ii) @dfat.gov.au>
Subject: RE: China MFA Press Conference - ref to AU -7 February 2024- CN-Antarctic station, s 22(1)(a)(ii)

[SEC=OFFICIAL]

OFFICIAL

s 22(1)(a)(ii) probably has a better sense than me.

My impression is that Reuters line of questioning won't be in state media, but news that the new station is in operation will be.

Happy estimates updating 😊

From: s 22(1)(a)(ii) @dfat.gov.au>
Sent: Thursday, February 8, 2024 12:36 PM
To: s 22(1)(a)(ii) @dfat.gov.au>; s 22(1)(a)(ii) @dfat.gov.au>; s 22(1)(a)(ii) @dfat.gov.au>; s 22(1)(a)(ii) @dfat.gov.au>
Cc: s 22(1)(a)(ii) @dfat.gov.au>
Subject: RE: China MFA Press Conference - ref to AU -7 February 2024- CN-Antarctic station, s 22(1)(a)(ii)

[SEC=OFFICIAL]

OFFICIAL

Thanks s 22(1)(a)(ii)

Do you know if this is likely to go in any of the state media? We'll probably need to update estimates brief 😊

s 22(1)(a)(ii)

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 International Law Branch II (ILX) | Legal Division (LGD)
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Sent: Thursday, February 8, 2024 12:29 PM
To: s 22(1)(a)(ii) @dfat.gov.au>; s 22(1)(a)(ii) @dfat.gov.au>; s 22(1)(a)(ii) @dfat.gov.au>; s 22(1)(a)(ii) @dfat.gov.au>
Subject: FW: China MFA Press Conference - ref to AU -7 February 2024- CN-Antarctic station, s 22(1)(a)(ii)

[SEC=OFFICIAL]

OFFICIAL

Fyi

From: RVU Beijing s 47E(d) @dfat.gov.au>
Sent: Thursday, February 8, 2024 12:20 PM
To: RVU Beijing s 47E(d) @dfat.gov.au>
Cc: Crisis Centre s 47E(d) @dfat.gov.au>; CrisisMedia Officer s 47E(d) @dfat.gov.au>
Subject: China MFA Press Conference - ref to AU -7 February 2024- CN-Antarctic station, s 22(1)(a)(ii)

[SEC=OFFICIAL]

OFFICIAL

Hi all,

Below is the official English transcript of MFA's regular press conference by Spokesperson Wang Wenbin on 7 February 2024. Topics covered included:

- China today started operations at its fifth Antarctic station in the Ross Sea, just south of Australia and New Zealand
- s 22(1)(a)(ii)

Reuters: China today started operations at its fifth Antarctic station in the Ross Sea, just south of Australia and New Zealand. Last year a US think tank said the station is well positioned to collect signals intelligence over Australia and New Zealand, and telemetry data on rockets launched from Australia's new Arnhem Space Centre. How will China address the concerns of countries like Australia and New Zealand?

Wang Wenbin: As a consultative party to the Antarctic Treaty, China always makes sure that our activities are consistent with the stipulations of the Antarctic Treaty System. China's new Antarctic station is built and operated in full compliance with international rules and procedures. The station will contribute to humanity's scientific understanding of the Antarctic, provide a platform for joint scientific exploration and cooperation between China and other countries, and help advance peace and sustainable development in the region. [\[Back to top\]](#)

s 22(1)(a)(ii)

s 22(1)(a)(ii)

From: s 22(1)(a)(ii)
Sent: Monday, 19 August 2024 10:14 AM
To: s 22(1)(a)(ii)
Cc: s 22(1)(a)(ii) ; Paul Schofield; s 22(1)(a)(ii)
Subject: RE: QTB update - Qinling base in Antarctica [SEC=OFFICIAL]
Attachments: s 47E(d)

OFFICIAL

Hi s 22(1)(a)(ii)

s 47E(d)

Kind regards
s 22(1)(a)(ii)

From: s 22(1)(a)(ii) @dfat.gov.au>
Sent: Monday, August 19, 2024 10:03 AM
To: s 22(1)(a)(ii) @dfat.gov.au>
Cc: s 22(1)(a)(ii) @dfat.gov.au>; s 22(1)(a)(ii) @dfat.gov.au>; s 22(1)(a)(ii) @dfat.gov.au>; Paul Schofield <Paul.Schofield@dfat.gov.au>; s 22(1)(a)(ii) @dfat.gov.au>
Subject: RE: QTB update - Qinling base in Antarctica [SEC=OFFICIAL]

OFFICIAL

Hi s 22(1)(a)(ii),

s 47E(d), s 47C(1)

Thanks

s 22(1)(a)(ii)

ABC report on Qinling station

- The Australian Government actively monitors and responds to emerging trends and risks in respect of Australia’s national interests in Antarctica.

- Australia encourages all Parties to continue to support the Antarctic Treaty system, its rules and norms of freedom of scientific investigation, international cooperation, environmental protection and non-militarisation.

