

SENATE LEGAL AND CONSTITUTIONAL LEGISLATION COMMITTEE
AUSTRALIAN CUSTOMS SERVICE

Question No. 125

Senator Ludwig asked the following question at the hearing on 17 February 2006:

- a) How many airlines passenger information databases are currently available to Customs?
- b) What percentage of this is the total number of airlines that fly to Australia?
- c) Was the linking of airline passenger information databases with Customs completed in December 2005?
- d) If not, why not? When is it expected to be completed?

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

- a) Customs now has access to 32 airline reservation systems.
- b) This represents 73% of all airlines and 92% of all passengers that fly to Australia.
- c) The project to link Customs to airline reservation systems is essentially completed. A number of airlines with very small numbers of passengers have not been connected on cost-effectiveness grounds and these flights are assessed on arrival. A small number of airlines cannot be accessed because of European Commission restrictions on access to data for privacy reasons. Negotiations have been underway with the EC since 2002 to finalise an agreement to permit data access to European-based airlines.
- d) Not applicable.