

QUESTION TAKEN ON NOTICE

SUPPLEMENTARY BUDGET ESTIMATES HEARING : 17 October 2016

IMMIGRATION AND BORDER PROTECTION PORTFOLIO

(SE16/122) - High performance vessels in Cairns - Programme 1.1: Border Enforcement

Senator Carr, Kim (L&CA) written:

In relation to the Immigration Minister's announced of two new high performance vessels in Cairns (September 2016):

What type of vessels have been ordered?

What was the original date of delivery and what is revised date of delivery?

What were the production glitches and will those glitches impact on the effectiveness of the vessels?

What is the cost of the vessels and have the delays result in any additional expenses?

What operations will these vessels undertake?

Has the delay resulted in gaps in the Australian Border Force network in North Queensland?

Answer:

What type of vessels have been ordered?

The vessels are known in Australia as Fast Response Boats (FRB). They are 11.5 metre (38 foot) Full Cabin All-Weather Interceptor, high-speed boats, currently in service with the US Coast Guard, US Customs and Border Protection and a number of other countries around the world.

What was the original date of delivery and what is the revised date of delivery?

When the project was first announced, delivery of the Fast Response Boats (FRBs) was estimated to be late 2016. Further detailed design work to maximise the safety of the vessels and prevent a repeat of the Malu Sara tragedy has resulted in a revised operational date for the FRBs of June 2017.

What were the production glitches and will those glitches impact on the effectiveness of the vessels?

There have been no production problems.

What is the cost of the vessels and have the delays resulted in any additional expenses?

The purchase cost of the vessels is \$2.5 million. The delays have not resulted in any additional expenses.

What operations will these vessels undertake?

The vessels will be used, in conjunction with other ABF assets, to respond to the following threats:

- a) prohibited imports and exports
- b) illegal maritime arrivals
- c) illegal exploitation of natural resources
- d) compromise to bio-security
- e) illegal fishing activity in protected areas
- f) support to counter-terrorism
- g) piracy, robbery and violence at sea.

Has the delay resulted in gaps in the Australian Border Force network in North Queensland?

No.