If raised: Antarctic inspections

- Inspections of other nations' facilities in Antarctica under the Antarctic Treaty System are an important transparency and compliance mechanism
- Australia is one of the most active countries undertaking inspections.
 - Inspections have indicated compliance with the key Treaty provisions.
- Australia regularly conducts inspections of bases and programs of all treaty states.
- Australia conducted inspections of China's Taishan Station and its Qingling (fifth) Station in January 2020 (then named *Inexpressible Island*) and found both to be compliant with China's obligations under the Treaty.
- We encourage all Parties to continue to support the Antarctic Treaty system, particularly its rules and norms of freedom of scientific investigation, international cooperation, environmental protection and non-militarisation.

s 33(a)(iii)

Thanks

s 22(1)(a)(ii)

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International Law Branch II | Legal Division
Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade
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From: s 22(1)(a)(ii) @dfat.gov.au>

Sent: Monday, August 19, 2024 9:50 AM

To: s 22(1)(a)(ii) @dfat.gov.au

Cc: s 22(1)(a)(ii) @dfat.gov.au>; s 22(1)(a)(ii)

@dfat.gov.au>; s 22(1)(a)(ii)

@dfat.gov.au>

Subject: RE: QTB update - Qinqing base in Antarctica [SEC=OFFICIAL]

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s 47C(1), s 47E(d)

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Subject: RE: QTB update - Qinling base in Antarctica [SEC=OFFICIAL]

OFFICIAL

Hi ^{s 22(1)(a)(ii)}

Please see below changes.

s 47C(1), s 47E(d)

Thanks

^{s 22(1)(a)(ii)}

Assistant Director | Antarctica Section
International Law Branch II | Legal Division
Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade
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Subject: FW: QTB update - Qinling base in Antarctica [SEC=OFFICIAL]

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Cc:

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ABC News By Henry Zwartz

Sunday 18 August 2024, 1:02pm AEST

It might look like an ice-bound resort but China's latest Antarctic station, Qinling, has Australia's intelligence community concerned.

Potential Audience: 1,126,000

[VIEW ONLINE](#)

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- We encourage all Parties to continue to support the Antarctic Treaty system, particularly its rules and norms of freedom of scientific investigation, international cooperation, environmental protection and non-militarisation.

s 33(a)(iii)

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On 18 August, ABC News published an article entitled 'China has expanded its presence in Antarctica with its new Qinling base. Should Australia be worried?'

On 16 August, APSI released a Special Report entitled "Ice panda: navigating China's hybrid Antarctic agenda". [Ice panda: navigating China's hybrid Antarctic agenda | Australian Strategic Policy Institute | ASPI](#). The report claims Australia is failing to do the bare minimum to protect the status quo ensured by the Antarctic Treaty System. It recommends making Antarctica a higher priority in Australia's strategic thinking; establishing a specific Antarctic group in the Department of Defence; and establishing a special envoy / Ambassador for Antarctic in the Prime Minister's portfolio.

Regards

s 22(1)(a)(ii)

Assistant Director | China Strategic Section (CSS)
East Asia Political Branch (EAB) | East Asia Division (EAD)

T s 22(1)(a)(ii) M s 22(1)(a)(ii)

s 22(1)(a)(ii)

From: s 22(1)(a)(ii)
Sent: Monday, 19 August 2024 9:48 AM
To: Paul Schofield; s 22(1)(a)(ii)
Cc: Adam Mccarthy; s 22(1)(a)(ii)
Subject: Re: QTB update - Qinling base in Antarctica [SEC=OFFICIAL][SEC=OFFICIAL]

OFFICIAL

s 47C(1), s 47E(d)

From: "Paul Schofield" <Paul.Schofield@dfat.gov.au>
Date: Monday 19 August 2024 at 9:20:21 AM
To: s 22(1)(a)(ii) @dfat.gov.au
Cc: "Adam Mccarthy" <Adam.McCarthy@dfat.gov.au>, s 22(1)(a)(ii) @dfat.gov.au, s 22(1)(a)(ii) @dfat.gov.au
Subject: FW: QTB update - Qinling base in Antarctica [SEC=OFFICIAL]

OFFICIAL

Hi s 22(1)(a)(ii)

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P

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Sent: Monday, August 19, 2024 9:13 AM
To: Paul Schofield <Paul.Schofield@dfat.gov.au>
Cc: s 22(1)(a)(ii) @dfat.gov.au; s 22(1)(a)(ii) @dfat.gov.au; s 22(1)(a)(ii) @dfat.gov.au
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OFFICIAL

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Regards

s 22(1)(a)(ii)

Assistant Director | China Strategic Section (CSS)
East Asia Political Branch (EAB) | East Asia Division (EAD)

T s 22(1)(a)(ii) M s 22(1)(a)(ii)

s 22(1)(a)(ii)

From: s 22(1)(a)(ii) @aad.gov.au>
Sent: Friday, 9 February 2024 7:30 AM
To: s 22(1)(a)(ii)
Subject: RE: Requesting advice: Antarctica article overnight [SEC=OFFICIAL]

Thanks s 22(1)(a)(ii)

Cheers,
s 22(1)(a)(ii)

