



CUSTOMS AND BORDER PROTECTION BAY CLASS VESSELS

Australia has 36,000 kilometres of coastline and an offshore maritime area of nearly 13 million square kilometres.

The Customs and Border Protection *Bay Class* patrol boats play a significant role in border security by maintaining an armed presence around Australia's coastline and responding to reported or suspected border incidents and illegal activity.

Customs and Border Protection *Bay Class* patrol boats perform strategic patrols and tactical surveillance and enforcement for various agencies to address the eight maritime security threats within and beyond Australia's 200 nautical mile Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ).

The eight maritime threats are:

- unauthorised maritime arrivals
- maritime terrorism
- piracy, robbery or violence at sea
- marine pollution
- bio security
- illegal exploitation of natural resources
- illegal activity in protected areas
- import or export of prohibited items.

Customs and Border Protection operates a fleet of eight seagoing *Bay Class* offshore patrol boats.

They are:

- ACV *Roebuck Bay*
- ACV *Holdfast Bay*
- ACV *Botany Bay*
- ACV *Hervey Bay*
- ACV *Corio Bay*
- ACV *Arnhem Bay*
- ACV *Storm Bay*
- ACV *Dame Roma Mitchell*

ABOUT THE BAY CLASS FLEET

Customs and Border Protection patrol boats investigate reported or confirmed incursions into Australia's maritime jurisdictions and visit remote or otherwise inaccessible areas in Australia's offshore territories.

Each patrol boat is equipped with two tenders, capable of carrying two crew and four passengers on excursions of up to 30 nautical miles from the Customs and Border Protection patrol boat. The tenders can be readily launched from a moving patrol boat in most sea conditions.

In response to the expanding role of the Australian Customs and Border Protection Service, Customs and Border Protection patrol boats and their crews are armed and equipped to deal with potentially hostile situations.

The Bay class Fleet operate for 365 days per year with an annual total fleet target of 2400 patrol days.

SPECIFICATIONS

- **Length:** USL 34.95 metres
- **Beam:** 7.2 metres
- **Draught:** 1.9 metres
- **Range:** 1000 nautical miles at 20 knots
- **Gross tonnage:** 240

Tenders

- Two 6.4 metre aluminium Pursuit 640 quick-launching tenders, for boarding, surveillance and interception duties.

Accommodation

- 16 berths for Australian Government Officials, including armed Customs and Border Protection Officers.

Facilities

- Holding areas equipped with CCTV and facilities for accommodating intercepted illegal foreign fishers and suspected unauthorised people attempting to enter Australia
- Weapons and Personal Defensive Equipment
- Two deck-mounted 7.62mm general purpose machine guns
- Glock pistols for Customs and Border Protection boarding party officers
- Shotguns for protection against wild animals
- Additional personal defensive equipment such as body armour, batons, capsicum spray and handcuffs.

USE OF VESSELS

Customs and Border Protection patrol boats may be deployed according to aerial surveillance, community reports and/or radar sightings.

Customs and Border Protection patrol boats may also be tasked to respond to illegal fishing and other threats by the Border Protection Command. Border Protection Command is a Government directed, multi-agency authority, headed by a Rear Admiral, that combines the expertise of Customs and Border Protection and the Australian Defence Force to deliver a coordinated, national approach to managing Australia's offshore maritime security.

Customs and Border Protection patrol boats may be used to:

- Counter people, drug and weapons smuggling
- Apprehend foreign fishing vessels
- Gather information and intelligence
- Monitor environmental pollution
- Assist park management of offshore nature reserves and marine parks
- Assist search and rescue efforts.

The fleet operates in conjunction with the Border Protection Command, and a range of partner agencies including:

- Australian Fisheries Management Authority
- Australian Federal Police
- Australian Maritime Safety Authority
- Australian Quarantine and Inspection Service
- Department of Immigration and Citizenship
- Department of Sustainability, Environment, Water, Population and Communities
- Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority.

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 Customs and Border Protection Marine Unit personnel are required to satisfy and maintain mandatory security, medical, 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 boarding at sea. Officers that operate the *Bay Class* patrol boats must maintain the appropriate marine qualifications.

Officers operating on *Bay Class* patrol boats undergo extensive training in:

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

The Department of Environment, Water, Heritage and the Arts provides warden training to the Marine Unit for personnel at the Ashmore Reef marine reserve.

REPLACEMENT VESSELS

In the 2010-11 Budget, the Australian Government approved a significant investment to replace the current *Bay Class* vessels with an enhanced capability. This enhanced capability, to be known as the *Cape Class* vessels, will play a critical role in border security and will address more than one security challenge by providing surveillance and response capabilities across northern Australia to counter illegal people smuggling, illegal foreign fishing, trafficking of illicit goods as well as search and rescue and counter-terrorism activities. It is anticipated that the first *Cape Class* vessel will come on line in 2012-13, and the full fleet is expected to be operational by 2015-16.

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.