

SENATE STANDING COMMITTEE ON LEGAL AND CONSTITUTIONAL AFFAIRS  
CRIMTRAC

**Question No. 23**

**Senator Stott-Despoja asked the following question at the hearing on 27 May 2008:**

What is the objective, nature and scope of the National Police Reference System?

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

The National Police Reference System (NPRS) allows police and law enforcement agencies to exchange information that supports their operational activities. The NPRS enables access by police to information about persons to assist police identify if they are:

- A threat to police safety
- A threat to themselves or others
- Of interest to police, or
- Wanted by police.

The system is fully audited and hosted in a secure environment. NPRS has been designed to allow each jurisdictions to determine its own rules for providing and querying data. Jurisdictions collectively determine what data should be shared, the minimum set of data that makes each record sensible and who can access the data.

Police have traditionally maintained information within jurisdictional boundaries and although these are relatively mature systems, they are disparate. The NPRS architecture is a federated model that incorporates participation from all police jurisdictions across Australia. Features of the system:

- Web services that enable jurisdictions to provide and consume information, create links to distributed data and integrate the nation-wide data into their local systems. The web services include a variety of nation-wide search requests tailored to operational police needs, and consolidated views of a person of interest.
- Real time and batch uploads to cater for diverse requirements.
- Centralised and decentralised data storage. Primarily, searchable data is stored centrally (at CrimTrac) and other data can be stored centrally or in jurisdictional domains.
- Several applications/interfaces to access the data. A generic application is available, however most jurisdictions prefer to access the data via their own application or systems.
- Real-time data quality monitoring and reporting.
- Auditing and security via the AFP secure network.