

**Rural & Regional Affairs and Transport Legislation Committee**  
ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON NOTICE  
Supplementary Budget Estimates  
**Infrastructure and Regional Development**

**Question no.:** 193

**Program:** n/a

**Division/Agency:** Australian Maritime Safety Authority

**Topic:** MH370

**Proof Hansard Page:** 136 (20 October 2014)

**Senator Milne asked:**

**Senator MILNE:** You were coordinating the surface search at the time, so it is unclear to me how you received the commercial satellite imagery of the objects that led you to tell the Prime Minister that this debris had been found. Did you get it first and then send it to the Australian Geospatial-Intelligence Organisation, or was it sent to them and then you got it? What is the sequence of events?

**Mr Young:** My recollection is that the sequence was: imagery could come into any of the agencies engaged, but it was all sent to the Australian Geospatial-Intelligence Organisation for assessment, and we worked on the basis of those assessments.

**Senator MILNE:** Did the Australian Geospatial-Intelligence Organisation assessment go any further than saying the imagery was credible; however, it might not be related to the aircraft?

**Mr Young:** I do not recall, Senator. I would have to take that on notice. I am sorry, I do not remember the detail.

**Senator MILNE:** I am just asking you if there was any more advice than, 'it's credible; however, it might not be related to the aircraft'. On the basis of that, the Orion aircraft were all sent to the location. Four aircraft were reorientated to the 23,000 square kilometres, 2,500 kilometres from Perth, on the basis of those two images. Is that correct?

**Mr Young:** My recollection is that there were a number of images. The AGIO assessed some of them as credible sightings, and on that basis we reoriented the search to that area. We found nothing.

**Senator MILNE:** Could you take it on notice how many images that were credible such that the search was sent there, and how long did you search that particular area based on those images?

**Mr Young:** Certainly.

**Answer:**

On 20 March 2014, the Australian Maritime Safety Authority (AMSA) received two satellite images of two objects from the Australian Geospatial-Intelligence Organisation (AGIO). AGIO advised that these images were assessed as credible but may not be related to the aircraft. AMSA updated its search area to take into account the new information. The search area was approximately 185 kilometres to the south-east of the initial search area. AMSA searched this area from Day 13 (20 March) until Day 20 (27 March).

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**Question no.:** 194

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**Division/Agency:** Australian Maritime Safety Authority

**Topic:** Underwater Noise and Whale Strike

**Proof Hansard Pages:** 137-138 (20 October 2014)

**Senator Rice asked:**

**Mr Kinley:** I think we say in the plan that median is five to ten years. For us, two of the issues which I think we will both be working on are underwater noise and whale strike, cetacean strike. We will be looking at where the high traffic areas are, where the whales are. Again, we are working with GBRMPA to see what information we can make available to ships through the reef vessel traffic service to say where whales actually are. If you can keep the ships away from the whales, that will reduce the chances of whale strike and also, hopefully, reduce the noise issue.

**Senator RICE:** Are there now staff allocated to be working on both the noise and the whales?

**Mr Kinley:** We do have people working on that now.

**Senator RICE:** How many full-time equivalent people have you got working on those?

**Mr Kinley:** It is not a full-time position role for anyone; it is actually part—

**Senator RICE:** How much for both of them, then—working on noise or working on the whale strike?

**Mr Kinley:** I would have to go away and work that out, Senator.

**Answer:**

The Australian Maritime Safety Authority (AMSA) has assigned one officer with core responsibility for coordinating the implementation of the 63 actions under the North East Shipping Management Plan. Six actions directly relate to measures to reduce the impacts of ship noise and ship strikes with cetaceans.

Investigation and assessment of the issues of underwater noise and whale strikes are not confined or exclusively assigned to the roles of individual AMSA officers. Work on these matters are entrenched in the regulatory functions of the key ship operation areas of AMSA (Navigation Safety, Marine Environment and Ship Safety Divisions). Collectively these divisions play a role in assessing, designing and implementing the regulatory tools mentioned in the North East Shipping Management Plan, for example, navigation aids, pilotage, marine environment protection measures and the port state control program.

AMSA is also working on new measures to provide operational information to vessels on the locations of cetacean and their habitats within the Great Barrier Reef. In addition, AMSA routinely considers measures related to cetaceans and shipping as they arise at the International Maritime Organization. Requests for ad hoc information and support regarding cetaceans and shipping are directed to relevant divisions of AMSA.

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**Question no.:** 195

**Program:** n/a

**Division/Agency:** Australian Maritime Safety Authority

**Topic:** Enforcement Action

**Proof Hansard Page:** Written

**Senator Sterle asked:**

1. I refer to your answer to question 210 from the last Estimates regarding enforcement action under the Maritime Labour Convention. Can you outline your role under the MLC?
2. Can you give a sense of the flag types of ships that are involved in the 1074 deficiencies?
3. Can you give a sense of the flag types of ships that are involved in the listed detentions?

**Answer:**

1. The *Maritime Labour Convention (MLC) 2006* is implemented in Australia by the Australian Maritime Safety Authority through the *Navigation Act 2012* and *Marine Order 11 – Living and Working Conditions on Vessels*, these legislative instruments provide for a variety of enforcement actions. MLC inspections are normally carried out in conjunction with port State control inspections but may also be conducted as a standalone inspection.

In 2013-14 there were 26,651 arrivals at 69 Australia ports by 5,631 foreign flagged ships from 59 flag states.

2. The 1047 MLC deficiencies issued between 20 August 2013 – 30 May 2014 from port State control and/or MLC inspections included vessels from 14 flag states: Indonesia; Papua New Guinea; Philippines; India, Republic of Korea; Bermuda; Hong Kong; Thailand; Antigua/Barbuda; Singapore; Panama; Italy; China; and Malta.
3. The flag types of ships involved in the listed detentions were: Hong Kong; Tuvalu; Cyprus; Liberia; Indonesia; Marshall Islands; PNG; Singapore; Panama; Malta; Republic of Korea; and Italy.