

**JOINT COMMITTEE OF PUBLIC ACCOUNTS AND AUDITS**  
**Auditor-General's Reports nos 4 to 21 (2009-10)**  
**Thursday 11 March 2010**

**Questions on Notice**  
**Australian Customs and Border Protection Service**

1. Hansard Transcript pp. 7-8

**Ms Ley:** How often does the IT system let the front-line processing staff down by failing to let them know about that? What is the average incidence of it happening?

...

**Mr Patmore:** I would say maybe twice a year across eight airports, so we would have probably no more than two incidents per year.

...

**Senator BARNETT:** I want to follow up on twice a year across eight airports. Is that in each airport or in one airport?

...

**Senator BARNETT:** Let us look at Sydney and take it on notice and get back to me on the others over, say, the last three years. How long was it down for?

***Answer to the questions of Ms Ley and Senator Barnett:***

*The below table reflects the number of incidents that affected clearance processing and the number of passengers who matched an alert and were not identified as being persons of interest.*

<b><i>Year</i></b>	<b><i>Number of Incidents</i></b>	<b><i>Passengers who matched an alert and were not identified</i></b>
<i>2007</i>	<i>2</i>	<i>1</i>
<i>2008</i>	<i>5</i>	<i>4</i>
<i>2009</i>	<i>7</i>	<i>13</i>
<i>2010</i>	<i>3</i>	<i>0</i>

*When PACE is not available for clearance processing at an airport, the business continuity plan is initiated which results in manual processing of passengers and generating of an expected movement alert report to assist in identifying persons of interest.*

*The below table reflects the number of incidents that affected clearance processing, which airports were affected and for how long.*

<b><i>#</i></b>	<b><i>Date of Incident</i></b>	<b><i>Affected Airport</i></b>	<b><i>Duration</i></b>	<b><i>Comment</i></b>
<i>1</i>	<i>29 October 2007</i>	<i>Sydney</i>	<i>½ hour</i>	<i>Delayed PACE response time due to a failure of the link between PACE and the DIAC Travel and</i>

				<i>Immigration Processing System (TRIPS)</i>
2	<i>27 December 2007</i>	<i>Adelaide, Brisbane, Cairns, Perth</i>	<i>1 hour</i>	
3	<i>11 May 2008</i>	<i>Cairns</i>	<i>1 ½ hours</i>	<i>Power failure followed by IT infrastructure failure</i>
4	<i>23 June 2008</i>	<i>Brisbane</i>	<i>¾ hour</i>	<i>Delayed PACE response time due to a failure of the link between PACE and the DIAC Travel and Immigration Processing System (TRIPS)</i>
5	<i>23 June 2008</i>	<i>Brisbane, Melbourne, Perth</i>	<i>4 hours – Brisbane, 8 hours Melbourne &amp; Perth</i>	<i>Delayed PACE response time due to a failure of the link between PACE and the DIAC Travel and Immigration Processing System (TRIPS)</i>
6	<i>3 October 2008</i>	<i>Brisbane, Cairns, Melbourne, Perth, Sydney</i>	<i>5 hours – Brisbane. 4 ½ hours – Perth, Sydney. 3 ¼ hours – Melbourne. ½ hour – Cairns</i>	<i>Delayed PACE response time due to a failure of the link between PACE and the DIAC Travel and Immigration Processing System (TRIPS)</i>
7	<i>16 December 2008</i>	<i>Perth</i>	<i>2 hours</i>	<i>Power failure followed by IT infrastructure failure</i>
8	<i>10 February 2009</i>	<i>Gold Coast</i>	<i>1 ½ hours</i>	<i>Delayed PACE response time due to a failure of the link between PACE and the DIAC Travel and Immigration Processing System (TRIPS)</i>
9	<i>20 March 2009</i>	<i>Darwin, Melbourne</i>	<i>1 ½ hour</i>	<i>Software conflicts following installation of patch on servers</i>
10	<i>20 March 2009</i>	<i>Darwin</i>	<i>¾ hour</i>	<i>Software conflicts following installation of patch on servers</i>
11	<i>30 March 2009</i>	<i>Brisbane, Cairns, Melbourne, Perth</i>	<i>1 ½ hours – Melbourne. 1 hour – Brisbane, Cairns, Perth</i>	<i>Shared memory on local PACE servers full preventing processing</i>
12	<i>4 April 2009</i>	<i>Darwin</i>	<i>9 hours</i>	<i>Total failure of IT(telephone) communication</i>

