



Police Federation
of Australia

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The Secretary
Senate Standing Committee on Legal and
Constitutional Affairs
Parliament House
CANBERRA ACT 2600

**RE: Inquiry into Customs Legislation Amendment (Augmenting
Offshore Powers and Other Measures) Bill 2006**

The Police Federation of Australia (PFA) represents the professional and industrial issues of Australia's 50,000 police and is pleased to make the following brief submission to your Inquiry.

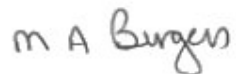
Our key concern when examining the Bill is to ensure that additional powers proposed to be granted to Customs Officers do not encroach on traditional policing functions.

In May 2006 the PFA raised concerns with the Justice Minister in respect to a proposal to provide arms and appointments to Customs Officers. Those concerns were likewise predicated on ensuring that the role of Customs Officers did not creep into the professional domain of policing and that the granting of additional powers or equipment was accompanied by appropriate training and oversight. We would expect that the extension of powers sought in this Bill would likewise be accompanied by such training and oversight.

It is our view that what is proposed in the current Bill before this Inquiry does not impact upon traditional policing functions as Customs Officers have always had powers to stop search and detain and what is proposed appears to be simply an extension of those existing powers.

However the PFA believes the Committee should task itself with monitoring the use of these powers by Customs to ensure that they are used appropriately and that there is not an endeavour to continue to expand them into areas of traditional policing.

Sincerely yours

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "m A Burgess". The signature is written in a cursive, lowercase style.

Mark Burgess
Chief Executive Officer