

SENATE STANDING COMMITTEE ON LEGAL AND CONSTITUTIONAL AFFAIRS  
ATTORNEY-GENERAL'S DEPARTMENT

**Group 3**

**Output 1.7**

**Question No. 66**

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

**Senator HUMPHRIES:** We were told earlier in answer to a question elsewhere that there have been 1,400 investigations into possible fraud relating to Australian government disaster relief payments, but there has only been one investigation by the Australian Federal Police into a claim of fraudulent obtaining of money under that program. This crosses over several agencies but perhaps you could take on notice to try to explain why it would be that there would be 1,400 complaints and only AFP investigation.

**Mr Darby:** Yes, we will take it on notice, Senator, and I presume it relates to last season. The advice we have, and we will get you some figures, was that there was actually a very, very small percentage of fraudulent claims that came through. The Department of Human Services manages that program on the ground on our behalf through an MOU and we can seek that information from them.

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

As the Department of Human Services has its own well developed investigation capability, referrals to the Australian Federal Police (AFP) are only considered where a matter is highly complex or widespread across government and non-government agencies.

The one matter that was referred to the AFP for investigation in February 2012 involves the use of fraudulent identities and varied government documentation. This matter is still under investigation therefore no further details can be provided.