

SENATE STANDING COMMITTEE ON LEGAL AND CONSTITUTIONAL AFFAIRS
AUSTRALIAN CUSTOMS AND BORDER PROTECTION SERVICE

Question No. 137

Senator Nash asked the following question at the hearing on 8 February 2010:

The Government has announced that they will *establish a regulated shipper scheme, which will allow for the identification of high-risk cargo for technical examination*. I understand that the Government cut \$17.1 million over four years for risk-based air cargo inspections in the 2009-10 Budget. Are there plans to restore funding for risk-based air cargo inspections?

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

Customs and Border Protection has refined its risk-based approach to the inspection of air and sea cargo. This approach commenced on 1 July 2009.

The refinements are aimed at achieving efficient Border Protection outcomes for the community through a more risk-based, intelligence-led deployment of inspection and examination resources and a reduction in the number of low risk consignments subject to inspection.

The strategy manages risk using a combination of specific intelligence to target inspections and examinations, in addition to campaign and coverage activity to provide a detection and deterrent capability.

In the first six months of operation, the refined intelligence-led risk-based approach has delivered an increase in the number of major detections and drug detections in imported air cargo compared to the six months before implementation.

New measures for air cargo announced by the Government on 9 February 2010 relate to arrangements for aviation security screening of cargo before it is loaded on aircraft in Australia. In a border management context, these measures, administered by the Department of Infrastructure, will apply to exported air cargo and are additional to the activity undertaken by Customs and Border Protection for import cargo, which will continue unchanged.

Customs and Border Protection continues to risk assess all international cargo (both import and export), and all consignments identified as high risk are physically examined.