

SENATE STANDING COMMITTEE ON LEGAL AND CONSTITUTIONAL AFFAIRS
AUSTRALIAN FEDERAL POLICE

Question No. 14

Senator Humphries asked the following question at the hearing of 22 February 2011:

Dylan Welch of the Age newspaper reported on 11 January about a group in the AFP called Special References.

1. What is the primary role of this group?
2. How many people work in this group?
3. Who does the group report to?
4. Can you please update us on the investigations into the 48 leaks referred by the Federal Government to the group?
- 4a. On Notice, a list of all references and the outcome.

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

1. Special References is responsible for investigating sensitive matters and special referrals from the Australian Government and other agencies.

Special References is part of the AFP's Crime Operations portfolio. Special References can also investigate crime types such as: electoral fraud; corruption; bribery of foreign officials; identity crime; crimes at sea; war crimes; environmental crime; offshore Australian hostage situations; human trafficking and sexual servitude.

The AFP does not have an investigation team dedicated solely to allegations of unauthorised disclosure of Commonwealth information. Investigations into matters of unauthorised disclosure are conducted by the team best positioned to conduct the investigation.

Head Office Investigations (HOI), a team within Special References, undertakes the majority of investigations in relation to unauthorised disclosure of Commonwealth information.

2. 107 persons.

3. Special References is part of the AFP Crime Program, which has two specific portfolios - Crime Operations and Serious and Organised Crime. The Crime Operations Portfolio is responsible for providing a law enforcement response to a range of transnational crime types.

Special References reports to the National Manager Crime Operations.

4. As at 3 March 2011, details of referrals received by the AFP relating to allegations of the unauthorised disclosure of information are as follows:

Active investigation	Matters finalised	Rejected	Terminated	Awaiting finalisation	Total
0	34	14	2	1	51

4a. As provided for in the above table, the outcomes of all references are as follows:

- 34 were finalised;
- 14 rejected;
- 2 terminated; and
- 1 is awaiting finalisation.