

Australian police drop probe into WikiLeaks

The Australian government had previously said the actions of WikiLeaks, founded by Australian-born Julian Assange, were "grossly irresponsible" and potentially illegal

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Sydney: Australian police Friday said they had dropped their inquiries into whistleblowing website WikiLeaks, saying it had not broken any laws under their jurisdiction in releasing US diplomatic cables.

The Australian government had previously said the actions of WikiLeaks, founded by Australian-born Julian Assange, were "grossly irresponsible" and potentially illegal.

But the Australian Federal Police (AFP) said it would not be investigating the matter further after finding no evidence of criminal activity it could prosecute.

"The AFP has completed its evaluation of the material available and has not established the existence of any criminal offences where Australia would have jurisdiction," it said in a statement.

"Where additional cables are published and criminal offences are suspected, these matters should be referred to the AFP for evaluation."

The Australian government has rounded on WikiLeaks and Assange with Prime Minister Julia Gillard saying the "foundation stone" for the release of the sensitive cables had been an illegal act.

Attorney-General Robert McClelland said the AFP had noted a number of offences that could be applied depending on the circumstances, but had not identified any criminal offences where Australia had jurisdiction.

"The government referred the matter to the AFP as it was prudent to examine whether any Australian laws have been broken," he said in a statement.

"As has previously been stated, given the documents published to date are classified by the United States, the primary jurisdiction for any investigation into the matter remains the United States."

McClelland said the government remained extremely concerned about the "unauthorised and irresponsible distribution of classified material".

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