

Mr John Carter
Sectional Committee Secretary
Joint Committee of Public Accounts and Audit
Parliament House Canberra ACT 2600
By email: jcpa@aph.gov.au

John,

The transcript of my evidence is fine and accurate. However, I'd like to add a few short points regarding the evidence I gave and in response to the questions posed by some members of the committee. These were:

1. (Page two of my transcript, paragraph three – Question by Chairman).
The Australian Customs Service UHF (Radio) network does not have the capacity to support the proposed Island Watch digital demands (128 megabytes per second) for high speed videoconferencing and Internet access. However, the UHF infrastructure (land mounted fixed masts) would assist the Island Watch proposal through sharing of transmission masts for reception of other services in the future, if the network is fully rolled out in the region.
2. (Page two of my transcript, paragraph five – Question by Chairman).
The business case project will aim to firm up key agencies' interest in, and commitment to, the Island Watch proposal.
3. (Page five, paragraph three – Question by Chairman).
The question of training is a complex one. There are existing models that demonstrate that training for Island Watch activities (such as the successful operation of the Dept of Immigration and Multicultural Affairs' Migration Monitoring Officers initiative) for local people undertaking surveillance, quarantine, customs, policing, etc., roles can be delivered successfully.

Local people are interested in "real" jobs and Island Watch presents an opportunity to improve Australia's security, customs, defence, immigration detection, quarantine detection and protection. Lastly, and importantly, it will create a greater sense of ownership of these various activities (including Coastwatch) and create viable career paths for Torres Strait residents while ensuring that the inhabitants of the region enjoy modern telecommunications access comparable to most other parts of Australia.

I hope that this short response, and the earlier submission, do result in Coastwatch supporting, later utilising, Island Watch proposal to improve its respective agencies' policing, defence, surveillance and quarantine activities to better protect both the Torres Strait and its inhabitants and the Australian nation.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide evidence at the hearing and to forward the Island Watch proposal as a viable and practical way to improve Australia's defence, policing, illegal immigration and drugs and guns trafficking and customs and quarantine activities.

Yours truly,

Brian Arley
Consultant
Island Watch
Ph/fax: 07 – 3392 3117
Email: d.s.i@bigpond.com

14 November 2000