

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

Question No. 69

Senator Brandis asked the following question at the hearing on 12 February 2013:

- a) With the change to the duty free allowance of cigarettes as of 1 September 2012, could you confirm how many passengers were over their duty free allowance from that date to the present?
- b) What overseas education campaigns are underway to educate travellers who are coming to Australia about changes to the duty free allowance?
- c) What percentage of passengers who were over the duty free allowance chose to forfeit their goods and how many chose to pay the duty? Where any fines administered for those who did not comply with the new rules?

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

- a) Between 1 September 2012 and 31 January 2013 approximately 62,500 travellers exceeded the duty-free concession for tobacco, which is less than 1% of the total arriving travellers for that period.
- b) The awareness campaign aimed at educating overseas visitors included both a formal media campaign and agency-initiated awareness activities.

The media campaign included:

- Scrolling backlit messages at the check-in counters in Bangkok airport;
- In-flight magazine advertising in ten magazines - Qantas, Jetstar, Singapore Airlines, Etihad Airlines, Emirates Airlines, China Southern, Thai Airways, British Airways, China Air and Scoot Singapore;
- Advertisements were placed in all major Australian newspapers, including the major non-English speaking newspapers; and
- Digital online advertising with both English and non-English digital display and search messages was placed through all Google display networks.

The formal media campaign concluded at the end of February 2013.

The agency-initiated awareness activities include:

- The Know Before You Go brochure has been updated and translated into 15 different languages. This brochure is available on the Customs and Border Protection website;
- All of the Department of Immigration and Citizenship's overseas visa issuing posts have been provided with access to duty-free changes brochures in 15 different languages;
- The Department of Infrastructure and Transport provided translated electronic copies of the duty-free changes brochures to 50 airlines. Many airlines have included this information on their websites.

c) Approximately 67% of travellers who exceeded the duty-free concession for tobacco chose to abandon the excess, whereas 33% of travellers chose to pay the duty on the full amount of tobacco imported. No fines have been administered where the passenger did not comply with the new tobacco concession.