



## AUSTRALIAN CUSTOMS SERVICE PRACTICE STATEMENT

**FILE NO: 2008/007525-01**

**PRACTICE STATEMENT NO: PS 2008/38**

**PUBLISHED DATE: 28 JULY 2008**

**AVAILABILITY: Internal and External**

**SUBJECT:** Assessment of Travellers

**PURPOSE:** To provide a high level policy overview of Assessment of Travellers by Customs.

**APPROVING OFFICER:** National Director Passengers Division

**CATEGORY:** Operational Procedures (OP)

**CONTACT:** Passenger Policy Ph: (02) 6275 8026

### SUMMARY OF MAIN POINTS

Customs Practice Statements are endorsed Customs policy and must be followed by all Customs employees. This practice statement outlines:

- The policies relating to Customs role in the Assessment of Travellers arriving and departing Australia.

*The electronic version published on the intranet is the current Practice Statement.*

### STATEMENT

#### Introduction Statement:

International traveller numbers are increasing. Effective assessment of travellers is one of the keys to managing the efficient processing of legitimate travellers with minimal delay, while maintaining the integrity of the border. Customs undertakes a layered approach to assessing passengers in order to detect and deter the unauthorised movement of people and prohibited and restricted goods across the Australian border.

**BCS CLASSIFICATION: \*TVFC\_Policy\***

**File Number: 2008/007525-01**

## **Context and Scope:**

This practice statement encompasses all traveller assessment activities undertaken by Customs including pre-arrival assessment, identification of persons of interest and the visual risk assessment of potential non-compliant travellers.

The scope of this practice statement extends to the assessment of international air and sea passengers and crew only.

## **Policy Statement:**

Customs presence in airports and seaports derives from our community protection role. Whether on our own behalf or on behalf of other agencies, we are there to support legitimate travel, the interventions needed to detect the illegal movement of people and the goods they bring across the border, and the collection of associated revenue.

Customs traveller assessment activities are conducted in a way that minimises intervention while optimising travellers are compliance with Australian laws. This enables legitimate travellers to be facilitated quickly across the border while fulfilling Customs border protection responsibilities.

Customs uses an intelligence based process screening 99% of all passengers and crew prior to arrival to identify persons of interest. This initial assessment is made using information made available to Customs and Department of Immigration and Citizenship (DIAC) by airlines under S64AF of the *Customs Act 1901*.

## **Procedural Statement:**

Customs adopts a layered approach to the risk-assessment of travellers. At any stage of the traveller assessment process a passenger or crew member may be subject to further Customs scrutiny to determine compliance with Australian laws.

Prior to a traveller arriving at Australia's border, a pre-arrival risk assessment involving the examination of a range of data sources made available to and held by Customs is undertaken. This assessment facilitates travellers who pose no risk and allows for a more in-depth review of travellers assessed as being of Customs concern.

Customs officers may observe travellers disembarking from an aircraft and on their journey through the airport. Risk indicators are used to determine whether closer scrutiny is required. This assessment may lead to detailed questioning by a Customs officer to determine a person's *bona fides* or whether or not they pose a risk to the Australian border.

Detector dogs may also be used as the traveller disembarks or in the Customs Hall. The Detector dog program plays an integral role in the detection of illicit drugs and other controlled substances.

Passengers and crew who are suspected of being non-compliant with the requirements of other Government agencies may be referred by Customs to those agencies.

BCS CLASSIFICATION: \*TVFC\_Policy\*

File Number: **2008/007525-01**

## **RELATED INSTRUCTIONS AND GUIDELINES**

Alert Management

## **RELATED POLICIES AND REFERENCES**

Memoranda of Understanding (MOU) exist between Customs and a number of government agencies to facilitate a whole-of-government approach to the protection of the Australian community.

Customs carries out its border protection role by administering a number of Acts and Regulations. These include:

- *Customs Act 1901*
- *Customs (Prohibited Exports) Regulations 1958*
- *Customs (Prohibited Imports) Regulations 1956*
- *Anti-Money Laundering and Counter-Terrorism Financing Act 2006*
- *Aviation Transport Security Act 2004*
- *Crimes Act 1914*
- *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999*
- *Migration Act 1958*
- *Quarantine Act 1908*
- *Various State and Territory legislation.*

## **KEY ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES**

Customs policy responsibility rests with the Passenger Policy Section of the Passenger Operations Branch, Passengers Division.

The Director Passenger Policy is responsible for the preparation and dissemination of policy and practices in relation to the function. Airport Operations North and South are responsible for ensuring the efficient and effective delivery of the function in the eight international airports while Enforcement Operations Branch is responsible for delivery of the function at minor airports and all seaports.

## **CONSULTATION**

### **Industry Consultation**

Not required

### **External Consultation**

AFP

BCS CLASSIFICATION: \*TVFC\_Policy\*

File Number: **2008/007525-01**

ASIO

ACC

DIAC

### **Internal Consultation**

The following internal stakeholders have been consulted in the development of this Practice Statement:

Airport Operations North

Airport Operations South

Strategic Development Passengers

Enforcement Operations

Border Targeting Branch

### **Approval**

Approved on 8 July 2008 by:

Jan Dorrington

National Director Passengers

### **ENDORSED**

Endorsed on 25 July 2008 by:

Sue Pitman

A/g DCEO Passengers and Trade Facilitation

**BCS CLASSIFICATION: \*TVFC\_Policy\***

**File Number: 2008/007525-01**