From: s 22(1)(a)(ii) @dfat.gov.au>
Sent: Thursday, 8 February 2024 5:08 PM
To: s 22(1)(a)(ii) @aad.gov.au>; s 22(1)(a)(ii) @pmc.gov.au
Cc: s 47E(d) @pmc.gov.au>; s 22(1)(a)(ii) @dcceew.gov.au>; s 22(1)(a)(ii) @dcceew.gov.au>; s 22(1)(a)(ii) @dfat.gov.au>; s 22(1)(a)(ii) @aad.gov.au>; s 22(1)(a)(ii) @aad.gov.au>; s 22(1)(a)(ii) @aad.gov.au>; s 22(1)(a)(ii) @aad.gov.au>; s 22(1)(a)(ii) @aad.gov.au>; s 47E(d) @aad.gov.au>
Subject: RE: Requesting advice: Antarctica article overnight [SEC=OFFICIAL]

OFFICIAL

Dear s 22(1)(a)(ii),

Further to the below, there has been a range of media on this (summary below). It is worth noting the framing of the spokesperson in answering the question from Reuters, which is connected to reporting last year on the same station.

Reuters: China today started operations at its fifth Antarctic station in the Ross Sea, just south of Australia and New Zealand. Last year a US think tank said the station is well positioned to collect signals intelligence over Australia and New Zealand, and telemetry data on rockets launched from Australia's new Arnhem Space Centre. How will China address the concerns of countries like Australia and New Zealand?

Wang Wenbin: As a consultative party to the Antarctic Treaty, China always makes sure that our activities are consistent with the stipulations of the Antarctic Treaty System. China's new Antarctic station is built and operated in full compliance with international rules and procedures. The station will contribute to humanity's scientific understanding of the Antarctic, provide a platform for joint scientific exploration and cooperation between China and other countries, and help advance peace and sustainable development in the region. [\[Back to top\]](#)

The below attributable TP for DFAT has been cleared by colleagues in EAD and is currently going through clearance for estimates for FAS LGD, and we can revert if there were any changes.

The opening of new Chinese station Qinling on 7 February 2024 was announced by Foreign Ministry Spokesperson Wang Wenbin. [Reuters](#) reporting noted the Center for Strategic and International Studies report from 2023 which noted it would be well situated to collect signals intelligence over Australia and New Zealand. [Xinhua](#) reported that President Xi Jinping on Wednesday commended the opening of the station and urged station workers to "better know, protect and utilise the polar region". ([Global Times](#), [Canberra Times](#), [Yahoo](#), [9News](#))

Thanks

s 22(1)(a)(ii)

Assistant Director | Antarctica Section
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From: s 22(1)(a)(ii) @aad.gov.au
Sent: Thursday, February 8, 2024 5:02 PM
To: s 22(1)(a)(ii) @pmc.gov.au
Cc: s 47E(d) @pmc.gov.au; s 22(1)(a)(ii) @dcceew.gov.au; s 22(1)(a)(ii) @dfat.gov.au; s 22(1)(a)(ii) @aad.gov.au; s 22(1)(a)(ii) @aad.gov.au; s 22(1)(a)(ii) @aad.gov.au; s 47E(d) @aad.gov.au
Subject: FW: Requesting advice: Antarctica article overnight [SEC=OFFICIAL]

Hi s 22(1)(a)(ii)

Thanks for reaching out. s 22(1)(a)(ii)

Regarding the Canberra Times article, this has been circulating in the news a bit last year with a Guardian article and was not unexpected. For Senate Estimates, AAD would keep it flat as per below:

- The construction of Qinling station is consistent with the framework of the Antarctic Treaty system, and was first announced in 2013.
- There has been an increase in involvement in Antarctica by both established and new Antarctic nations.
 - All countries which are active in Antarctica are party to the Antarctic Treaty and are governed by its rules.
 - Nations can operate anywhere in Antarctica.
 - The US, South Korea and New Zealand also have stations in the Ross Sea region.

For further detail we would refer to DFAT. DFAT has indicated it has the following TP prepared for their estimates appearance:

- *We encourage all Parties to continue to support the Antarctic Treaty system, particularly its rules and norms of freedom of scientific investigation, international cooperation, environmental protection and non-militarisation.*

Please keep us posted if any request comes through and you need anything further.

Thank you,
s22(1)(a)(ii)

From: s 22(1)(a)(ii) @pmc.gov.au>
Sent: Thursday, 8 February 2024 10:19 AM
To: s 22(1)(a)(ii) @aad.gov.au>; s 47E(d) @aad.gov.au>
Cc: s 47E(d) @pmc.gov.au>; s 22(1)(a)(ii) @dcceew.gov.au>
Subject: Requesting advice: Antarctica article overnight [SEC=OFFICIAL]

OFFICIAL

Good morning s 22(1)(a)(ii)

Separately, we spotted an article on China’s new research station in Antarctica in our daily media summary:
<https://www.canberratimes.com.au/story/8513961/china-opens-antarctic-research-post-south-of-australia/>

Wondering if DCCEEW has any thoughts on this? Pre-empting possible questions especially with sitting week happening (no one is asking yet, just to be clear).

Happy to chat.

