

SENATE STANDING COMMITTEE ON LEGAL AND CONSTITUTIONAL AFFAIRS
AUSTRALIAN CUSTOMS SERVICE

Question No. 104

Senator Ludwig asked the following question at the hearing on 13 February 2007:

- a) How is it that Coastwatch can forecast the number of flying hours but not the number of sorties?
- b) Has forecasting of the numbers of sorties been attempted by Coastwatch?

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

a) and b)

The number of sorties undertaken by BPC contracted or chartered aircraft depends on a range of circumstances including, but not limited to, the geographic focus of operations (for example, close inshore or outer reaches of the Exclusive Economic Zone), operational tempo and associated requirements; aircraft serviceability and aircrew availability; and weather.

It is not feasible to forecast, a year or more in advance, the specific operational circumstances that would govern the number of flights that would be undertaken in a specific year.

Where appropriate and required, flying hours can, to an extent, be increased or decreased by adjusting the duration of individual flights. Previous attempts at forecasting sorties for Portfolio Estimates purposes have not provided meaningful figures.