

SENATE STANDING COMMITTEE ON LEGAL AND CONSTITUTIONAL AFFAIRS
AUSTRALIAN FEDERAL POLICE

Question No. 16

Senator Rhiannon asked the following question at the hearing on 18 October 2011:

Senator RHIANNON: Thank you. In response to a question from Senator Brandis, you said that one of your people is stationed in Sri Lanka. Are you aware that, in September, a boat leaving Sri Lanka carrying 44 asylum seekers was stopped by the Sri Lankan security forces; and, if you are aware of that, did the Australian Federal Police officer stationed there assist the Sri Lankan security forces with any information about that boat and, possibly, in stopping the boat?

Mr Negus: I might get Deputy Commissioner Colvin to answer that question.

Mr Colvin: Senator, certainly we are aware. As we work with a number of partners around the region there are a number of vessels that get stopped by our regional partners. We are aware that that vessel was intercepted by Sri Lankan authorities. In terms of our specific knowledge at the time and information we may have provided, I will have to take that on notice. Suffice to say, we are working with the Sri Lankan police service on a range of fronts including people smuggling and broader trans-national crime and building their capacity. I would have to take on notice our specific knowledge of that particular venture.

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

The Australian Federal Police officer stationed in Sri Lanka did not provide any information or assistance which led to the interception of 44 asylum seekers by the Sri Lankan Navy on 11 September 2011.