

## QUESTION TAKEN ON NOTICE

**ADDITIONAL ESTIMATES HEARING : 23 February 2015**

IMMIGRATION AND BORDER PROTECTION PORTFOLIO

**(AE15/107) - World Customs Organisation - Programme 1.1 Border Management (Administered)**

Senator Carr, Kim (L&CA) written:

- a. ACBPS Maintains a Membership of the World Customs Organisation which is listed as a contract worth \$1.9 million over 6 years. Provide a breakdown of what this contract provides.
- b. Did ACBPS attend any conferences as part of its membership of the World Customs Organisation?
- c. Provide details on the numbers of customs officials that attended the conferences and the costs associated with attendance

*Answer:*

a) The \$1.9 million over six years provides for the payment of Australia's annual contribution to maintain membership in the World Customs Organisation (WCO). The WCO is the primary multilateral forum through which the Australian Customs and Border Protection Service (ACBPS) engages customs administrations around the world. Broken down over six years, the yearly payments vary slightly based on the exchange rate between the Australian dollar and the Euro. Australia will be contributing 1.828% (EUR 263,218.85, approximately AUD \$386,000) of the total sum of contributions for the 2014-2015 financial year (FY), paid in advance.

b) Most of the WCO's work occurs through 'technical' committees. The portfolio participates in a range of these committees, forums and meetings, with the level of participation determined on a case by case basis.

With the WCO based in Brussels, the portfolio Counsellor in Brussels facilitates the day-to-day engagement with the WCO. In FY2014-15, up to 23 February 2015, ACBPS attended one WCO sponsored conference.

c) One ACBPS officer based in Washington D.C. attended the WCO's 9th Picard Conference in Puebla, Mexico on 17-19 September 2014. Costs were: AUD \$794 for flights from the US to Mexico, AUD \$153 for conference registration, AUD \$405 for accommodation in Mexico, and AUD \$403 travel allowance.