

SENATE STANDING COMMITTEE ON LEGAL AND CONSTITUTIONAL AFFAIRS
AUSTRALIAN FEDERAL POLICE

Question No. 89

Senator Humphries asked the following question at the hearing on 24 May 2012:

It was reported in January 2011, in both The Australian and the Courier Mail, that approximately 1400 investigations into fraudulent disaster assistance claims were being investigated by Centrelink's taskforce.

- a) What role did the Australian Federal Police play in these investigations?
- b) Was the one allegation of fraud as mentioned in question on notice 32 from February 2012 Senate Additional Estimates?
- c) Is the Australian Federal Police aware of the outcomes of the 1400 investigations?
- d) What representations have been made by Centrelink to the Australian Federal Police surrounding the 1400 investigations?

The answer to the honourable senator's question is as follows:

- a) Since January 2011, the AFP has received one referral of an alleged fraud against the Australian Government Disaster Recovery Payments (AGDRP) fund from the Department of Human Services (DHS). The AFP understands the remainder of the allegations of fraudulent activity are being dealt with by the Centrelink Taskforce.
- b) Yes. Since January 2011, the AFP has received one referral of an alleged fraud against the Australian Government Disaster Recovery Payments (AGDRP) fund from the Department of Human Services (DHS). The AFP understands the remainder of the allegations of fraudulent activity are being dealt with by the Centrelink Taskforce.
- c) No. Questions relating to Centrelink's Taskforce investigating fraudulent claims should be directed to the Department of Human Services.
- d) Since January 2011, the AFP has received one referral of an alleged fraud against the Australian Government Disaster Recovery Payments (AGDRP) fund from the Department of Human Services (DHS). The AFP understands the remainder of the allegations of fraudulent activity are being dealt with by the Centrelink Taskforce.

The AFP has 10 members out-posted to the Department of Human Services - Centrelink offices throughout Australia. Out-posted members provide training and advice to enhance Centrelink's fraud detection capabilities and investigative practices, assist with the preparation, swearing and execution of search warrants, facilitate the referral of matters to the AFP and facilitate the use of other AFP services, such as forensics and international assistance.