

QUESTION TAKEN ON NOTICE

SUPPLEMENTARY BUDGET ESTIMATES – 20 OCTOBER 2014

IMMIGRATION AND BORDER PROTECTION PORTFOLIO

(SE14/108) PROGRAMME – Australian Customs and Border Protection Service

Senator Carr (Written) asked:

Has customs sought to obtain the duties from Airfreights customers even though they have been paid already to Ausfreight?

Answer:

Each party fitting the definition of ‘owner’ in the Customs Act can be held liable for outstanding duty and GST, until someone pays the debt. The definition of “owner” is very broad and includes importers.

In accordance with legislation and in line with normal practice, the Australian Customs and Border Protection Service (ACPBS) issued revenue demands to the seven importers who received the relevant goods when there was no authority to deal with them. A number of the importers have paid their outstanding debts to the Commonwealth.

ACBPS has obligations to pursue Commonwealth revenue debts where it is possible to do so. ACBPS is not responsible for the defaults of Ausfreight, which acted as the agent of the importers, under contract to the importers.