Best,
s 22(1)(a)(ii)

Adviser | Industry, Infrastructure and Environment Division | Environment and Water
Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet
P. s 22(1)(a)(ii) | E. s 22(1)(a)(ii) @pmc.gov.au
Ngunnawal Country, One National Circuit Barton ACT 2600 | PO Box 6500 CANBERRA ACT 2600



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s 22(1)(a)(ii)

From: s 22(1)(a)(ii) @pmc.gov.au>
Sent: Thursday, 8 February 2024 5:41 PM
To: s 22(1)(a)(ii)
Cc: s47E(d) @pmc.gov.au; s 22(1)(a)(ii)
Subject: AADcoord
 RE: Requesting advice: Antarctica article overnight [SEC=OFFICIAL]

Hi s 22(1)(a)(ii) ,

Thanks both for the steer, clearly I missed a lot of media since the end of last year. Many thanks for the helpful TPs, we'll keep them in the back pocket just in case. 😊

Cheers,

s 22(1)(a)(ii)

From: s 22(1)(a)(ii) @dfat.gov.au>
Sent: Thursday, 8 February 2024 5:08 PM
To: s 22(1)(a)(ii) @aad.gov.au>; s 22(1)(a)(ii) @pmc.gov.au>
Cc: s 47E(d) @pmc.gov.au>; s 22(1)(a)(ii) @dceew.gov.au>; s 22(1)(a)(ii) @dceew.gov.au>; s 22(1)(a)(ii) @dfat.gov.au>; s 22(1)(a)(ii) @aad.gov.au>; s 22(1)(a)(ii) @aad.gov.au>; s 22(1)(a)(ii) @aad.gov.au>; s 22(1)(a)(ii) @aad.gov.au>; s 47E(d) @aad.gov.au>
Subject: RE: Requesting advice: Antarctica article overnight [SEC=OFFICIAL]

OFFICIAL

Dear s 22(1)(a)(ii)

Further to the below, there has been a range of media on this (summary below). It is worth noting the framing of the spokesperson in answering the question from Reuters, which is connected to reporting last year on the same station.

Reuters: China today started operations at its fifth Antarctic station in the Ross Sea, just south of Australia and New Zealand. Last year a US think tank said the station is well positioned to collect signals intelligence over Australia and New Zealand, and telemetry data on rockets launched from Australia's new Arnhem Space Centre. How will China address the concerns of countries like Australia and New Zealand?

Wang Wenbin: As a consultative party to the Antarctic Treaty, China always makes sure that our activities are consistent with the stipulations of the Antarctic Treaty System. China's new Antarctic station is built and operated in full compliance with international rules and procedures. The station will contribute to humanity's scientific understanding of the Antarctic, provide a platform for joint scientific exploration and cooperation between China and other countries, and help advance peace and sustainable development in the region. [Back to top](#)

The below attributable TP for DFAT has been cleared by colleagues in EAD and is currently going through clearance for estimates for FAS LGD, and we can revert if there were any changes.

The opening of new Chinese station Qinling on 7 February 2024 was announced by Foreign Ministry Spokesperson Wang Wenbin. [Reuters](#) reporting noted the Center for Strategic and International Studies report from 2023 which noted it would be well situated to collect signals intelligence over Australia and New Zealand. [Xinhua](#) reported that President Xi Jinping on Wednesday commended the opening of the station and urged station workers to "better know, protect and utilise the polar region". ([Global Times](#), [Canberra Times](#), [Yahoo](#), [9News](#))

Thanks

s 22(1)(a)(ii)

Assistant Director | Antarctica Section
International Law Branch II (ILX) | Legal Division (LGD)
Phone: s 22(1)(a)(ii) Email: s 22(1)(a)(ii) @dfat.gov.au
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Sent: Thursday, February 8, 2024 5:02 PM
To: s 22(1)(a)(ii) @pmc.gov.au
Cc: s47E(d) @pmc.gov.au>; s 22(1)(a)(ii) @dceew.gov.au>; s 22(1)(a)(ii) @dfat.gov.au>; s 22(1)(a)(ii) @aad.gov.au>; s 22(1)(a)(ii) @aad.gov.au>; s 22(1)(a)(ii) @aad.gov.au>; s 22(1)(a)(ii) @aad.gov.au>; s47E(d) @aad.gov.au>
Subject: FW: Requesting advice: Antarctica article overnight [SEC=OFFICIAL]

Hi s 22(1)(a)(ii)

Thanks for reaching out. s 22(1)(a)(ii)

Regarding the Canberra Times article, this has been circulating in the news a bit last year with a Guardian article and was not unexpected. For Senate Estimates, AAD would keep it flat as per below:

- The construction of Qinling station is consistent with the framework of the Antarctic Treaty system, and was first announced in 2013.
- There has been an increase in involvement in Antarctica by both established and new Antarctic nations.
 - All countries which are active in Antarctica are party to the Antarctic Treaty and are governed by its rules.
 - Nations can operate anywhere in Antarctica.
 - The US, South Korea and New Zealand also have stations in the Ross Sea region.

