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The Spy Catchers: The Official History of ASIO, 1949-1963

David Horner

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The Spy Catchers: The Official History of ASIO, 1949-1963 David Horner
Winner of the Prime Minister's Prize for Australian History

For the first time, ASIO has opened its archives to an independent historian. With unfettered access to the records, David Horner tells the real story of Australia's domestic intelligence organisation, from shaky beginnings to the expulsion of Ivan Skripov in 1963.

From the start, ASIO's mission was to catch spies. In the late 1940s, the top secret Venona program revealed details of a Soviet spy ring in Australia, supported by leading Australian communists. David Horner outlines the tactics ASIO used in counterespionage, from embassy bugging to surveillance of local suspects. His research sheds new light on the Petrov Affair, and details incidents and activities that have never been revealed before.

This authoritative and ground-breaking account overturns many myths about ASIO, and offers new insights into broader Australian politics and society in the fraught years of the Cold War.

The Spy Catchers is the first of three volumes of *The Official History of ASIO*.

'*The Spy Catchers* is a fascinating account of ASIO's early years when the main threat Australia faced was from the Soviet regime.' - *The Hon. John Howard, OM, AC, former Prime Minister of Australia*

'This is one of our most important official histories.' - *The Hon. Kim Beazley, AC, Australian Ambassador to the United States of America*

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