

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

Program: Australian Federal Police

Question No. SBE16/016

Senator McKim asked the following question at the hearing on 17 October 2016:

Senator McKIM: I had a range of questions on the Broderick report, but it has been covered relatively comprehensively. I wanted to ask: have you had an increase in complaints since you began work to respond to the Broderick report? Generally, if the culture is changing and people are discovering more confidence in the processes of your agency, you would expect an increase in formal complaints. Has that occurred?

Mr Colvin: That is correct. In the less than two months of operation of Safe Place we have had a number of people—both internally in the AFP but also externally—bringing forward matters that they believe are relevant to the Safe Place and Investigations team. Some of those are historic and many of them are matters that are not necessarily new to the AFP—we may have had prior knowledge of them. So to say it is an increase—yes, but some of those matters are also previous investigations we have had.

Senator McKIM: You may not have this information here—if not, I would ask that you take it on notice—but what is the rate, if you like, of complaints in those couple of months? I accept that it is early days, but what is the rate of complaints as compared to prior to the Broderick report being released and the agency responding to it?

Mr Colvin: Absolutely. In fact, one of the recommendations from the report is that we be very open and transparent about the rate of referral of incidents, and I intend to be. I took on notice earlier that we will provide some material. It is early, as you say, but what we can do is contrast that to our previous historical recordings of these matters.

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

Since the release of the report on 22 August 2016 to 3 November 2016, AFP Safe Place has received ninety-five referrals.

Providing a response in relation to contrasting our previous historical recordings will be more meaningful at the six month interval, as the quantitative data will be more indicative of the impact of the report.