For further detail we would refer to DFAT. DFAT has indicated it has the following TP prepared for their estimates appearance:

- We encourage all Parties to continue to support the Antarctic Treaty system, particularly its rules and norms of freedom of scientific investigation, international cooperation, environmental protection and non-militarisation.

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Cc: s47E(d) @pmc.gov.au>; s 22(1)(a)(ii) @dcceew.gov.au>; s 22(1)(a)(ii) @dcceew.gov.au>
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s 22(1)(a)(ii)

Adviser | Industry, Infrastructure and Environment Division | Environment and Water
Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet
P.s 22(1)(a)(ii) | E.s 22(1)(a)(ii) @pmc.gov.au
Ngunnawal Country, One National Circuit Barton ACT 2600 | PO Box 6500 CANBERRA ACT 2600



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s 22(1)(a)(ii)

From: s 22(1)(a)(ii)
Sent: Thursday, 8 February 2024 2:25 PM
To: s 22(1)(a)(ii)
Subject: RE: Senate estimates update China MFA Press Conference - Opening of Qinling [SEC=OFFICIAL]

OFFICIAL

s 22(1)(a)(ii)

From: s 22(1)(a)(ii) @dfat.gov.au
Sent: Thursday, February 8, 2024 1:41 PM
To: Adam Mccarthy <Adam.McCarthy@dfat.gov.au>
Cc: s 22(1)(a)(ii) @dfat.gov.au; s 47E(d) @dfat.gov.au; s 22(1)(a)(ii) @dfat.gov.au; s 22(1)(a)(ii) @dfat.gov.au
Subject: Senate estimates update China MFA Press Conference - Opening of Qinling [SEC=OFFICIAL]

OFFICIAL

Dear Adam,

Overnight Foreign Ministry Spokesperson Wang Wenbin announced the opening of the new Chinese station in Qinling. s 47C(1), s 47E(d)

Wang Wenbin took the following question from Reuters and responded per the below:

Reuters: China today started operations at its fifth Antarctic station in the Ross Sea, just south of Australia and New Zealand. Last year, a US think tank said the station is well positioned to collect signals intelligence over Australia and New Zealand, and telemetry data on rockets launched from Australia's new Arnhem Space Centre. How will China address the concerns of countries like Australia and New Zealand?

Wang Wenbin: As a consultative party to the Antarctic Treaty, China always makes sure that our activities are consistent with the stipulations of the Antarctic Treaty System. China's new Antarctic station is built and operated in full compliance with international rules and procedures. The station will contribute to humanity's scientific understanding of the Antarctic, provide a platform for joint scientific exploration and cooperation between China and other countries, and help advance peace and sustainable development in the region.

This picks up on the earlier reporting from Reuters regarding the CSIS report last year.

s 33(a)(iii)

Thanks

s 22(1)(a)(ii)

Assistant Director | Antarctica Section
International Law Branch II (ILX) | Legal Division (LGD)
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From: RVU Beijing s 47E(d) @dfat.gov.au>
Sent: Thursday, February 8, 2024 12:20 PM
To: RVU Beijing s 47E(d) @dfat.gov.au>
Cc: Crisis Centres s 47E(d) @dfat.gov.au>; CrisisMedia Officer s 47E(d) @dfat.gov.au>
Subject: China MFA Press Conference - ref to AU -7 February 2024- CN-Antarctic station, s 22(1)(a)(ii)

SEC=OFFICIAL]

OFFICIAL

Hi all,

Below is the official English transcript of MFA's regular press conference by Spokesperson Wang Wenbin on 7 February 2024. Topics covered included:

- China today started operations at its fifth Antarctic station in the Ross Sea, just south of Australia and New Zealand

s 22(1)(a)(ii)

Reuters: China today started operations at its fifth Antarctic station in the Ross Sea, just south of Australia and New Zealand. Last year a US think tank said the station is well positioned to collect signals intelligence over Australia and New Zealand, and telemetry data on rockets launched from Australia's new Arnhem Space Centre. How will China address the concerns of countries like Australia and New Zealand?

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s 22(1)(a)(ii)

s 22(1)(a)(ii)

From: s 22(1)(a)(ii)
Sent: Thursday, 8 February 2024 1:18 PM
To: s 22(1)(a)(ii)
Cc: s 22(1)(a)(ii)
Subject: RE: China MFA Press Conference - ref to AU -7 February 2024- CN-Antarctic station, s 22(1)(a)(ii)

[SEC=OFFICIAL]

OFFICIAL

Thanks s 22(1)(a)(ii)

Looks good to us!

Best
s 22(1)(a)(ii)

From: s 22(1)(a)(ii) @dfat.gov.au>
Sent: Thursday, February 8, 2024 1:12 PM
To: s 22(1)(a)(ii) @dfat.gov.au>; s 22(1)(a)(ii) @dfat.gov.au>; s 22(1)(a)(ii) @dfat.gov.au>
Cc: s 22(1)(a)(ii) @dfat.gov.au>
Subject: RE: China MFA Press Conference - ref to AU -7 February 2024- CN-Antarctic station, s 22(1)(a)(ii)

EC=OFFICIAL]

OFFICIAL

Hi s 22(1)(a)(ii),

Propose something using previously cleared words s 22(1)(a)(ii)

Are you aware of the remarks that Foreign Ministry Spokesperson Wang Wenbin at his regular press conference [7 February] made regarding the opening of China's new Ross Sea station?

