

SENATE LEGAL AND CONSTITUTIONAL LEGISLATION COMMITTEE  
AUSTRALIAN CUSTOMS SERVICE

**Question No. 167**

**Senator Ludwig asked the following question at the hearing on 31 October 2005:**

- a) Is the First Port Boarding program complete?
- b) Were the funds fully expended?
- c) How were the funds expended? (specify allocation)
- d) Were any positions tied directly to this program?
  - (i) *If yes, now the program has been expired are they redundant?*
- e) Did it meet budget?
- f) How much did it go over or under?
- g) Please provide a breakdown of final expenditure?

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

- a) The First Port Boarding initiative is not complete as it is an ongoing program.
- b) All operating funding provided to date has been expended on the program. Equity funding has not been fully drawn on.
- c) The majority of the funding has been used to fund an increase in employee numbers. Some funding was also provided to extend the accommodation at the Dampier office.
- d) Positions were not specifically tied to the program. Rather an additional 19 staff were engaged to increase existing boarding activities.
  - (i) This program has not expired.
- e) Customs has deployed resources in accordance with the requirement of this Government initiative and the costs incurred have been consistent with the funding provided by Government.
- f) see (e) above.
- g) The annual ongoing cost of 19 additional employees is approximately \$2.0m p.a. In addition, the Government provided funding associated with property operating costs of approximately \$0.4m p.a. and general supplier expenses costing approximately \$0.7m.

The unspent equity injection is related to office accommodation upgrades still under negotiation.