

SENATE LEGAL AND CONSTITUTIONAL LEGISLATION COMMITTEE
AUSTRALIAN CUSTOMS SERVICE

Question No. 204

Senator Ludwig asked the following question at the hearing on 31 October 2005:

- a) Regarding the additional boats that Customs have been allocated...
 - (i) When will the boats be purchased?
 - (ii) What is the planned date of purchase?
 - (iii) What is the intended date for the boats to be operational?
- b) Regarding the additional personnel that Customs have been allocated...
 - (i) What is the intended date for the deployment of the personnel?
 - (ii) How many personnel have been deployed so far?
- c) Has Customs diverted resources from any existing operations for increased patrols or surveillance efforts in northern Australia?
 - (i) If so, how much in terms of resources or funding have been diverted, and from which programs?
 - (ii) if not, why not?
- d) Has Customs diverted personnel from any existing operations for increased patrols or surveillance efforts in northern Australia?
 - (i) If so, how much in terms of resources or funding have been diverted, and from which programs?
 - (ii) If not, why not?
- e) Have any additional resources been allocated to surveillance and patrols over the Gulf of Carpentaria?
 - (i) If so, what additional resources have been allocated?

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

- a)
 - (i) Financial year 2005-06.
 - (ii) The procurement process will commence as soon as the specifications for each vessel are determined. This is necessary to take into account the different operating conditions in the waters of each of the four ports.
 - (iii) During this financial year, taking into account the necessity for a procurement process.
- b)
 - (i) From 1 November 2005.
 - (ii) Staff are being temporarily redeployed as necessary to meet demands in each port. A recruitment process is underway to provide the permanent staff.
- c) No.
 - (i) Not applicable.
 - (ii) The program using the additional boats will commence when the boats are delivered and staff have been trained.
- d) No.
 - (i) Not applicable.
 - (ii) See response to c)(ii).

- e) The Coastwatch strategic flying program is planned on the basis of the Civil Maritime Surveillance Program's Common Risk Assessment Methodology (CRAM). CRAM assesses risks for all client agency interests across the totality of the Australian Exclusive Economic Zone, including the Gulf of Carpentaria. The surveillance rate of effort is continually reviewed and adjusted within resource and asset availability, to match the relative risks and priorities.