

SENATE STANDING COMMITTEE ON LEGAL AND CONSTITUTIONAL AFFAIRS
AUSTRALIAN CUSTOMS SERVICE

Question No. 55

Senator Abetz asked the following question in writing:

What is the total number of hours that have been flown in the past 2 years for coastal surveillance operated by Border Protection Command? An analysis on a calendar year basis would be appreciated.

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

In 2006 Border Protection Command aircraft flew a total of 13701 hours in the high threat areas to Australia's north. The total for the same areas in 2007 was 13777. There were eight aircraft types involved. The actual amount of aerial surveillance coverage per hour for each aircraft type is different. Customs ceased using flying hours as a measure of surveillance coverage in 2006-07 as aerial surveillance coverage in terms of square nautical miles (nm²) is the effective surveillance measure.

In 2006, surveillance coverage of the high threat areas of Australia's northern waters was 115.9 million nm². The coverage for 2007 was 116.7 million nm².