

**Senate Standing Committee on Education Employment and Workplace
Relations**

**QUESTIONS ON NOTICE
Additional Estimates 2011-2012**

Outcome 4 - Employment

DEEWR Question No. EW0948_12

Senator Bernardi provided in writing.

Question

DEEWR Investigative Unit

Regarding the DEEWR Investigative Unit, how many staff are in this unit? What is their role? What are their powers?

Answer

Regarding the DEEWR Investigative Unit, how many staff are in this unit?

As at 1 March 2012, there were 35 staff in the DEEWR Investigations Branch.

What is their role?

The DEEWR Investigations Branch undertakes investigations into suspected fraud on the department. Investigations are undertaken by trained and accredited investigators in accordance with the *Commonwealth Fraud Control Guidelines* and the *Australian Government Investigations Standards*.

The Investigations Branch comprises a professional group of investigators and fraud control specialists who work with areas of the department to strengthen fraud control measures and who conduct criminal investigations.

The Investigations Branch operates independently from the Groups within the department responsible for policy and day to day management of the department's programs and contracts.

Where appropriate the Investigations Branch refers incidents of serious and complex fraud to the Australian Federal Police (AFP), or utilises the AFP where specialist resources are required.

Where it appears that there is sufficient evidence to support an allegation, the matter is referred to the Commonwealth Director of Public Prosecutions (CDPP).

What are their powers?

The DEEWR Investigations Branch is authorised to conduct investigations by the Secretary of the department, in line with the *Commonwealth Fraud Control Guidelines*, but does not have any specific legislative powers.