



**Australian
BORDER FORCE**

Senate Estimates Opening Statement

1 December 2025

Thank you Chair and Senators.

This year, the ABF has marked a decade of service, providing security and prosperity for our nation through the protection of our border.

I'd like to share with you some of our operational outcomes over the last financial year. They demonstrate how the dedicated people in the ABF protect the nation in our shared mission as Australia's only border security organisation.

As confidence returns to the travel sector post-pandemic, in the last financial year, we welcomed more than 22.8 million air passenger arrivals to Australia and saw 22.4 million depart from our shores.

Our border modernisation program means that passengers as young as seven who hold an ePassport from one of the 199 participating nationalities can now pass through the border using a SmartGate, with 67% of inward air travellers now using SmartGates.

We have interdicted 189 people with child abuse material on their digital devices at the border.

Our Airline Liaison Officers and Border Operations Centre have kept 968 threats offshore, equating to approximately \$72 million of taxpayer funds saved.

In fact, the ABF has not just saved money, it has collected \$13.7 billion on behalf of the Australian Government through border revenue.

The ABF has prevented 24,000kg of border controlled drugs and precursors from entering Australia, reducing the impact of drug harm in the community by \$6.5 billion.

The ABF is committed to working with regulatory and law enforcement partners across the nation in breaking the illicit tobacco business model.

We prevented \$4.4 billion in duty evasion by interdicting 2.5 billion cigarettes and 439 tonnes of tobacco. We also interdicted 6 million vapes on our border.

Led by the ABF, the newly established National Disruption Group will represent a new era in illicit tobacco enforcement by partnering with traditional and non-traditional federal, state, and territory partners to disrupt mid-level criminals and enablers operating in the illicit tobacco trade.

The ABF has continued to protect our maritime resources and our borders from threats through our ongoing focus on maritime surveillance and expanding our civil maritime capabilities.

Our on-water assets achieved 2,156 patrol days, which represents a 3% increase from the previous financial year, and our total fixed-wing flying hours increased by 24% to 14,347 compared to the previous year.

As I conclude my opening remarks, I would like to again commend the people who serve the nation through the ABF with pride and professionalism.

Thank you, Chair.