

SENATE LEGAL AND CONSTITUTIONAL LEGISLATION COMMITTEE
AUSTRALIAN CUSTOMS SERVICE

Question No. 99

Senator Ludwig asked the following question at the hearing on 17 February 2006:

a) Please provide an overview of what is intended by the budget measure:

Examining the development and implementation of a standardised data set for whole of government reporting.

b) What work is being done on the development of the dataset?

c) What sort of data is intended to be included in the dataset?

d) What is the timeline for the completion of this standardised dataset?

e) Has this been finalised?

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

a) The standardised data set is a whole of government data harmonisation exercise to examine the provision of a single data set that could be used for the reporting by industry to government regulatory agencies of information about import, export and transit cargo, conveyances and crew.

The adoption of a standardised data set could lead to reduced duplication of reporting by industry, increased government interoperability, improved supply chain security, and more effective and efficient deployment of resources. There would also be potential for a "single window" for industry to deal on line with Government. A fully functional single window would enable a "submit once, use many times" approach to the submission of trade-related data.

b) Detailed consultations have been conducted with the 41 Commonwealth, state and territory government agencies that have a requirement to collect data from traders in order to perform their particular functions in the regulation of international trade. The majority of these agencies collect data in order to assess applications for the import or export of restricted goods for which a permit is required.

The first version of the data set has been distributed to the 41 participating agencies for their comment. Further refinement would be required before the data set could be widely deployed.

c) Included would be the data requested from traders to enable the various government agencies to fulfil their regulatory requirements in relation to goods – and the conveyances and crews carrying them – crossing Australia's borders. Goods descriptions, names and addresses (of consignors and consignees, owners, agents, freight forwarders, shipping companies), tariff classification details (where appropriate), goods movement information eg vessel, port of loading, port of discharge, document identification numbers, etc. would all be included in the data set.

The rationalisation and harmonisation exercise (including the elimination of duplicates) has resulted in a first version of the data set containing 637 data elements, from an original collection from the 41 agencies of 7,469.

d) It is estimated that further refinement of the data set to render it suitable for deployment would take two to three years.

e) No. A report is being prepared for government consideration.