

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

**Question No. 50**

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

Referring to Question on notice number 77 from 2012-13 Budget Estimates regarding vessel inspections for all vessels entering Australia lawfully:

The answer said that vessels arriving in Australia are risk assessed.

‘Since 2009-10 the target for vessel boarding has been 6,450 vessels per year. In 2009-10 8,918 vessels were boarded, in 2010-11 7,130 vessels were boarded and in 2011-12 (to the end of May) 6,532 vessels were boarded.’

1. For each year how many vessels entered Australia? What percentage of vessels are inspected per year?

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

The target of 6,450 vessels boarded at first port of arrival was met for all three years.

In 2009-10 a total of 13,729 commercial vessels arrived in Australia; 8,918, or 65 percent of those vessels were boarded at the first port of arrival.

In 2010-11 a total of 13,603 commercial vessels arrived in Australia; 7,130, or 52.4 percent of those vessels were boarded at the first port of arrival.

In 2011-12 a total of 14,542 commercial vessels arrived in Australia; 6,760, or 46.5 percent of those vessels were boarded at the first port of arrival.

Customs and Border Protection risk assess all vessels prior to their arrival against known international and domestic risk indicators and any specific intelligence or information relating to the vessel or crew.

An intervention plan is developed for all vessels assessed as extreme or high risk to ensure appropriate treatment of the risk on the vessel’s arrival into port. The plan includes a range of waterfront treatments – for example, examination of disembarking crew and their baggage, inspection of all other goods moving on and off the vessel, waterside identity checks, vehicle searches and covert techniques – all of which are co-ordinated and planned to mitigate the specifics of the risk presented.