

SENATE STANDING COMMITTEE ON LEGAL AND CONSTITUTIONAL AFFAIRS
ATTORNEY-GENERAL'S PORTFOLIO

Group: 3

Program: Other Agency

Question No. BE15/049

Senator Rhiannon asked the following question at the hearing on 27 and 28 May 2015:

Senator RHIANNON: Has an allocation of funds to an international counternarcotics initiative ever been refused on the basis of human rights risk?

Mr Colvin: Again, we have particular operational programs that we run with our partners overseas. Some of those may be aid funded and they may have a counternarcotics angle to them. There is not a simple answer to give you on whether any have ever been rejected on human rights grounds because they would follow so many different permutations to get to the point of delivery. I would have to take that on notice to see if we could find out—

Senator RHIANNON: Take on notice also to give an example of how the human rights component is included and how that assessment is made. That is what I am really trying to understand the process for. Does it actually happen? If so, how does it happen? Take that on notice, please.

Mr Colvin: I want to be clear about what we are taking on notice. You said 'human rights component'. If we are training international police in intelligence investigations for forensic investigations, what human rights component of that are you talking about?

Senator RHIANNON: I will go back to the specific question: has an allocation of funds to an international counternarcotics initiative ever been refused on the basis of human rights risk?

Mr Colvin: I will take it on notice and we will do the best we can to give you a specific answer to that.

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

An allocation of funds to an international counternarcotic initiative has never been refused on the basis of a human rights risk.