

QUESTION TAKEN ON NOTICE

SUPPLEMENTARY BUDGET ESTIMATES HEARING: 19 November 2013

IMMIGRATION AND BORDER PROTECTION PORTFOLIO

(SE13/0031) PROGRAM – Operation Sovereign Borders

Senator Carr (L&CA67) asked:

I have just got the report here in front of me that Maritime Safety Authority officers consider that people smugglers could still get real-time information about on-water rescues coordinated by Australian authorities. Could you confirm that?

Answer:

When responding to a distress situation, the Australian Maritime Safety Authority's Rescue Coordination Centre (RCC) issues a broadcast to shipping giving the location, time and general information of the vessel requesting assistance and requesting vessels in the vicinity to provide assistance.

These shore to ship alerts only include essential information that ships in the designated area need to plan their part in a search and rescue incident. Parties with the appropriate communication equipment and operating within the specific area defined by RCC Australia will be able to receive the broadcasts.