

SENATE STANDING COMMITTEE ON LEGAL AND CONSTITUTIONAL AFFAIRS  
AUSTRALIAN CUSTOMS SERVICE

**Question No. 104**

**Senator Payne asked the following question at the hearing on 23 May 2007:**

What activity does Customs undertake in Indonesia regarding illegal fishing.

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

As part of the 2006-07 Budget package, Customs was funded to establish an extra position in Jakarta to combat illegal foreign fishing (IFF). The Customs Officer took up her position at the Australian Embassy in Jakarta in November 2006. The Customs Representative in Indonesia:

- Takes a lead role in pursuing cooperation with the Indonesian government on the joint fisheries surveillance forum as well as other surveillance and enforcement issues.
- Has close working relationships with Indonesian Ministry of Marine Affairs and Fisheries (MMAF) and the Maritime Security Coordinating Board (Bakorkamla) similar to Border Protection Command (BPC).
- Is the first point of contact between Customs and MMAF and Bakorkamla on behalf of BPC and Enforcement Operations during surveillance or enforcement activities (hot pursuits etc).
- Is a member of the Australia - Indonesia Fisheries Surveillance Forum held bi-annually, (last one held in Darwin on 16-17 March 2007) where agreement was reached to conduct a coordinated patrol between Indonesian MMAF and Customs in late 2007. As a precursor to the coordinated patrol, Customs and MMAF agreed to conduct a coordinated communication trial in Arafura Sea between 15-19 June 2007. The aim of the trial was to establish the reliability of communications between the Indonesian and Australian vessels. This is a vital component of our joint efforts to deter illegal foreign fishing in our northern waters.
- Has been instrumental in coordinating and organising the coordinated communication trial undertaken in Arafura Sea. As part of the communications coordinated patrol, travelled to Manado, Sulawesi along with senior MMAF executives, to meet with Masters of Indonesian vessels to discuss and finalise operational requirements for the trial. Was the liaison point between MMAF Vessels and Australian Customs Vessels, during the sea activity.
- Has been given authorisation to pass BPC surveillance information, photos, names, flags, location coordinates of suspected IFF vessels in Australian waters to counterpart Indonesian agencies.
- Has participated in the visits to Indonesian fishing villages as part of the whole-of-government public information campaign on the impact and consequences of fishing illegally in Australian waters.
- Has established communication protocols for information exchange between Indonesian MMAF, Bakorkamla and Customs.