

SENATE STANDING COMMITTEE ON LEGAL AND CONSTITUTIONAL AFFAIRS
AUSTRALIAN CUSTOMS AND BORDER PROTECTION SERVICE

Question No. 13

Senator Ronaldson asked the following question at the hearing on 12 February 2013:

Senator RONALDSON: We have got an acknowledgment from you that Customs has known for some time about the threat to border security through corruption. We have acknowledgement that internal emails alerting to resourcing and other issues were being sent from 2007 on, yet in 2009-10, 220 staff were cut; in 2010-11, a further 250 staff were cut; and, in 2011-12, not only were 90 staff lost but the budget cut was \$38.2 million. In 2012-13, there was a further cut in budget of \$25.9 million and a further 190 staff lost. I hope you are not seriously suggesting that these anticorruption measures, or appropriate anticorruption measures, could be appropriately done internally when there has been some \$64 million slashed from your budget and a staff reduction of some 750 people.

Mr Pezzullo: The fact of the matter is we have resourced the function. It has grown. Those additional responsibilities were put into that branch, as I have described, and, most critically, there are resources outside our agency—namely, within ACLEI, which has the powers of a standing royal commission—which have been decisive in getting beyond the theoretical appreciation of risk and getting to the heart of some of these groups and the way they are operating.

Senator RONALDSON: So have these staff cuts included reductions in management staff?

Mr Pezzullo: Yes.

Senator RONALDSON: Have they included reductions of your on-the-ground Customs officers?

Mr Pezzullo: In terms of supervisors and managers? I will have to take some advice on that. I suspect not but I will come back to you on that. With the roll-out of technology such as SmartGate, the number of what we call our basic ranking officer, the Customs level 1 officer, there has probably been if not a plateauing maybe even shrinkage of officers at that level. Automation means that is what happens. I will have to take on notice the exact profile of what we call the balance between our CL1s, Customs level 1 officers and 2s, 3s and 4s, which are the basic middle-management and supervisory ranks.

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

A breakdown of staff classifications for 2006-07 up to, and including 2012-13 (to 31 January 2013) is provided below:

Staff Headcount by Classification							
	2006/07	2007/08	2008/09	2009/10	2010/11	2011/12	2012/13 YTD*
Indigenous Cadet	5	3	2	4	7	5	6
Graduate	13	10	7	16	19	31	31
Customs Trainee	121	132	0	46	60	62	47
Customs Level 1	2,585	2,681	2,571	2,461	2,394	2,336	2,318
Customs Level 2	1,504	1,619	1,568	1,494	1,389	1,389	1,360
Customs Level 3	993	1070	1001	1003	992	1016	1,002
Customs Level 4	438	512	508	513	524	556	557

* Year to date figures accurate as at 31 January 2013. Includes staff employed under the *Public Service ACT 1999*, staff on leave, higher duties and staff on loan from other agencies.