



AUSTRALIAN CUSTOMS AND BORDER PROTECTION VESSEL – *ACV ASHMORE GUARDIAN*

PROTECTING AUSTRALIA'S OFFSHORE AREAS

Protecting Australia's remote maritime areas off north-western Australia is a major priority for Customs and Border Protection.

In particular, guarding against the threats of environmental degradation, illegal fishing and people smuggling is an ongoing task.

The Customs and Border Protection Vessel, the ACV *Ashmore Guardian*, is stationed on a near-permanent basis at the Ashmore Reef National Nature Reserve and Cartier Island Marine Reserves.

The two marine reserves, covering an area of 750 km², are about 320km off the Australian coast but only 150km south of the Indonesian Island of Roti.

The internationally significant coral ecosystems and the turtles, dugongs, sharks and seabirds use the reserves for feeding and breeding and are threatened by illegal fishing and poaching.

The ACV *Ashmore Guardian* allows Customs and Border Protection to conduct enforcement operations and assist with environmental management on a near continuous basis at Ashmore Reef.

The 34.9 metre specially modified commercial fleet support ship can carry up to ten Customs and Border Protection officers and government officials.

It also enhances surveillance and enforcement activities undertaken by Customs and Border Protection and Australian Defence Force aircraft and patrol boats, which are coordinated by the Border Protection Command, to protect Australia's offshore maritime areas.

ABOUT THE ACV ASHMORE GUARDIAN

Performance

- The ACV *Ashmore Guardian* will operate at Ashmore Reef for 330 days continuously per year until 30 June 2013.

Specifications

- **Length:** 34.9 m
- **Beam:** 8 m
- **Gross Tonnage:** 339 GT
- **Max Speed:** 10 knots

Accommodation

- 26 berths for six civilian marine crew and up to ten Australian government officials, including armed Customs and Border Protection boarding officers.

Medical Facilities

- First aid / isolation facility.

Illegal Foreign Fisher (IFF) Accommodation

- Secure holding facility for up to ten apprehended illegal foreign fishers for a short period of time.

Customs and Border Protection Response Tenders (CRT)

- 2 x 7.5m Norsafe tenders.

Other

- Operations room equipped with secure communications.



Weapons and Personal Defence Equipment (PDE)

- Glock pistols for Customs and Border Protection Boarding Party officers
- Other PDE equipment is also on board.

Customs and Border Protection Marine Unit personnel

Maritime Operations Support Branch has overall command of the Customs and Border Protection Marine Unit and provides personnel and logistic support to combat illegal activity in Australia's waters.

All armed Customs and Border Protection Marine Unit boarding party personnel are required to satisfy and maintain mandatory security, medical, dental, fitness and psychometric standards as part of their conditions of employment.

Customs and Border Protection Marine Unit personnel are trained in use of force, ship search and undertake armed boardings at sea. Officers performing the role of tender coxswains must have the appropriate marine qualifications.

Officers operating in northern waters undergo extensive training in:

- Safety at Sea
- Operational Safety Training, including the use of side-arms and deck mounted weapons
- Vessel familiarisation
- Medical training
- Operational command
- Customs and Border Protection and Fisheries legislative provisions
- Tactical boarding operations
- Ship search techniques.

The Department of Sustainability, Environment, Water, Population and Communities provides training to the Marine Unit for personnel at the Ashmore Reef marine reserve.

FOR MORE INFORMATION

For more information on any Customs and Border Protection matters, contact the Customs and Border Protection Information and Support Centre on 1300 363 263 or email information@customs.gov.au or browse the website www.customs.gov.au.