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# The evolution of the role of Australian customs in maritime surveillance and border protection.

Matthew Bannon  
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**THE EVOLUTION OF THE ROLE OF AUSTRALIAN CUSTOMS  
IN MARITIME SURVEILLANCE AND BORDER PROTECTION**

**A thesis submitted in fulfilment of the  
requirements for the award of the degree**

**MASTER OF MARITIME STUDIES - RESEARCH**

**from**

**UNIVERSITY OF WOLLONGONG**

**by**

**MATTHEW BANNON**

**BACHELOR OF BUSINESS (PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION) (NT University)  
GRADUATE CERTIFICATE IN PUBLIC MANAGEMENT (Monash University)  
GRADUATE DIPLOMA IN PUBLIC MANAGEMENT (Monash University)**

**2007**

## **CERTIFICATION**

I, Matthew James Bannon, declare that this thesis, submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the award of Master of Maritime Studies, in the Faculty of Law, University of Wollongong, is wholly my own work unless otherwise referenced or acknowledged. The document has not been submitted for qualification at any other academic institution.

Matthew J Bannon  
2713846

2007

## **DISCLAIMER**

This thesis is presented in accordance with the assessment requirements of THES 912.

The views expressed are entirely the author's own and do not reflect those of the Australian Customs Service or the government.

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## ABBREVIATIONS

ACV	Australian Customs Vessel
ADF	Australian Defence Forces
AFMA	Australian Fisheries Management Authority
AFP	Australian Federal Police
AMIS	Australian Maritime Information System
AMSA	Australian Maritime Safety Authority
AQIS	Australian Quarantine and Inspection Service
DFAT	Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade
DIMIA	Department of Immigration and Multicultural and Indigenous Affairs (now the Department of Immigration and Citizenship)
DITR	Department of Industry, Tourism and Resources
DOD	Department of Defence
DOTARS	Department of Transport and Regional Services
EEZ	Exclusive Economic Zone
Fixed Platform Protocol-	Protocol for the Suppression of Unlawful Acts against the Safety of Fixed Platforms Located on the Continental Shelf 1988
GBRMPA	Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority
GEOSS	Global Earth Observation System of Surveillance
JPDA	Joint Petroleum Development Area
JOPC	Joint Offshore Protection Command (now Border Protection Command, as at 23 October 2006)
LOSC	United Nations Convention Law of the Sea
MOU	Memorandum of Understanding
NMU	National Marine Unit
OCS	Offshore Constitutional Settlement
PM&C	Department of Prime Minister and Cabinet
PSI	Proliferation Security Institute
RAAF	Royal Australian Air Force
RACS	Review into the Australian Customs Service
RAN	Royal Australian Navy
SOPs	Standard Operating Procedures
SUA	Convention for the Suppression of Unlawful Acts against the Safety of Maritime Navigation 1988
UAV	Unmanned Aerial Vehicle
WMD	Weapons of Mass Destruction



## **ABSTRACT**

Customs maritime surveillance history has been influenced by numerous reports that often identified the need for management changes or infrastructure changes. This thesis analyses the evolution of the Australian Customs Services' role in Australia's maritime surveillance and border protection. The analysis framework is built around policy, financial and legal influences and developments.

The thesis recommends implementing a comprehensive harmonized strategy for early detection and effective responses.

This thesis argues that there are only two organisations capable of sustaining an effective maritime surveillance and enforcement capacity and they are the Australian Customs Service (Customs) and the Australian Defence Force (ADF). The suggestion that a single Australian coastguard organisation is another option is analysed in this thesis and discounted. The thesis looks at Customs evolution in maritime surveillance and border protection from pre-Federation to mid 2005 and forecasts some alternatives that could advance maritime surveillance and protection policy.

This thesis is important because competing world priorities, including terrorism *versus* trade, in turn, can lead to rapid policy competition for government funding, which can lead to poor policy choices.

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