

SENATE LEGAL AND CONSTITUTIONAL LEGISLATION COMMITTEE  
AUSTRALIAN CUSTOMS SERVICE

**Question No. 197**

**Senator Ludwig asked the following question at the hearing on 24 May 2005:**

- a) On how many occasions was a flight cancelled or shortened due to aircraft unserviceability or crew unavailability (please provide a breakdown), and on when occasions were they?
- b) What were the nature of the flights which were cancelled?
- c) What weather events have forced the cancellation or shortening of a surveillance flight?

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

The following statistics are for the six months to 1 June 2005

a)

	Cancelled	Partially completed
Aircraft unserviceable	132	87
Crew Unavailable	140	Nil
Total	272	87

Total flights for the period were 2,234\*.

The occasions on which these occurred follow:

	Aircraft unserviceable <sup>^</sup>	Crew Unavailable	Occurred Flights*
December 04	33	29	359 (16)
January	48	21	375 (22)
February	25	31	352 (9)
March	26	21	387 (14)
April	45	15	378 (15)
May	42	23	383 (11)
Total	219	140	2,234 (87)

<sup>^</sup>These figures for 'Aircraft Unserviceable' include 'Partially Completed Flights'.

\*Figures for 'Occurred Flights' reported by Coastwatch always include the figure for 'Partially Completed Flights' shown in brackets.

- (b) All but one of the cancellations were surveillance flights. The remaining flight was a tactical flight. The cancellation of a programmed flight often results in another flight being planned when the aircraft is serviceable or when another aircraft and crew are available and when weather conditions allow.

- (c) Weather is assessed for each planned flight. In general terms, the weather events that would trigger the cancellation or shortening of a flight include tropical cyclones and other severe storms; wind or turbulence, dense cloud cover or fog which reduces visibility, or sea states that affect radar effectiveness.