

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

**Question No. 23**

**Senator HUMPHRIES asked the following question at the hearing on 16 October 2012:**

**Senator HUMPHRIES:** Chair, if I could ask just a few extra questions, I am sorry, about the ACV *Hervey Bay*. When was it first stationed at the Cocos Islands?

**Mr Pezzullo:** I might just ask Admiral Johnston to join me. It has been there for some three months or so. I want to give you a more precise answer to that and I will be able to in a moment.

**Senator HUMPHRIES:** Sure.

**Rear Adm. Johnston:** I believe the date is 23 July but I will need to check that.

**Senator HUMPHRIES:** Sure.

...

**Senator HUMPHRIES:** Do we have to enhance facilities on Cocos Islands in order to allow that asset to be based there?

**Mr Pezzullo:** Subject to being advised to the contrary, we position the vessel there essentially because they are self-sustaining. Obviously we are rotating the crew; it has not been the same crew there for the best part of three months. They are supported to some extent from the land but they are essentially self-contained. If I need to modify that I will come back to you, Senator.

**Senator HUMPHRIES:** All right, but if there are any additional costs associated with basing the boat there, could I have you tell us what they are on notice.

**Mr Pezzullo:** I will take that on notice.

**Senator HUMPHRIES:** Thank you. In that period since 23 July—whatever the date is—how many boats has the *Hervey Bay* intercepted or assisted?

**Mr Pezzullo:** In the calendar year, as I think I said earlier, some 53 vessels have arrived at Cocos. I would say well over half-a significant majority of those have arrived in the last three months. I will just have to get the breakdown of how many have arrived since *Hervey Bay* arrived and how many of those *Hervey Bay* intercepted. Some of them are able to be intercepted by other vessels that we have there—the inshore vessels I mentioned earlier. We might just take the detail of that on notice. But it would be a subset of the 53.

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

The ACV *Hervey Bay* arrived on station at Cocos (Keeling) Islands (CKI) on 24 July 2012. It departed CKI on 2 November 2012 and was replaced by ACV *Triton*. ACV *Triton* or another of the large hulled vessels under the control of Border Protection Command will remain at CKI throughout the monsoon season; another *Bay Class* vessel is currently programed to return to CKI in June 2013, when the monsoon season is expected to end.

Current practice is to transport IMAs to Christmas Island as soon as possible. IMAs currently are only kept at CKI for short periods of time.

The additional costs associated with basing a vessel at CKI as of 4 November 2012 are as follows:

- \$47,710: patrol costs (including victuals, freight and spares)
- \$49,060: fuel costs
- \$73,220: flights from Perth to CKI plus accommodation

These costs are based on the actual cost of the six CKI patrols that have occurred thus far, in comparison with budgeted costs for a normal *Bay Class* patrol. Additional stores have also been provided to CKI from the Darwin store facility.