



Australian Government
Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade

7 April 2015

Ms Sophie Dunstone
Committee Secretary
Senate Legal and Constitutional Affairs Committee
Parliament House
CANBERRA ACT 2600

Dear Ms Dunstone

Inquiry into the Australian Border Force Bill 2015

Thank you for the invitation to provide a submission to the Senate Legal and Constitutional Affairs Committee's Inquiry into the Australian Border Force Bill 2015. As the Ambassador for People Smuggling Issues, I work exceptionally closely with both the Department of Immigration and Border Protection (DIBP), and the Australian Customs and Border Protection Service (ACBPS).

The Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT) has enjoyed a strong relationship with both DIBP and ACBS in our work to deliver successful outcomes on Operation Sovereign Borders (OSB). DFAT's management of Australia's international engagement in support of OSB has required regular strong communication and coordination with the policy and operational components of each agency.

DIBP and ACBPS have complementary objectives and functions. Their integration should contribute to delivering coordinated and cohesive management of Australia's borders. The standing-up of the Australian Border Force within DIBP will be a further milestone towards streamlining and optimising front-line functions.

A critical element to the success of OSB, has been the leadership of the Joint Agency Taskforce on OSB (JATF) in coordinating the efforts of the government agencies involved in border protection. The JATF has demonstrated the value of ensuring a single point of authority for diverse operational and policy functions that share a common objective.

We expect that the integration of ACBPS' and DIBP's operational functions in the Australian Border Force will enhance overall coordination and effectiveness. This will be of particular significance to OSB as the Australian Border Force assumes many of the functions that are critical to OSB's ongoing success, from detection and interception to support for regional processing. The development of strong and coordinated capacity in these areas will be critical to ensuring that the JATF can be progressively wound down with no operational impact.

DFAT works closely with both DIBP and ACBPS on a number of other priority issues for our portfolio ranging from international trade and travel to countering foreign fighters. The strategic focus and effectiveness of the Border Force will be important in ensuring Australia is able to benefit from opportunities such as increased trade flows and travel in our region, as well as effectively combating the threats posed by people smuggling, human trafficking and other forms of transnational crime. Further, we look forward to the consolidation of policy support functions in DIBP better facilitating whole-of-government engagement to advance cooperation on these issues.

We look forward to working with the Border Force, as part of a fully integrated department to ensure the gains from OSB are maintained.

Yours sincerely

Andrew Goledzinowski
Ambassador for People Smuggling Issues