

Senate Legal and Constitutional Affairs References Committee

Attorney-General's Department

Hearing date: 05 October 2022

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David Shoebridge asked the following question:

Senator SHOEBRIDGE: Is the first time you saw the data when you saw the answers to questions on notice to this committee, and, if not, when else have you obtained that data?

Ms Bogaart: It's not the first time I've seen data that indicates that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women experience violence and murder at a higher rate than non-Indigenous women.

Senator SHOEBRIDGE: I'm talking about those specific data points or that discrepancy over time. If you can't answer now, then, on notice, has your department obtained those data points before and, if so, when?

Ms Bogaart: That specific report was compiled in response to the question on notice.

Senator SHOEBRIDGE: Correct, but you said you were troubled by the data—so am I—and I'm asking if the first time your agency saw that data was when it was—

Ms Bogaart: It's not the first time I've seen statistics and data that indicate that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women—

Senator SHOEBRIDGE: But I'm asking about those data points that have been tracked over time. Was the first time the agency saw it when we obtained it through questions on notice?

Ms Bogaart: I would have to take on notice, as an agency—whether it's the first time I've seen that specific dataset, but I have seen datasets indicative of that over many years.

CHAIR: Could you also take on notice, pursuing Senator Shoebridge's point, whether or not the department receives information, or whether data is produced on a regular basis, maybe yearly, which makes comparisons between the rates of murder of non-Indigenous women and children and the rates of murder of Indigenous women and children. Is that data actually produced on an annual basis and provided to your departments on an annual basis?

Senator SHOEBRIDGE: Or any other basis.

CHAIR: Or any other basis. Could you take that on notice.

The response to the question is as follows:

The comparative data referred to by the Australian Institute of Criminology (AIC) was developed by drawing upon raw data from the National Homicide Monitoring Program (NHMP) for the period 1989-90 to 2019-20. Data from the NHMP is published in annual reports on homicide in Australia, which are provided to the department approximately two weeks prior to publication. These reports include analysis of the Indigenous status of the victims and perpetrators of all homicides; including comparisons between the rates of homicide of non-Indigenous females and the rates of homicide of Indigenous females. The reports do not provide rates of homicide of Indigenous children compared with non-Indigenous children, although that information is available in the NHMP collection.

The statistics provided by the AIC were specifically compiled in response to this Committee's written Questions on Notice, and were not provided to the department in that format ahead of being provided to the Committee.