- Yes.
- We encourage all Parties to continue to support the Antarctic Treaty system, particularly its rules and norms of freedom of scientific investigation, international cooperation, environmental protection and non-militarisation.

I've found a smattering of the reporting for the background.

The opening of new Chinese station Qinling on 7 February 2024 was announced by Foreign Ministry Spokesperson Wang Wenbin. [Reuters](#) reporting noted the Center for Strategic and International Studies report from 2023 which noted it would be well situated to collect signals intelligence over Australia and New Zealand. [Xinhua](#) reported that President Xi Jinping on Wednesday commended the opening of the station and urged station workers to "better know, protect and utilise the polar region". ([Global Times](#), [Canberra Times](#), [Yahoo](#), [9News](#))

Please let me know if there are any concerns

Thanks

s 22(1)(a)(ii)

Assistant Director | Antarctica Section
International Law Branch II (ILX) | Legal Division (LGD)
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Sent: Thursday, February 8, 2024 12:58 PM
To: s 22(1)(a)(ii) @dfat.gov.au; s 22(1)(a)(ii) @dfat.gov.au; s 22(1)(a)(ii) @dfat.gov.au; s 22(1)(a)(ii) @dfat.gov.au
Cc: s 22(1)(a)(ii) @dfat.gov.au
Subject: RE: China MFA Press Conference - ref to AU -7 February 2024- CN-Antarctic station, s 22(1)(a)(ii)

[SEC=OFFICIAL]

OFFICIAL

Hi all

Looks like it has been reported by the Global times: [China opens fifth Antarctic research station, to provide platform for scientific cooperation - Global Times](#) and Xinhua: [China's Qinling Station in Antarctica starts operation-Xinhua \(news.cn\)](#)

'some Western media have hyped "intelligence concerns" by claiming that the station is located in an "excellent position" to gather intelligence information about Australia and New Zealand.' (Global Times).

s 47E(d)

Kind regards
s 22(1)(a)(ii)

Policy Officer | China Legal Issues Section
East Asia Political Branch | East Asia Division
Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade
P: s 22(1)(a)(ii) | M: s 22(1)(a)(ii) E: s 22(1)(a)(ii) @dfat.gov.au
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Sent: Thursday, February 8, 2024 12:42 PM
To: s 22(1)(a)(ii) @dfat.gov.au>; s 22(1)(a)(ii) @dfat.gov.au>; s 22(1)(a)(ii) @dfat.gov.au>
Cc: s 22(1)(a)(ii) @dfat.gov.au>
Subject: RE: China MFA Press Conference - ref to AU -7 February 2024- CN-Antarctic station, s 22(1)(a)(ii)

[SEC=OFFICIAL]

OFFICIAL

s 22(1)(a)(ii) probably has a better sense than me.

My impression is that Reuters line of questioning won't be in state media, but news that the new station is in operation will be.

Happy estimates updating 😊

From: s 22(1)(a)(ii) @dfat.gov.au>
Sent: Thursday, February 8, 2024 12:36 PM
To: s 22(1)(a)(ii) @dfat.gov.au>; s 22(1)(a)(ii) @dfat.gov.au>; s 22(1)(a)(ii) @dfat.gov.au>
Cc: s 22(1)(a)(ii) @dfat.gov.au>
Subject: RE: China MFA Press Conference - ref to AU -7 February 2024- CN-Antarctic station, s 22(1)(a)(ii)

[SEC=OFFICIAL]

OFFICIAL

Thanks s 22(1)(a)(ii)

Do you know if this is likely to go in any of the state media? We'll probably need to update estimates brief 😊

s 22(1)(a)(ii)

Assistant Director | Antarctica Section
International Law Branch II (ILX) | Legal Division (LGD)
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From: s 22(1)(a)(ii) @dfat.gov.au>
Sent: Thursday, February 8, 2024 12:29 PM
To: s 22(1)(a)(ii) @dfat.gov.au>; s 22(1)(a)(ii) @dfat.gov.au>; s 22(1)(a)(ii) @dfat.gov.au>

Subject: FW: China MFA Press Conference - ref to AU -7 February 2024- CN-Antarctic station, s 22(1)(a)(ii)

[SEC=OFFICIAL]

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Fyi

From: RVU Beijing s 47E(d) [@dfat.gov.au](mailto:dfat.gov.au)>
Sent: Thursday, February 8, 2024 12:20 PM
To: RVU Beijing s 47E(d) [@dfat.gov.au](mailto:dfat.gov.au)>
Cc: Crisis Centres s 47E(d) [@dfat.gov.au](mailto:dfat.gov.au); CrisisMedia Officer s 47E(d) [@dfat.gov.au](mailto:dfat.gov.au)>
Subject: China MFA Press Conference - ref to AU -7 February 2024- CN-Antarctic station, s 22(1)(a)(ii)

