

**SENATE STANDING COMMITTEE ON LEGAL AND CONSTITUTIONAL AFFAIRS**  
**BUDGET ESTIMATES 2017**

**Australian Federal Police**

**Question No. BE17-054**

**Senator Xenophon asked the following question on 25 May 2017:**

Senator XENOPHON: You mentioned that—I think on notice—that since 22 August 2016 there had been 97 bullying complaints to Safe Place. Is that because—as I recall it—this is a new arrangement?

Mr Wood: Yes. When you asked about what were the arrangements now a moment ago, that is a critical new arrangement. It is designed to take away the concerns that were raised in the Broderick Report about the way that we had previously handled complaints, including some of the issues you just mentioned, and so as a result there has been an increase in the number of reports of bullying. The Safe Place figures would be even higher again. I am just aware that since we answered the questions that went back to you after the last estimates, there has been some more.

Senator XENOPHON: How many more since then?

Mr Wood: All I know is that I left the office yesterday. The person who runs this area said, 'Look, we could update the figures if the Senate wants something.'

Senator XENOPHON: If you could update those figures. How many of those complaints have been directed at senior management and how are they being addressed? You might want to take that on notice.

Mr Wood: The first of that we will answer. We will update the answer because we have already provided that answer in the questions on notice. We will update that as well. In terms of how they are dealt with, one of the things that Broderick strongly recommended was that the person who is complaining has control over what happens next. Rather than the matter being taken out of their hands and automatically going to professional standards, that the individual can say, 'I would like to sit down and have a mediated conversation with the person who I believe has been bullying me, or I want it referred to professional standards.' There is a range of responses to that second part of your question.

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

In answer to the first question asked by Senator Xenophon, from 28 February 2017 to 25 May 2017 AFP Safe Place has had an additional 33 bullying complaints reported. Of these, 11 complaints have been reported against senior management, being Superintendent/Coordinator and above.

As highlighted by Mr Wood on 25 May, the matters reported are addressed in accordance with the individual's wishes. In addition to the options outlined by Mr Wood, other options that Safe Place can facilitate include, but are not limited to:

- immediate intervention in the workplace via discussions with supervisors and relevant members;
- de-identified or identified thematic briefs to managers on trends of behaviour in the workplace;
- formal administrative investigation;
- mediation;
- wellbeing assistance;
- administrative action; and
- storytelling.