

SENATE STANDING COMMITTEE ON LEGAL AND CONSTITUTIONAL AFFAIRS  
AUSTRALIAN FEDERAL POLICE

**Question No. 82**

**Senator Ludlam asked the following question at the hearing on 20 October 2008:**

I refer to media reports of State police agencies undertaking covert surveillance and infiltration of peace, environment, climate change and animal rights groups.

- a) To what degree does the AFP undertake surveillance of such groups?
- b) Can you provide an estimate of the total budget expenditure on such activities?

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

- a) The Australian Federal Police (AFP) does not engage in inappropriate surveillance activities targeting community or issue motivated groups. The AFP, through Protection Intelligence, undertakes overt community engagement strategies with peace, environment, climate change and animal rights groups. On very rare occasions, the AFP conducts covert operations targeting individuals who may be members of such groups where specific intelligence exists relating to criminal activities by those individuals. Such covert operations are considered, approved and monitored by a Board of Management made up of senior AFP executive officers, including the Deputy Commissioner, and are subject to strict and rigorous scrutiny.
- b) In the past twelve months the AFP has conducted one such covert operation. The costs associated with that operation were in the vicinity of \$16,400, in addition to staff costs.