				<i>infrastructure in Northern Territory</i>
13	1 November 2009	Brisbane	2 ½ hours	<i>Power failure followed by IT infrastructure failure</i>
14	29 November 2009	Brisbane, Melbourne, Perth	2 ½ hours – Perth. 1 ¼ hours – Brisbane, Melbourne	<i>IT infrastructure failure</i>
15	9 February 2010	Gold Coast	¼ hour	<i>PACE replication failure and user error</i>
16	11 March 2010	Perth	½ hour	<i>Power failure followed by IT infrastructure failure</i>
17	22 March 2010	Perth	¼ hour	<i>Power failure</i>

2. Hansard Transcript pp. 10-11

**Mrs Bronwyn BISHOP:** In a year, how many people were processed manually while it was down?

**Mr Patmore:** I think that in the last year there would be a couple of hundred at most, I would say – maybe 200 at most.

**Senator BARNETT:** Do you mind taking that on notice in light of the time? The 200 figure seems very low. You must process hundreds and hundreds in the different airports around Australia and, if the system is down, it just seems low. Please take that on notice and give me the figures over the last three years.

**Answer to the questions of Mrs Bronwyn Bishop and Senator Barnett:**

*The table below reflects the number of air passengers at major airports, the number that were manually processed and the number processed during a power outage at the airport terminal for the period 1 January 2007 to 1 April 2010.*

<b>Year</b>	<b>Total Air Passengers at major airports</b>	<b>Total Manually processed</b>	<b>During power outage</b>	<b>Passengers who matched an alert and were not identified as a result of a power outage</b>
2007	23 059 327	927	0	0
2008	23 816 540	2373	0	0
2009	24 651 340	5201	540	10
2010	6 678 961	153	65	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>78 206 078</b>	<b>8654</b>	<b>605</b>	<b>10</b>

3. Hansard Transcript p. 11

**Mrs Bronwyn BISHOP:** On page 26, when you are dealing with the number of incoming international passengers, you have air and sea together. You have done the same for international crew. Could you disaggregate those figures and let us have those, please?

**Ms Dorrington:** In what way?

**Mrs Bronwyn BISHOP:** How many came in by air and how many came in by sea?

**Ms Dorrington:** If I can take that on notice, I can give you a table.

**Answer to the question of Mrs Bronwyn Bishop:**

*The table below represents a breakdown of incoming international air passengers and crew and sea passengers and crew over a four year period.*

**Traveller movement figures by air and sea**

	<b>2004-5</b>	<b>2005-6</b>	<b>2006-7</b>	<b>2007-8</b>
No. of incoming international air passengers	10421602	10686079	11314147	11955163
No. of incoming international air crew	616970	610619	612488	642891
No. of incoming international sea passengers	67687	74695	110835	147766
No. of incoming international sea crew	304465	331218	339915	370594

4. Hansard Transcript p. 11

**Mrs Bronwyn BISHOP:** ... I notice that there is quite a big jump in the number of incoming international crew in 2007-08, up about 48,000. What was the extra activity that they were coming in for?

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

*The increase to incoming international crew in 2007-8 was due to an increase in flights and vessels and larger aircraft/cruise ships (introduction of A380) with more crew.*

5. Hansard Transcript p. 11-12

**Mrs Bronwyn BISHOP:** ... Then, when we come down to the last part of this table, the number of referrals of incoming air passengers – and this is only air – to Immigration in the last year is 272,000 and the number referred to Health is 6,000. What (were) the basic reasons they were referred and what was the outcome of the referrals?

**Mrs Bronwyn BISHOP:** Can I have the answer to what happened to the 272,000 who were referred to Immigration?

**Answer to the question of Mrs Bronwyn Bishop:**

The table below represents the 271,303 air passengers who were referred by Customs and Border Protection to the Department of Immigration and Citizenship during 2007-08. Of these referrals, 1,135 were refused entry into Australia. Health referrals are made to AQIS at the primary line, who carry out the initial health assessment on behalf of the Department of Health and Ageing, therefore details on health referrals are not recorded by Customs and Border Protection.

