

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

Question No. 27

Senator Cash asked the following question at the hearing on 18 October 2010:

When people arrive at Port Headland, what is the process undertaken in getting the people off the plane, and what occurs in getting them back onto the plane and then transporting them to Derby airport?

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

The Department of Immigration and Citizenship's (DIAC) charter flights arrive at Port Hedland airport from Christmas Island.

When the aircraft arrives in Port Hedland, the on-board security contingent provided by the security provider (currently SERCO) will disembark the aircraft and establish themselves on the tarmac to provide security as the Potential Irregular Immigrants (PIIs) move from the aircraft into the Port Hedland terminal building for processing.

Inside the terminal building all PIIs, DIAC staff, air crew and SERCO staff are subject to relevant Customs and Border Protection and Australian Quarantine and Inspection Service (AQIS) processing including x-ray examination of baggage.

Once processing and intervention has been completed, the PIIs are returned to the aircraft, with SERCO again providing security as required from the terminal and back to the aircraft.

The aircraft, crew and passengers are deemed to be domestic travellers once the aircraft departs Port Hedland en-route to Derby or other mainland destinations.