

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

**Question No. 141**

**Senator Humphries asked the following question at the hearing on 16 October 2012:**

Passenger Facilitation/ Duty free tobacco ban

- 1) What was the cost of re-printing the landing cards for the changes in the duty free tobacco allowance?
- 2) What has happened to the confiscated excess tobacco? How has it been destroyed if at all? What is the budget to store or destroy confiscated tobacco?
- 3) List any advertising Customs used in regard to the changes in the duty free tobacco allowance. What was the cost and duration of each advertisement program?

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

- 1) The new inwards passenger cards reflecting the change in the tobacco concession were printed and distributed at a cost of \$195,000.
- 2) Tobacco products brought into Australia in excess of the duty free concession are either duty paid or abandoned by the international traveller or airline crew member.

All tobacco products that have been abandoned by international travellers or airline crew are destroyed, in most instances, by shredding and then disposed of as landfill.

Powdered tobacco products are unable to be shredded due to Work Health and Safety concerns so separate collection and disposal arrangements have been put in place.

The Australian Customs and Border Protection Service (Customs and Border Protection) has allocated \$1.07 million to support the management and destruction of abandoned tobacco products.

- 3) The media campaign has been conducted in two phases. The first phase of the media campaign was aimed at educating departing travellers of the change and was completed on 31 August 2012. The second phase commenced on 1 September 2012 will run until the end of February 2013 and is aimed at educating overseas visitors.

Phase 1 awareness activities included:

- Advertisements appeared in all major newspapers, including the major non-English speaking newspapers.
- Digital online advertising with both English and non-English digital display and search messages were used through all Google display networks.

Phase 2 awareness activities include:

- Billboard advertising in Bangkok airport.

**Note:** There were plans to use billboard advertising in Singapore and Dubai airports, however this has not been possible due to a prohibition on tobacco advertising in these countries.

- In-flight magazine advertising in the following magazines - Qantas, Jetstar, Singapore Airlines, Etihad Airlines, Emirates Airlines, Thai Airways, British Airway, Scoot, China Air and China Southern.
- Bathroom door panel advertising in all Australian airports.

A total of \$1.3 million has been spent on the media campaign.

In addition to the media campaign, Customs and Border Protection undertook additional activities to enhance the awareness of international travellers and help reduce the potential impact of the duty-free changes. These activities included:

- A brochure advising travellers about the change distributed to departing travellers by Customs and Border Protection at all international air and sea ports.
- Signage placed at all international airports advising of the changes.
- The Know Before You Go brochure was translated into 15 different languages and is available on the Customs and Border Protection website.
- All of the Department of Immigration and Citizenship's overseas visa issuing posts were provided with access to duty-free changes brochures in 15 different languages.
- The Department of Infrastructure distributed translated electronic copies of the duty-free changes brochures to 50 airlines.
- The Department of Resources, Energy and Tourism transmitted electronic copies of the duty-free changes brochures to approximately 30,000 people in 110 countries.
- Advice was provided to the Chinese, Japanese, Korean, Malaysian, Thai and Vietnamese Embassies in Australia regarding the change.
- Qantas, Virgin, the Board of Airline Representatives of Australia (BARA) and the Australian Federation of Travel Agents helped spread the message about the change to the duty-free limit.