<b>Referral code</b>	<b>Short meaning</b>	<b>Movements</b>
<i>P</i>	<i>PAL possible match</i>	<i>77058</i>
<i>D</i>	<i>No Australian or New Zealand passport or no Australian visa held</i>	<i>69372</i>
<i>4</i>	<i>Manual (officer initiated) referral</i>	<i>45065</i>
<i>T</i>	<i>Bona-fides check</i>	<i>30255</i>
<i>C</i>	<i>No ETA/Visa record found</i>	<i>23710</i>
<i>O</i>	<i>Overstayer</i>	<i>8956</i>
<i>F</i>	<i>Australian visa held by New Zealand passport holder</i>	<i>4173</i>
<i>V</i>	<i>Visa ceased or cancelled</i>	<i>4017</i>
<i>7</i>	<i>Holder of bridging visa "E"</i>	<i>2900</i>
<i>A</i>	<i>No record of Australian or New Zealand passport</i>	<i>1707</i>
<i>Z</i>	<i>Passport not in force/unacceptable/being processed</i>	<i>1031</i>
<i>M</i>	<i>Breach of condition 8504</i>	<i>750</i>
<i>W</i>	<i>DAL document alert</i>	<i>741</i>
<i>J</i>	<i>Lawful until date (LUD) invalid</i>	<i>700</i>
<i>R</i>	<i>Visa evidence record not found/ Stay period invalid</i>	<i>364</i>
<i>Q</i>	<i>Impound Australian passport</i>	<i>362</i>
<i>L</i>	<i>Passport lost or stolen</i>	<i>81</i>
<i>I</i>	<i>Person on Australian or New Zealand passport not matched</i>	<i>54</i>
<i>H</i>	<i>Other</i>	<i>7</i>

*Note – In the ANAO report the figures titled ‘No. of incoming air passenger referrals to Immigration (I) and Health (H)’ include departure referrals to Immigration. The Annual Report states the figures as ‘the number of air passenger referrals...’ These numbers total 271303, the figure quoted was 272014.*

6. Audit Report No 10, p. 35

Customs and Border Protection advised the ANAO that it is developing a ‘Quality Assurance Process’ to measure compliance with the specified routine of primary line immigration clearance processing. What progress has been made? Has this QA Process been implemented? If so, has it improved compliance?

***The answer to the above question is as follows:***

*The Passengers Division of Customs and Border Protection has developed the high-level details of a broader quality assurance framework, and are now developing the detail for delivery and implementation. The quality assurance process has not yet been*

*implemented and Customs and Border Protection can make no comment on improved compliance.*

*As part of the above development, a national review has been conducted to assess which operational practices should be subject to regular compliance measures. This assessment included a recommendation to develop a nationally consistent assessment and reporting process for key Airport Operations activities, including primary processing.*

*There is an existing 'primary processing assessment tool' in use, but some sections of this are not reflective of current Instructions and Guidelines and are being updated.*

7. Audit Report No 10, pp. 38-39

The ANAO suggests that regular assessment of Customs and Border Protection officers performing primary line functions be implemented and refresher training courses offered. Have steps been taken to implement such a process?

***The answer to the above question is as follows:***

*All Customs and Border Protection Officers are required to undertake the training course, Passenger Clearance Course (PCC) before being allowed to work on the primary line. The PCC provides Customs and Border Protection Officers with:*

- An awareness of their delegated authority, conferred by the Minister for Immigration and Citizenship, to undertake immigration clearance processing on behalf of DIAC at Australian borders; and*
- The ability to perform immigration clearance functions efficiently and effectively, in accordance with legislation, and using the correct procedures and protocols.*

*Should a Customs and Border Protection Officer not perform the primary line function for a period of six months or more, they are required to complete the PCC course again. Customs and Border Protection have recently met with DIAC to forward plan refresher training needs.*

*As discussed in the answer to question six (above), Passengers Division conducted a national review to assess which operational practices should be subject to regular compliance measures. The primary processing function was identified as a key activity for regular review. Currently, assessment and coaching are provided to specific officers when quantitative and qualitative performance standards are not being met. These standards are identified through entry control point statistics and feedback from DIAC on a local airport level relating to the quality of work completed. The 'primary line assessment tool' is used annually in some airports for all staff prior to the establishment of new performance agreements with staff. In other airports the 'primary line assessment tool' is only used if there are concerns about an officer's performance/capability.*

*Work is progressing to update the primary line assessment tool in line with current Instructions and Guidelines, determine a nationally consistent regime for conducting this assessment and a recommendation for how often refresher training should be conducted.*

8. Audit Report No 10, pp. 38-39

The ANAO notes the need for guidance for Customs and Border Protection officers when exercising their power to question passengers. The ANAO notes that Customs and Border Protection has produced a draft final version of training modules in questioning techniques. Has this draft been finalised? Has it been distributed? Is training being implemented using the new materials?

