

QUESTION TAKEN ON NOTICE

SUPPLEMENTARY BUDGET ESTIMATES HEARING: 19 November 2013

IMMIGRATION AND BORDER PROTECTION PORTFOLIO

(SE13/0257) PROGRAMME – Operation Sovereign Borders

Senator Carr (Written) asked:

What is the precise definition used by Customs of an “operational matter”?

Answer:

‘Operational matters’ is a phrase commonly used to refer to activities part of a military or security operation. *Operation Sovereign Borders*, which comprises agencies including the Australian Customs and Border Protection Service is a part of, is a military led, maritime security operation.

The term, ‘Operational Matters’, refers to information, often classified, regarding *Operation Sovereign Borders* operational activity not disclosed where this would prejudice the outcomes of current or future operations.

The categorisations that are used to define operational matters fall into four groups, and include that which might:

- provide advantage to people smugglers;
- manipulate prospective passengers;
- potentially damage bilateral or multilateral relationships; and
- endanger the safety of our people.