

SENATE STANDING COMMITTEE ON LEGAL AND CONSTITUTIONAL AFFAIRS
AUSTRALIAN FEDERAL POLICE

Question No. 43

Senator Xenophon asked the following question at the hearing on 30 May 2013:

Senator XENOPHON: Can you advise, on notice, whether any members of parliament have been the subject of these authorisation orders?

Mr Negus: I do not think we could. I mean, we do not specify real estate agents or anyone else for this process.

Senator XENOPHON: You are elevating us you know, comparing us to real estate agents!

Mr Negus: I hesitated because I did not want to bring too many people into the mix, but we do not categorise people by what their job is, whether they be journalists, members of parliament or police officers.

Senator XENOPHON: Commissioner, come on—you know very well that members of parliament are more likely to get information about malfeasance or from a whistleblower than a real estate agent, from someone in the public service. I am not sure that Century 21 Belconnen gets too many calls from people dissatisfied with—

Mr Negus: You may be surprised! But can I take that on notice? I will have a look at what I can disclose to you.

Senator XENOPHON: Why can't you tell us whether any members of parliament have been the subject of these authorisations?

Mr Negus: Well, I do not recall any, off the top of my head, and we are talking about five investigations of leaks in each of the last two years. I do not recall any. These things are not done without proper consideration of the requirement here, and also understanding and respecting some of the issues you have raised here; that is certainly part of what we do. I cannot recall any off the top of my head, but I will take it on notice and see whether we can supply you with any information or whether we think that is stepping too far across the line.

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

For reasons of operational security the AFP does not disclose specific operational information to ensure integrity of its investigations, however the AFP can disclose there have been occasions where members of Parliament have been the subject to Authorisation Orders.