***The answer to the above question is as follows:***

*The Customs and Border Protection National Trainee Program module on questioning techniques has been finalised and is now being delivered to all trainees. The content of the entire training program has been revised and is in use. Other relevant training modules with content that relates to questioning techniques include:*

- *National Trainee Program - Powers of Officers;*
- *National Trainee Program – Introduction to Passenger Risk Assessment;*
- *National Trainee Program - Questioning Techniques;*
- *National Trainee Program - Standard Questions;*
- *National Trainee Program - Baggage Examination;*
- *National Trainee Program - Engaging at the Frontline;*
- *National Trainee Program - Cultural Awareness;*
- *National Trainee Program - Non-verbal Communication Analysis;*
- *National Trainee Program - Client Service;*
- *Passenger Assessment Training Course - Communication and Questioning;*
- *Passenger Assessment Training Course - Language and Communication; and*
- *Passenger Assessment Training Course - Non-verbal Communication Analysis.*

9. Audit Report No 10, p. 42

The ANAO notes that at the time of the audit Customs and Border Protection was developing its new Practice Statement Framework to replace the existing Standard Operating Procedures. Has this new Framework been implemented? What are the results?

***The answer to the above question is as follows:***

*The National Practice Statement Framework is now in use. All staff have internal intranet access to this framework which consists of nationally consistent policy documents (Practice Statements) and procedural documents (Instructions & Guidelines).*

*Practice Statements outline the principles, directions and precedents which act as a reference for future decision making and are the basis from which Customs and Border Protection procedures are determined. Instructions & Guidelines describe the processes that must be followed to implement the policy.*

*Use of the framework is driving national consistency of practices and procedures, and allowing details of the quality assurance framework to be developed.*

10. Audit Report No 10, pp. 50-51

Customs and Border Protection advised the ANAO that it was developing a nationally consistent business continuity plan for passenger processing across all international airports. Has this plan been finalised? Has it been implemented? If not, what stage is the plan at?

***The answer to the above question is as follows:***

*In April 2009, Customs and Border Protection determined that an Air Travellers Business Continuity Plan (BCP) should be produced at a Divisional level with annexes for specific airports.*

*A discussion exercise (DISCEX) was developed and exercised at Airport Operations Cairns (AOC) late November to validate the BCP. A second DISCEX will be conducted at Airport Operations Brisbane in late April 2010. A third DISCEX will provide the final validation of the BCP before it is submitted to the Customs and Border Protection's Business Continuity Steering Committee for endorsement. It is proposed that this DISCEX take the form of a functional walk-through exercise conducted at one of the major airports, either Airport Operations Sydney or Airport Operations Melbourne. It has been proposed that this DISCEX be conducted during May 2010.*

11. Audit Report No 10, pp. 59, 64 and 66

The ANAO found that some service times for IT incidents and problems were unacceptable and recommends that acceptable service times be established. What steps have been taken to establish acceptable service times?

***The answer to the above question is as follows:***

*Our Main Processing Services Agreement sets service times in respect of incidents and problems assigned to IBM for resolution. Similarly, contracts with Telstra and Verizon also set service times in respect of incidents and problems assigned to these respective service providers. To enhance service standards being met, education material is being developed for staff to support compliance with incident and problem management processes.*

12. Audit Report No 10, p 66

Customs and Border Protection advised ANAO that it was developing a Problem Management governance framework and 'clearly defined problem management procedures'. What progress has been made in developing the Problem Management governance framework?

***The answer to the above question is as follows:***

*Customs and Border Protection's IT Division has a published Problem Management Instructions & Guidelines document. ICT Service Delivery is also in the process of transitioning the major incident management function to the IT Service Desk in order to free up resources to develop capability in Problem Management. The development of a*



*consistent, sustainable Problem Management framework is part of the 2010/11 work program for this function.*