

QUESTION TAKEN ON NOTICE

BUDGET ESTIMATES – 26 – 27 MAY 2014

IMMIGRATION AND BORDER PROTECTION PORTFOLIO

(BE14/601) PROGRAMME – Australian Customs and Border Protection Service

Senator Whish-Wilson (Written) asked:

Are you aware of the search for a fishing vessel (Tianan) that sunk on Sunday 30 March in the Southern Indian Ocean

Did the Department have any involvement in helping to locate this vessel? If yes what was the involvement?

Do you know whether this was an illegally operating vessel?

Did you know that the vessel was operating in this region before the distress call was received?

Was the Department aware of a sister ship (Changbai) in the area at the same time?

- a. Was radio contact established with this ship?
- b. Was this ship fishing illegally?
- c. Was this ship pursued by Australian assets?
- d. Is the Department aware of where this ship was flagged?
- e. Does the Department know where this ship is currently located?

Answer:

The Australian Customs and Border Protection Service (ACBPS) is aware of a search that occurred for a fishing support vessel known as *Tiantai* on or about 30 March 2014.

The Australian Maritime Safety Authority (AMSA) did not request assistance, and ACBPS did not have any involvement in locating the vessel.

The vessel had been included on the Commission for the Conservation of Antarctic Marine Living Resources (CCAMLR) Non-Contracting Party list of Illegal, Unreported and Unregulated (IUU) vessels since 2012.

Yes, Border Protection Command (BPC) was advised during the search for the *Tiantai* that the *Changbai* was in the area at the same time.

- a. No.
- b. The *Changbai* has a history of IUU fishing in the Southern Ocean and has been included on the CCAMLR Non-Contracting Party list of IUU vessels since 2003. The sighting suggests that the vessel continues to be engaged in IUU activities in the Southern Ocean.
- c. BPC surveillance allowed the Australian Fisheries Management Authority to alert Regional Plan of Action countries to deny the *Changbai* port access.

- d. Yes.
- e. The *Changbai* has not recently been detected by BPC within areas of Australia's maritime jurisdiction.