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WARNING: TOPIC: TERRORISM, INTERNATIONAL POLITICAL, DOMESTIC POLITICAL

SERIAL: SEP20021215000006

COUNTRY: AUSTRALIA, AFGHANISTAN, UNITED STATES

SUBJ: REPORTS OF AL-OA'IDAH OPERATIVES IN AUSTRALIA SAID NOT NEW

SOURCE: MELBOURNE RADIO AUSTRALIA IN ENGLISH 0900 GMT 15 DEC 02

TEXT:

[FBIS TRANSCRIBED TEXT] REPORTS OF AL-QA'IDAH OPERATIVES IN AUSTRALIA SAID NOT NEW

TEXT OF REPORT BY RADIO AUSTRALIA ON 15 DECEMBER

THE AUSTRALIAN GOVERNMENT SAYS REPORTS THERE ARE TWO HIGHLY TRAINED MEMBERS OF AL-QA'IDAH OPERATING IN THE COUNTRY ARE CONSISTENT WITH INFORMATION IT HAS ALREADY RELEASED. SAMANTHA HAWLEY REPORTS. [HAWLEY] THE NEWSPAPER REPORT SAYS THE INFORMATION HAS COME DIRECTLY FROM THE TWO AUSTRALIANS BEING HELD IN GUANTANAMO BAY IN CUBA. SUSPECTED TALEBAN FIGHTERS **DAVID HICKS** AND MAMDOUH HABIB ARE REPORTED TO HAVE TOLD INTERROGATORS ABOUT TWO MEN WITH STRONG LINKS TO AL-QA'IDAH LIVING IN AUSTRALIA. A SPOKESWOMAN FOR ATTORNEY-GENERAL DARYL WILLIAMS SAYS THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT HAS ALWAYS MAINTAINED IT BELIEVES THERE ARE PEOPLE WITH LINKS TO THE TERRORIST NETWORKS AL-QA'IDAH AND JEMAAH ISLAMIYAH IN THE COUNTRY. SHE SAYS NO NEW INFORMATION HAS COME TO HAND AND INVESTIGATIONS ARE ONGOING.

[DESCRIPTION OF SOURCE: MELBOURNE RADIO AUSTRALIA IN ENGLISH --GOVERNMENT-FUNDED OVERSEAS SERVICE OF THE AUSTRALIAN BROADCASTING CORPORATION]

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