

SENATE STANDING COMMITTEE ON LEGAL AND CONSTITUTIONAL AFFAIRS
AUSTRALIAN FEDERAL POLICE

Question No. 18

Senator Wright asked the following question at the hearing on 14 February 2012:

Senator WRIGHT: Thank you. Have any protests by environmental activists ever caused actual disruption to electricity supply in Australia to your knowledge?

Mr Negus: I do not know. Of course, many of these demonstrations would be based around state and territory police responses as well as the AFP. So not to my knowledge, but again we can certainly take that on notice.

Senator WRIGHT: Thank you; I would appreciate that. I suppose what I will ask you to take on notice—because you have not been able to give me a definitive answer about whether there has been surveillance of this kind to date—is, if indeed you are of the view that that has occurred or you come up with that information, the total cost of such monitoring and surveillance.

Mr Negus: We will take that on notice. Again, if—and it is a big if—that has occurred, it would be very minor, because this is not something that we would do very much at all.

Senator WRIGHT: I have heard about the extensive array of duties that you have, so that would be interesting to know. Again I will ask you, if indeed there has been this kind of surveillance, to look at the last five years and take on notice whether or not the intensity or resourcing of those sorts of operations has increased in the last five years and, if so, by what percentage the costs have increased over the past five years, from 2007 to 2012. Could that be compared with 2002 to 2007. Thank you.

Mr Negus: Yes.

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

Incidents in relation to disruption of electricity supply would normally be dealt with by the relevant state or territory police jurisdiction.

The AFP has not received any referrals from state or territory police regarding protest activities having caused a disruption to electricity supply in Australia.