

## QUESTION TAKEN ON NOTICE

### ADDITIONAL ESTIMATES HEARING: 27 February 2017

#### IMMIGRATION AND BORDER PROTECTION PORTFOLIO

#### **(AE17/044) – Border Crossings in the Torres Strait – Maritime Border Command**

Senator Pratt, Louise asked:

Senator PRATT: How many fishing vessels were found within Australian waters in that region?

Mr Quaedvlieg: We have seen a bit of a spike in Vietnamese fishing vessels. We have intercepted nine vessels in this financial year to date, with 117 illegal fishers on board. But those have predominantly been off the east coast of Queensland, out in the Coral Sea.

Senator PRATT: Does that represent an increase in illegal fishing in that region?

Mr Quaedvlieg: In that region, yes. The numbers are broadly parallel to what we have seen in the last few years, but we have not had that concentrated cluster off the north coast of Queensland for a period of time. Absolutely that is a phenomenon.

Senator PRATT: Given that is what is happening, you are still adamant there has been no decrease in resources to the policing of that region?

Mr Quaedvlieg: In fact we have increased resources in that region.

Senator PRATT: Please take on notice the provision of statistics for the past five years on the levels of prosecutions and interceptions, and the reasons for those interceptions.

Mr Quaedvlieg: That is on fishing?

Senator PRATT: Yes.

Mr Quaedvlieg: I might have to refer you to AFMA, which is the prosecuting authority for that.

Senator PRATT: Other interceptions as well—including border crossing interceptions. Perhaps you can break the question into two.

Mr Quaedvlieg: From an ABF perspective, I can quantify the number of border crossings in the Torres Strait for the last five years, and, for the fishing interceptions, I can give that to you by vessel and fishers. But I cannot give you responses in relation to prosecutions because that is an AFMA responsibility.

*Answer:*

Fishing interceptions in the Torres Strait by financial year

Financial Year	Vessel apprehensions	Persons on board
2011-12	0	0
2012-13	0	0
2013-14	10	83
2014-15	1	9
2015-16	7	57
2016-17	0	0
Total	18	149