

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES STANDING COMMITTEE ON INFRASTRUCTURE AND COMMUNICATIONS

AUSTRALIAN FEDERAL POLICE

Question No. 2

The Committee asked the below question at the hearing on 29 October 2014:

CHAIR: Thank you very much for coming today and for presenting. We will send you a draft transcript of proceedings so a request can be made to correct any errors of transcription. Thank you for your offer to provide information that we will get later. Could we also ask—you mentioned that this is just one of a range of strategies you use—if you could also perhaps give us a layout of all the different strategies combined?

Mr Zuccato: We will definitely give you those that we can. There are certain operational strategies that we will not be able to make available, but some of the education, prevention and awareness stuff that we do is really important and helpful. We will do that for you, absolutely.

The answer to the Committee's question is as follows:

The AFP utilises a range of tools to detect, deter, investigate and prevent crime. The types of strategies utilised are influenced by a wide range of factors, including the crime type being investigated and factors such as the location of the offenders and victims.

It would not be possible to detail every strategy employed by the AFP, however the following child sexual exploitation example will provide the Committee with an understanding of the types of strategies that the AFP may utilise.

Intelligence collection

This may include the collection and analysis of lawfully obtained information or the exploitation of open source information. Examples could include:

- Analysis of financial records to determine the transfer of monies between offenders, such as those that utilise 'pay-per-view' networks for child sexual exploitation.
- Open source searching and exploitation of social media, such as Facebook or Twitter, to identify connections between individuals or to identify potential offenders or victims.

Investigation

Investigators utilise a wide range of tools to identify offenders and gather evidence to support a prosecution. The AFP may use telephone intercepts, surveillance, search warrants and interviews of suspects, witness or victims.

Forensics

Forensic analysis is a valuable tool in child sexual exploitation matters. An example could include the forensics analysis of alleged offenders computers/electronic devices seized during search warrants to link them to the offences being investigated. This analysis could include locating chat logs on child exploitation websites where the offender is seeking to source images, or the location of large collections of child sexual exploitation images stored by the offender.

Partnerships with law enforcement

The AFP works collaboratively with its domestic and international law enforcement partners to investigate crime. The AFP operates an extensive international liaison officer network with 99 officers in 28 countries (in 35 locations) around the world who facilitate the exchange of information with foreign law enforcement on a range of serious crime matters. Examples of how the AFP partners with law enforcement include:

- Joint operational activity, domestically and internationally to target child sexual exploitation rings.
- Working collaboratively through strategies such as the Joint Anti Child Exploitation Team (JACET) model which will see the AFP co-locate with state and territory law enforcement partners to tackle child sexual exploitation.

- Working with foreign law enforcement partners to request websites hosting child sexual exploitation material are shut down at their source.
- Participating in joint international taskforces to analyse seized child exploitation images to assist in identifying victims where ever they are located in the world.

International forums

The AFP is engaged in range of international forums in order to broker greater information sharing and collaboration in relation to the investigation of child sexual exploitation material. Examples include:

- Virtual Global Taskforce (VGT) which is a global response to online child sexual abuse. The VGT comprises 11 countries, INTERPOL, EUROPOL and private sector partners such as the Microsoft Digital Crimes Unit and the United States based National Centre for Missing and Exploited Children.
- Engagement with INTERPOL member countries through initiatives such as the victim identification taskforces.

Engagement with the public and private sector

The AFP recognises that the identification and prosecution of child sexual offenders cannot be achieved without effective public and private sector partnerships.

An example of how the AFP works with the private sector could include identifying new technology that will be released on the market and understanding how that technology may be exploited by criminals. This allows the AFP to work with manufacturers to keep a step ahead of the criminal exploitation of technology.

Prevention strategies

The AFP also engages with the community to utilise a range of prevention strategies to mitigate crime.

ThinkUKnow is a partnership between the AFP and Microsoft Australia which is supported by ninemsm.

ThinkUKnow aims to raise awareness amongst parents, carers and teachers of the issues facing Australian youth online