[SEC=OFFICIAL]

OFFICIAL

Hi all,

Below is the official English transcript of MFA's regular press conference by Spokesperson Wang Wenbin on 7 February 2024. Topics covered included:

- China today started operations at its fifth Antarctic station in the Ross Sea, just south of Australia and New Zealand
- s 22(1)(a)(ii)

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s 22(1)(a)(ii)

s 22(1)(a)(ii)

From: s 22(1)(a)(ii) @aad.gov.au>
Sent: Thursday, 8 February 2024 12:49 PM
To: s 22(1)(a)(ii)
Cc: s 22(1)(a)(ii)
Subject: RE: China MFA Press Conference - ref to AU -7 February 2024- CN-Antarctic station, s 22(1)(a)(ii)

[SEC=OFFICIAL]

Hi s 22(1)(a)(ii)

Thanks for passing this on. Strategic Policy is leading on this one for us. It's useful to see that there was a direct Reuters question with that answer – this morning I'd only seen the media reporting that included the answer. You'll see the media articles including the source articles (and a neat construction time lapse video) googling Qinling Station Antarctica. It's interesting to see the location now s 22(1)(a)(ii) Nothing unexpected being reported so far.

Regards,

s 22(1)(a)(ii)

From: s 22(1)(a)(ii) @dfat.gov.au>
Sent: Thursday, 8 February 2024 12:38 PM
To: s 22(1)(a)(ii) @aad.gov.au>
Cc: s 22(1)(a)(ii) @aad.gov.au>; s 22(1)(a)(ii) @dfat.gov.au>
Subject: FW: China MFA Press Conference - ref to AU -7 February 2024- CN-Antarctic station, s 22(1)(a)(ii)

[SEC=OFFICIAL]

OFFICIAL

Hi s 22(1)(a)(ii)

Just trying to find the relevant articles in the news – worth flagging for senate estimates briefing.

Thanks

s 22(1)(a)(ii)

Assistant Director | Antarctica Section
International Law Branch II (ILX) | Legal Division (LGD)
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Sent: Thursday, February 8, 2024 12:29 PM
To: s 22(1)(a)(ii) @dfat.gov.au>; s 22(1)(a)(ii) @dfat.gov.au>; s 22(1)(a)(ii) @dfat.gov.au>; s 22(1)(a)(ii) @dfat.gov.au>
Subject: FW: China MFA Press Conference - ref to AU -7 February 2024- CN-Antarctic station, s 22(1)(a)(ii)

[SEC=OFFICIAL]

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Fyi

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Sent: Thursday, February 8, 2024 12:20 PM
To: RVU Beijing s 47E(d) @dfat.gov.au>
Cc: Crisis Centre s 47E(d) @dfat.gov.au>; CrisisMedia Officer s 47E(d) @dfat.gov.au>
Subject: China MFA Press Conference - ref to AU -7 February 2024- CN-Antarctic station, s 22(1)(a)(ii)

[SEC=OFFICIAL]

OFFICIAL

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understanding of the Antarctic, provide a platform for joint scientific exploration and cooperation between China and other countries, and help advance peace and sustainable development in the region. [\[Back to top\]](#)

s 22(1)(a)(ii)

s 22(1)(a)(ii)

From: s 22(1)(a)(ii) @aad.gov.au>
Sent: Tuesday, 19 March 2024 8:56 AM
To: Strategic Policy; International; DFAT Antarctic Section
Subject: FW: Great-Power Competition Comes to Antarctica | Foreign Affairs [SEC=OFFICIAL]

Recent piece from Elizabeth Buchanan.

From: s 47F(1) @utas.edu.au>
Sent: Tuesday, 19 March 2024 7:08 AM
To: s 47F(1) @utas.edu.au>; s 47F(1) @utas.edu.au>;
s 47F(1) @utas.edu.au>; s 47F(1) @wilsoncenter.org>; s 47F(1) @utas.edu.au>
Subject: Great-Power Competition Comes to Antarctica | Foreign Affairs[SEC=OFFICIAL]

s 47F(1)

<https://www.foreignaffairs.com/arctic-antarctic/great-power-competition-comes-antarctica>

Cheers

s 47F(1)

University of Tasmania
s 47F(1)

Mob: s 47F(1)

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s 22(1)(a)(ii)

From: s22(1)(a)(ii)
Sent: Tuesday, 13 February 2024 4:27 PM
To: Paul Schofield; Media
Cc: s 22(1)(a)(ii) ; DFAT Antarctic Section; s 22(1)(a)(ii)
Subject: RE: **For action - media enquiry** Deadline to MLS 1600 today Tuesday 13 February s 47F(1) /ABC - Surveillance concerns in Antarctica [SEC=OFFICIAL]

OFFICIAL

Hi Media.

Please see proposed response below approved by AS ILX/LGB.

ABC Questions

s 47G(1)(a)

Suggested Answer.

Clearing SES

Name: Paul Schofield

Title: Assistant Secretary, International Law Branch II, Legal Division

Mobile phone number: s 22(1)(a)(ii)

Best contact number: s 22(1)(a)(ii)

Attributable to a Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade spokesperson:

The Antarctic Treaty prohibits the militarisation of Antarctica and the Southern Ocean.

