

JOINT SELECT COMMITTEE ON THE CHRISTMAS ISLAND TRAGEDY
AUSTRALIAN FEDERAL POLICE
6 JUNE 2011

Question No. 2

Senator Hanson-Young asked the following question at the hearing on 6 June 2011:

Senator HANSON-YOUNG: The reason I am asking is that there has been some suggestion that some of the people on the boat had actually called relatives that they had here on Christmas Island in the detention centres. Has that come up in your investigation?

Supt Ryan: Not to my knowledge, but I am not across every single statement. There are 420-odd statements. I can only say that I will ask my colleagues to take that on notice and check it.

Senator HANSON-YOUNG: I think it is important because if it is correct then somebody has from the boat called somebody at the island to say, 'Hey, we are on our way; we have left Indonesia.' I do not know how you possibly would have been able to monitor it, but it would confirm some of the statements that were given by survivors. I am surprised that perhaps that has not gone into your investigation, but you are saying that maybe it has and you just do not have that information. Is that right?

Supt Ryan: Yes, that is correct. The actual investigation for the coronial was handled by the Western Australian police and we assisted them. We took probably two-thirds of the statements for them. They ended up having all of the statements together—which have got as well; they have shared them with us.

Senator HANSON-YOUNG: My understanding is that it was the day before, the 14th.

Supt Ryan: So they would have been at sea when they rang. Okay.

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

The AFP has examined its holdings in relation to SIEV 221. The AFP does not hold any information about alleged phone calls from SIEV 221 to detention centres on Christmas Island on 14 December 2010. The AFP would welcome any details about the alleged phone calls.