

**Answers from an ABC spokesperson to questions,**

**Why did the ABC wait so long to update this story:**

<https://www.abc.net.au/news/2025-12-16/bondi-gunmen-went-to-philippines-for-military-style-training/106148662>

The additional information was added to the story when the editorial team involved had properly assessed it and how it should be reflected. As noted in the program, police have yet to be definitive in their determination of what the Akrams were doing in the Philippines.

**What is the ABC's response to the threatening nature of ASIO's public statement released ahead of last Monday's *Four Corners*?**

The ABC will continue to report on this area, given the significant public interest.

**During his interview, why was 'Marcus' not challenged more thoroughly and more explicitly about his separation from ASIO, given his potential animus towards ASIO and its potential as a motivating factor for his speaking out?**

The program provided the audience with details of the circumstances around Marcus's dispute with ASIO and departure from Australia. The reporter challenged Marcus on multiple occasions during the full interview and one exchange was included in the program.

In addition, information about this was also already on the public record from [Four Corners' interview in April 2025](#), when Marcus first went public to warn the IS network was radicalising Australian teens and plotting violence and claimed that ASIO had "abandoned" him.

**Why did the program fail to set out the ASIO raids on Neil Fergus and his subsequent complaint to the IGIS? Was his dispute with ASIO underplayed in the program?**

The program disclosed Neil Fergus currently has a complaint against ASIO over a separate matter. The reasons surrounding the raids are complex, it would have been impractical to retell the entire history and the details weren't materially relevant to this story. The ABC has also previously covered this dispute elsewhere: [Former intelligence officer Neil Fergus raided by ASIO and AFP after Four Corners appearance; 7.30](#)

**In Senate Estimates this week, Mike Burgess said, “many of the claims and criticisms being made about ASIO’s handling of the case are baseless” and specifically of *Four Corners*, that it included “false claims”. How do you respond?**

*Four Corners* attempted to clarify and verify information with ASIO on multiple occasions. This included requesting an interview, submitting a comprehensive list of written questions, sending detailed follow-up questions, which included asking for clarification on Marcus's alleged “misidentification” of Naveed Akram, and making other attempts to contact ASIO regarding specific claims. ASIO was not forthcoming and has not detailed which claims and criticisms are either “baseless” or “false”. The *Four Corners* program included all relevant and key points in the ASIO statement.

**Should *Four Corners* have restricted its reporting of Marcus’ testimony only to what it could independently verify? Why did the program feel it was in the public interest to publish what it could not otherwise verify?**

In terrorism and national security reporting you're often dealing with clandestine material, so sometimes it's necessary to assess the value of single-source information. *Four Corners* and ABC Investigations have carried out thorough verification work around highly specific information provided by Marcus over more than 21 months and the information repeatedly holds up to a high level of detail.

Marcus worked for ASIO for six years, until 2023, and had intimate access to Australia's Islamic State network. Given the gravity of the issues explored by the program, including whether there were failures in surveillance of the Akrams by intelligence agencies, there was clearly strong public interest in Australians being able to hear his allegations. The program meticulously disclosed where Marcus was a single source. Beyond what could

be independently verified, *Four Corners* did not assert Marcus's allegations were true, but put the case that in the context of the forthcoming Royal Commission they warranted investigation.