

SENATE STANDING COMMITTEE ON LEGAL AND CONSTITUTIONAL AFFAIRS  
AUSTRALIAN FEDERAL POLICE

**Question No. 45**

**Senator Rhiannon asked the following question at the hearing on 30 May 2013:**

**Senator RHIANNON:** Does the AFP provide training to the Sri Lankan Police?

**Mr Colvin:** Yes, we do.

**Senator RHIANNON:** How many Sri Lankan police have the AFP trained?

**Mr Colvin:** I do not have the numbers. What I do have is the types of training that we have provided.

**Senator RHIANNON:** Could you take it on notice to provide the numbers and provide details about the types of training.

**Mr Colvin:** I can give you the types of training now and I will take it on notice to provide you with the numbers. The training courses have included management of investigations; development for individual police officer programs; criminal intelligence analyst training; money laundering investigations training; and train the trainer. Of course, it is our desire that these agencies build up their own capacity and do not need us to do this training with them. We have also assisted with 20 computer based training learning modules on police best practice. We have done that in partnership with the United Nations Office of Drugs and Crime.

**Mr Negus:** Can I just add—and this goes back to questions we have previously at estimates—that the issue of human rights remains central to all of the training we deliver. Human rights to the Australian standard and to our international obligations, and any training we would deliver during that period of time in the areas you have talked about, certainly would contain elements consistent with Australia's stand on human rights.

**Senator RHIANNON:** You use the word 'elements', which could be either minimal or considerable. Could you take it on notice to provide details of what training that is and how large a component of the training it is.

**Mr Negus:** Certainly.

**Senator RHIANNON:** Does the AFP provide training to the Sri Lankan Coast Guard?

**Mr Colvin:** No, we do not.

**Senator RHIANNON:** Does the AFP provide training to the Sri Lankan military?

**Mr Colvin:** No, we do not.

**Senator RHIANNON:** For either of those, have you ever done so?

**Mr Colvin:** I do not believe so. I will correct the record if there has been. I might add that that it would only be in an instance where we are conducting training with the Sri Lankan Police Service. It may be that an officer from the Sri Lankan Navy investigative component is in that training but that would be very rare and unusual because our liaison and training is with the police.

**Senator RHIANNON:** So you will take it on notice to find out whether the military have been present when you have been training police?

**Mr Colvin:** Yes, we will.

**Senator RHIANNON:** How much money has the AFP spent on this training?

**Mr Colvin:** I have records for 2012-13, the current financial year. We have spent approximately \$540,000, of which about half is ODA funding and half is our departmental funding that we have been appropriated under various new policy initiatives.

**Senator RHIANNON:** If you do not have the figures, could you take it on notice to tell me how much money has been spent on training since the end of the civil war in 2009.

**Mr Colvin:** I will have to take that on notice, yes.

...

**Senator RHIANNON:** Could you take it on notice to give us a specific example of where the AFP has interacted with your counterparts in Sri Lanka to recommend changes to address these ongoing allegations about torture and rape.

**Mr Colvin:** That will be part of our answer to you in relation to the training because that is implicit any training that we have delivered that has a human rights nature. I will also see if there have been any particular instances where we have raised it as a specific issue.

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

1. Since 2009/10 financial year, AFP records indicate that 231 Sri Lankan Police have attended a range of training courses.

2. Training courses provided to Sri Lankan Police since 2009/10 financial year include;

- law enforcement management;
- police development programs;
- criminal intelligence analyst training;
- money laundering investigation;
- train the trainer' programs; and
- 20 computer based training learning modules on policing best practice through a supplier contract with the UNODC (5 modules in Sinhala language).

The training is all about appropriate police actions and responses in particular situations, having regard to legal and other obligations, including human rights.

3. The Australian Federal Police is not aware of any military personnel being present during training provided to Sri Lankan Police members.

4. Since the end of the civil war in 2009 the AFP has spent \$607,056.00 on training members of the Sri Lankan Police Service.

5. In August 2010 the AFP was made aware of allegations of mistreatment made by two Sri Lankan nationals whilst in the custody of the Sri Lankan Police Criminal Investigations Department. The Australian High Commission (DFAT) in Colombo looked into and raised concerns about these allegations with the Sri Lankan authorities at the time.

The AFP takes allegations of human rights abuses very seriously, and if made aware of such allegations would raise them through the appropriate channels with the country concerned.