

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

Question No. 149

Senator Hanson-Young asked the following question at the hearing on 26 May 2009:

What is the role of border patrol when intercepting “illegal” vessels, and transporting occupants safety onto the Naval vessel? Is there a set procedure?

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

Maritime operations are conducted by Border Protection Command (BPC).

BPC is a standing multi-agency operational authority, hosted in the Australian Customs and Border Protection Service, that leads and coordinates security operations that manage and mitigate civil threats in the maritime domain. BPC is primarily supported and staffed by Customs and Border Protection and the Australian Defence Force. BPC exercises operational control of maritime and air assets assigned from both organisations.

BPC has standard operating procedures for responding to civil maritime security threats including interception of Suspect Illegal Entrant Vessels. These procedures cover all aspects of operations, from initial interception of a vessel and boarding to transfer of people to the Department of Immigration and Citizenship.