

**Rural Affairs and Transport Legislation Committee**  
ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON NOTICE  
Supplementary Budget Estimates October 2011  
**Infrastructure and Transport**

**Question no.:** 78

**Program:** n/a

**Division/Agency:** (AMSA) Australian Maritime Safety Authority

**Topic:** Communication with Indonesian Vessel on 2 October 2009

**Proof Hansard Page/s:** 69 (18/10/11)

**Senator BACK asked:**

**Senator BACK:** Can you tell me from the records, or can you take on notice, whether your operations officer—or whatever title they are given—would have had any communication with the vessel itself, with people on board, either by mobile phone or by radio communication, or would that not be something that an AMSA officer would engage in?

**Mr Young:** My recollection is that in this particular incident there was no communication with the vessel, certainly not by AMSA. I am not aware of whether Customs did. I do not believe so.

**Senator BACK:** I wonder if you would be kind enough to take on notice a confirmation of that. If that is the case, then you will not appear again.

**Mr Young:** Certainly.

**Answer:**

AMSA confirms there was no direct communication with an Indonesian vessel on 2 October 2009.

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**Question no.:** 79

**Program:** n/a

**Division/Agency:** (AMSA) Australian Maritime Safety Authority

**Topic:** Vessel that left Indonesia on or about 13 November 2010

**Proof Hansard Page/s:** 71 (18/10/11)

**Senator HUMPHRIES asked:**

**Senator HUMPHRIES:** Can I ask about another boat, one that was believed to have left Indonesia on about 13 November 2010. I understand that DIAC, in answer to a question on notice, has confirmed that DIAC received inquiries from relatives of people on this boat who had not heard from them since they left Indonesia on 13 November 2010. Can you tell me whether AMSA is aware of the issue of that boat?

**Mr Young:** Give me a second and I will look through the records here.

**Mr Kinley:** Can we take that on notice?

**Senator HUMPHRIES:** I have other questions that flow from that, so if it is possible to identify whether you have some information about the boat that would be useful at this point.

**Mr Young:** My preference would be to take it on notice. I would be talking without any briefing on the subject.

**Answer:**

AMSA does not have any information about the boat believed to have left Indonesia on or about 13 November 2010.

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ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

Supplementary Budget Estimates October 2011

**Infrastructure and Transport**

**Question no.:** 80

**Program:** n/a

**Division/Agency:** (AMSA) Australian Maritime Safety Authority

**Topic:** Audits of Search and Rescue Operations

**Proof Hansard Page/s:** 72 (18/10/11)

**Senator XENOPHON asked:**

**Senator XENOPHON:** So a significant number of operators. In general terms, what protocols and safeguards are there to ensure that those operators have appropriate standards of pilots training and of safety so that you know that the rescuers in a sense will not need to be rescued? Are there particular requirements that are set for those operators in terms of minimum standards?

**Mr Young:** Yes, there are. Firstly, we contract commercial operators. They obviously need to have an air operating certificate approved by the Civil Aviation Safety Authority. We provide specialist search and rescue pilot training. That is about flying at lower altitudes, bad weather and special requirements for search and rescue operations. We run an audit program through which we go out with aircraft and watch their specialist operations.

**Senator XENOPHON:** I might place some of my questions on notice. Essentially, if they have the air operator certificate, that gives you comfort, because in order to get that you need to satisfy CASA. So you quite justifiably rely on that. In addition to those minimum requirements for an AOC you undertake your own audits.

**Mr Young:** We undertake our own audits of the search and rescue operation not flight operation.

**Senator XENOPHON:** Perhaps on notice you can give me some information on the extent of those audits.

**Mr Young:** Certainly.

**Senator XENOPHON:** And whether there been any issues with respect to any of those audits.

**Mr Young:** Yes.

**Senator XENOPHON:** Can you say whether there have been any concerns or outcomes as a result of those audits with respect to any of your operators? Are you able to answer that now, or do you want to take that on notice?

**Mr Young:** I would prefer to take that on notice, thanks.

**Answer:**

AMSA engages 64 aviation operators around the country and equips them with specialised equipment to provide search and rescue services. AMSA conducts, as a minimum, annual audits of these operators examining their documentation, procedures and operational capability. Over the last two years, around 14 per cent of audits have had opportunities for improvement notices issued to the operators, and operators have rectified or are in the process of rectifying any issues identified. No significant concerns have been identified that would cause AMSA to terminate the arrangement with any operator.