

SENATE STANDING COMMITTEE ON LEGAL AND CONSTITUTIONAL AFFAIRS
AUSTRALIAN FEDERAL POLICE

Question No. 114

Senator Trood asked the following question at the hearing on 25 May 2010:

- a) What is the current status of the investigation into the death of Britt Laphorne?
- b) Why were two AFP officers recently sent over to Croatia as part of the investigation?
- c) How long were these officers in Croatia?
- d) What cooperation has the AFP received from the Croatian Government?
- e) How many officers are currently assigned to this case?
- f) Has the family been kept up-to-date on the major developments in the investigation?
- g) When is the investigation likely to conclude?

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

- a) The investigation into the death of Ms Britt Laphorne remains ongoing. Though all avenues of enquiry are currently exhausted, the Croatian Police Force (CPF) investigation will remain open indefinitely with resources allocated to examine any new information which becomes available.

To date no offence or suspect has been identified and the cause of death remains undetermined.

- b) The two AFP members were deployed to Zagreb and Dubrovnik, Croatia to conduct a joint review with the CPF of the investigation into the disappearance and death of Ms Britt Laphorne.

The two AFP officers deployed were selected on the basis that they had not previously been involved in the investigation. This is common practice in such reviews to ensure that all avenues of enquiry have been considered. The review team determined the investigation was conducted thoroughly and professionally. The investigation methodologies used by the CPF are consistent with those used by Australian police.

- c) The two AFP officers were deployed to Croatia for nineteen days, from 23 March to 10 April 2010.
- d) The AFP members were provided unrestricted access to all CPF records related to the investigation and full access to all crime scene locations. The CPF also provided the AFP with access to local witnesses upon request.
- e) The review team comprised two AFP officers and several officers from the CPF. Currently no AFP resources are assigned to the Britt Laphorne case. As the lead agency for the investigation, the CPF continues to have resources allocated to progress avenues of enquiry as they come to police attention.
- f) On 10 May 2010, the Laphorne family were briefed by the AFP regarding the outcomes of the investigation review conducted jointly with the CPF.

- g) The CPF investigation will remain open indefinitely with resources allocated to examine any new information which becomes available.