Australia remains committed to the Antarctic Treaty system, and upholding its rules of non-militarisation, environmental protection, and freedom of scientific investigation.

As Minister Wong stated in the Senate on 3 August 2023, Australia remains a global leader in Antarctic science, operations, environmental protection, and the Antarctic Treaty system. We continue to have a strong presence in the Australian Antarctic Territory and fulfil our obligations under the 1959 Antarctic Treaty.

Background (for use in reporting, not for attribution)

We are aware of China's ongoing investments in its Antarctic program, including its new Qinling research station at Inexpressible Island in the Ross Sea. Such developments are permitted under the Antarctic Treaty. China first announced plans to establish a station at Inexpressible Island in 2013. Publicly available imagery and footage shows the new station footprint as consistent with that which China proposed in its final comprehensive environmental evaluation, circulated to all Antarctic Treaty Parties in 2021, as required by the Antarctic Treaty's Environmental Protocol.

Australia conducted the first inspection at the site (5 January 2020) prior to construction of the station proper, and noted that the preparatory activities observed were consistent with the fundamental obligations of the Treaty with respect to peaceful use and non-militarisation. For more information see:

[report of australian antarctic treaty inspections 2020.pdf \(antarctica.gov.au\)](#). The United States also conducted an inspection at the site in February 2020 and found “[no violations of Treaty provisions reserving Antarctica solely for peaceful purposes.](#)”

We encourage all Parties to continue to adhere to the Antarctic Treaty system, particularly its rules and norms of freedom of scientific investigation, international cooperation, environmental protection and non-militarisation.

DFAT established a dedicated Antarctica Section in September 2022 in support of Australia’s leadership in Antarctic affairs and the rules and norms of the Antarctic Treaty System. DFAT’s Chief Counsel and First Assistant Secretary, Legal Division, is Australia’s Senior Antarctic Official and leads Australia’s delegation to the annual Antarctic Treaty Consultative Meeting. DFAT supports the Australian Antarctic Division of the Department of Climate Change, Energy, the Environment and Water, in their lead role in the management of Australia’s Antarctic program.

s 47C(1), s 47E(d), s 33(a)(iii)

s 22(1)(a)(ii)

Director | International Antarctic Law and Policy

Antarctic Section (ANT)

International Law Branch

Legal Division

Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade

Australian Government

Phone s 22(1)(a)(ii)

Mobile s 22(1)(a)(ii)

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From: Media <media@dfat.gov.au>

Sent: Tuesday, February 13, 2024 12:40 PM

To: s 22(1)(a)(ii) @dfat.gov.au; s 22(1)(a)(ii) @dfat.gov.au; s 22(1)(a)(ii) @dfat.gov.au; s 22(1)(a)(ii) @dfat.gov.au

Cc: Media <media@dfat.gov.au>; Paul Schofield <Paul.Schofield@dfat.gov.au>

Subject: ****For action - media enquiry**** Deadline to MLS 1600 today Tuesday 13 February -s 47F(1) /ABC - Surveillance concerns in Antarctica [SEC=OFFICIAL]

OFFICIAL

Dear Russell

Please see enquiry from s 47F(1) /ABC regarding Antarctica.

MLS would be grateful for a draft response to this enquiry by 1600 today, Tuesday 13 February. Please let us know as soon as possible if this is unrealistic. We have attempted to manage the journalist's deadline – ideally s 47F(1) would need a response by 7pm but s 47F(1) checking with s 47F(1) editor if they can move the deadline to tomorrow morning. We'll keep you updated.

FYI, we have asked the journalist to clarify the source of s 47F(1) third question.

We would also appreciate confirmation of receipt of this request. Grateful if you could loop in any other department colleagues who should receive this tasking email.

It is a requirement that draft responses are cleared at SES level before they are returned to MLS.

As the lead line area, you should consult relevant areas/Agencies as appropriate before returning the final draft response to MLS. If you are not the lead line area, grateful if you could advise MLS as soon as possible.

We will flag this enquiry with TTMO now.

Please find attached a response provided to the Australian in November last year, and a response template below.

//

s47C(1), s47E(d)

//

s47C(1), s47E(d)

//

For more guidance and tips, please read [this fact sheet on the intranet](#).

Kind regards

s 22(1)(a)(ii)

Media Liaison Section
Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade
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[We acknowledge](#) the Traditional Custodians of Country throughout Australia, and their continuing connection to land, waters and community. We pay our respects to all First Nations peoples, their cultures and to their Elders, past, present and emerging.

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From: s 47F(1) [@abc.net.au](#)>
Sent: Tuesday, February 13, 2024 12:16 PM
To: Media <media@dfat.gov.au>
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Surveillance concerns in Antarctica

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Hi there,

I'm a journalist with the ABC s 47F(1) writing an article on China opening its fifth base, Qinling, in Antarctica. I'd like to hear from an expert about what this means for Australia.

If you could please reply to my questions by COB today.

s 47G(1)(a)

Many thanks,

s 47F(1)

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