

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

**Group: 3**

**Program: Other Agency**

**Question No. SBE14/060**

**Senator O'Sullivan asked the following question at the hearing on 11 December 2014:**

Senator O'SULLIVAN: Well, that is a line that I can follow with them. I now have a question for the commissioner. I am particularly interested in what funding may now be allocated to the initiative to do with violence relating to women and children. We had that wonderful launch, in effect, with commissioners on White Ribbon Day, and I am interested to know just what your thinking is, what framework has been put in place—real everyday activities—between the commissioners and how it has been funded towards initiatives that will mitigate the terrible affliction in our society.

Mr Colvin: I guess the first thing I would say is that of course that was a significant milestone event, for the commissioners to stand up united against violence against women and children. And, as you saw, all commissioners, both Commonwealth and state and territory, stood as one on that issue, largely to try to bring awareness and to show that this was very much a male issue and that males need to show leadership. In terms of funding,

I will answer specifically from the AFP perspective. Violence against women and domestic violence more generally is largely a state and territory based offence. So, with the exception of the work that we do in the ACT police context and the work that we do in our offshore capacity-building missions—PNG, Timor-Leste and Solomon Islands—the AFP does not directly get involved in the issue of violence against women and children. We do, however, have a gender strategy that we recently launched for our offshore operations where we are working with our counterpart police organisations overseas, such as those in Solomon Islands and Papua New Guinea, where we focus specifically on improving their capacities to raise awareness but also to address and investigate violence against women and children. So that is the way the AFP contributes to this issue mainly, other than, of course, showing national leadership with my colleagues around the country.

As to the AFP itself, in terms of allocated funding or grant funding or program funding, nothing comes directly to mind. If there were, it would be fairly niche and very targeted. I could take on notice the question of whether there is any funding for our IDG missions overseas specifically. But at this stage that is probably all I can say on the matter.

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

The International Deployment Group (IDG) works closely with its international counterparts where we focus on improving capacity to raise awareness and address and investigate violence against women and children. A few examples include:

- in Papua New Guinea AFP advisors work closely with the Family and Sexual Violence Units;
- in Vanuatu the AFP has supported the refurbishment of a Family Protection Unit; and
- in the Solomon Islands the AFP has assisted the Royal Solomon Islands Police Force with the development of the Family Violence Unit.