

QUESTION TAKEN ON NOTICE

SUPPLEMENTARY BUDGET ESTIMATES HEARING: 19 November 2013

IMMIGRATION AND BORDER PROTECTION PORTFOLIO

(SE13/0407) PROGRAMME – ACBPS

Senator Whish-Wilson (Written) asked:

What cooperation is planned between Australian Customs, the Australian Defence Force and AFMA in regards to ongoing surveillance in the Southern Ocean?

Answer:

As a multi-agency entity, Border Protection Command (BPC) combines the resources of the Australian Customs and Border Protection Service, the Australian Defence Force, as well as contributions from other agencies including the Australian Fisheries Management Authority. Operations in the Southern Ocean are ongoing and mitigate or eliminate the threat of illegal foreign fishing activities within Australia's Exclusive Economic Zones (EEZ), such as the Heard and McDonald Island EEZ.

Additionally, treaty arrangements between Australia and France support cooperative fisheries surveillance activities in the Southern Ocean to detect, deter and prevent illegal fishing in Australian EEZs. Australia's engagement in the United Nations Regional Plan of Action framework also contributes in preventing illegal foreign fishing vessels from offloading their catches in regional nations and provides a strong disincentive to invest in illegal fishing activities.