

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

**Question No. 119**

**Senator Cash asked the following question at the hearing on 18 October 2010:**

Can you provide a more detailed explanation as to why Port Hedland is able to undertake the Customs processing but Derby is not, so an explanation can be provided to the shire what the technical reasons are in terms of section 15 of the Customs Act. What is the turnaround cost of having to stop the plane in Port Hedland to unload the people, put them back on the plane, and then have the plane en route to Derby?

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

Background to Airport Classification

Aircraft are required to enter Australia at an airport that has been appointed or designated for Australian Customs and Border Protection Service (Customs and Border Protection), Department of Immigration and Citizenship (DIAC), Australian Quarantine and Inspection Service (AQIS) and Department of Infrastructure and Transport (Infrastructure) purposes, unless prior permission has been obtained or the pilot needs to land elsewhere due to stress of weather or other reasonable cause. Airports are appointed or designated separately under Customs and Border Protection, AQIS and Infrastructure legislation.

Customs and Border Protection appointed airports are appointed under the *Customs Act 1901* (Customs Act) which allows the CEO of Customs and Border Protection to appoint, and to fix the limits of, airports under S.15 of the Customs Act) for those purposes.

Airports are designated and classified in the following terms:

*Major International Airport* – means an airport of entry and departure for international air traffic where all formalities incident to Customs and Border Protection, Immigration, Quarantine, Health, and similar procedures are carried out.

*Restricted Use International Airport* – means an airport of entry and departure at which the formalities incident to Customs and Border Protection, Immigration, Quarantine, Health, and similar procedures are made available on a restricted basis, to flights with prior approval only.

*Alternate International Airport* - Airports specified in a flight plan to which a flight may proceed when it becomes inadvisable to land at the airport of intended landing. Generally this would only occur due to an emergency situation or problems associated with the designated destination airport (e.g. fog, etc).

Turnaround Costs

We are unable to provide any details on the turnaround costs associated with the current arrangements where flights are processed in Port Hedland before continuing on to Derby as this is commercial information which we are not privy to.