

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

Program: Australian Human Rights Commission

Question No. AE17/004

Senator Macdonald asked the following question at the hearing on 28 February 2017:

CHAIR: This article says:

The number of such cases lodged with the Australian Human Rights Commission has leapt from 18 in the 12 months to last March to 71 in the past year, ...

Would that not be accurate?

Dr Soutphommasane: I will take it on notice and verify for the following reason: I believe that figure may relate to cases that are open, which is different to the category that I cited to you just now, which relates to received complaints.

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

The numbers quoted from the article referred to in Senator Macdonald's question above relate to the total number of open complaints alleging racial hatred on a specific date. This figure does not correlate with the total number of complaints lodged in a reporting year. On 16 January 2017 there were 71 open complaints that included racial hatred as a ground. The number of complaints lodged during recent reporting years that include racial hatred as a ground are as follows:

	2013-2014	2014-2015	2015-2016	July – Dec 2016
Racial hatred	116	116	77	118