

SENATE STANDING COMMITTEE ON LEGAL AND CONSTITUTIONAL AFFAIRS
AUSTRALIAN CUSTOMS AND BORDER PROTECTION SERVICE

Question No. 28

Senator BRANDIS asked the following question at the hearing on 24 May 2012:

Rear Adm. Johnston: The assets available to me at the moment include seven Armidale class working under my force assignment and I have up to eight Customs vessels. There are six at sea at the moment.

Senator BRANDIS: There are seven Armidale class naval vessels and six Customs vessels, so there are 13 at the moment on patrol?

Rear Adm. Johnston: Yes. I was referring with the Customs vessels to the Bay class patrol vessels. I also have the ACV Triton, which is a further Customs class vessel.

Senator BRANDIS: Is that currently on patrol as well?

Rear Adm. Johnston: Yes.

Senator BRANDIS: Is that in addition to the six Bay class?

Rear Adm. Johnston: Yes.

Senator BRANDIS: So there are seven naval vessels plus six Bay class vessels plus the ACV Triton deployed as we speak on maritime surveillance?

Rear Adm. Johnston: Yes.

Senator BRANDIS: So there are 14? You will need to take this on notice, I suspect, but I would like to track the fluctuations in that number over time. Would you tell us for each of the months—I think months would be a convenient time—over the last three years how many vessels have been on patrol, both naval assets available to you and Customs vessels.

Rear Adm. Johnston: Just so that I am clear, can I confirm: would an average number be sufficient? It changes some time by day, as vessels—

Senator BRANDIS: I can imagine. That is why I have not asked you to do it on a daily basis, because I do not want ask you to do a ridiculously burdensome exercise, but I think a monthly average for each month over the last three years would be sufficient for my purposes.

The answer to the honourable senator's question is as follows:

Please see the table below:

Average Assets Available to BPC on a Daily Basis Each Month		
Year	Customs & Border Protection Vessels	Australian Defence Force Vessels
Jan-10	8.35	7.68
Feb-10	8.89	7.43
Mar-10	8.84	7.81
Apr-10	8.97	8.10
May-10	7.68	7.06
Jun-10	7.80	6.96
Jul-10	7.77	6.94
Aug-10	8.32	7.45
Sep-10	8.27	7.67
Oct-10	7.65	8.61
Nov-10	8.53	9.27
Dec-10	9.65	9.26
Average 2010	8.39	7.85
Jan-11	8.77	7.10
Feb-11	8.57	7.57
Mar-11	8.81	7.52
Apr-11	9.87	7.87
May-11	8.23	8.90
Jun-11	8.67	7.97
Jul-11	8.71	8.29
Aug-11	9.19	7.65
Sep-11	8.50	6.30
Oct-11	7.84	7.32
Nov-11	9.23	7.53
Dec-11	8.55	7.06
Average 2011	8.75	7.59
Jan-12	9.32	6.45
Feb-12	8.64	4.34
Mar-12	7.45	6.19
Apr-12	9.00	6.30
May-12	9.32	5.52
Jun-12	8.13	3.06
Jul-12	8.16	6.00
Aug-12	8.97	8.30
Average 2012 YTD	8.10	5.77

In a period of high operational tempo, Border Protection Command has been able to achieve considerable operational outcomes such as a SIEV detection and interception rate of 99 per cent in 2011-12, and the continued deterrence of illegal foreign fishing activity in Australia's northern waters.