

OFFICIAL: SENSITIVE

Summary of evidence before the Senate Select Committee on COVID-19

Date: 05 May 2020

Departments and agencies in attendance:

- Department of Home Affairs
- Australian Border Force (ABF)
- Department of Agriculture

Summary:

- **Home Affairs and Agriculture portfolio responses** – Agencies gave the committee an overview of their roles and responsibilities in responding to COVID-19.
 - Agriculture outlined their role as human biosecurity officers at ports, as well as broader responsibilities in biosecurity regulation. Home Affairs discussed their national coordination role (NCM), community protection (through AFP) and “protecting critical infrastructure and systems of national significance from cyberthreats” (ACSC). ABF outlined the implementation of travel restrictions and border control and exemptions from controls.
 - The Committee were particularly interested in understanding the division of responsibility between ABF officers and Agriculture officers.
 - No implications for PM&C.
- **Disembarkation of passengers from the Ruby Princess** – On 19 March some 2,700 passengers from the *Ruby Princess* disembarked in Sydney. According to media reports, the *Ruby Princess* is linked to approximately 700 COVID-19 cases and 21 deaths.
 - Agriculture outlined that their actions were guided by NSW Health advice. ABF outlined that their role is not to clear human biosecurity (mostly focusing on ensuring all passengers have valid visas).
 - PM&C may be asked which agency ‘was or should have been responsible’ for passenger disembarkation. Suggest referring Senators to evidence provided by the Secretary of the Department of Agriculture and the Commissioner of the ABF.
- **COVIDSafe mobile phone application** – Home Affairs discussed its involvement with the development of the COVIDSafe app.
 - On or about 28 March, DTA asked Home Affairs to assist with the development of a prototype as DTA were focused on the coronavirus information app. DHA engaged with AWS off the standing panel; DTA engaged them separately. The app work was handed off to DTA on 2 April. The Committee was also interested in the CLOUD Act and access to data by US authorities. Secretary Pezzullo guaranteed that a US Court would not uphold a warrant seeking access COVIDSafe data.
 - No implications for PM&C.
- **Border closures** – The Committee was interested in why the Government waited to close the borders on 20 March and claimed to be ‘world leading’ when many countries had closed their borders days earlier.
 - Home Affairs noted that the Government’s response was based on medical advice from the AHPPC and decisions were taken collectively by NSC and the National Cabinet.
 - PM&C may be asked to comment on the timing of the various border restrictions.

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- **Source of COVID-19 from Wuhan wet markets** - The Committee was interested in whether the government was certain about the source of COVID-19 and when the Government was first notified.
 - **Agriculture** said that while not definitive, it was “a strong supposition” that it had come from a wet market.
 - **Home Affairs** referred the committee to the CMO’s evidence that he was notified in January, and that “Australia would not resile from calling for a properly constituted inquiry”.
 - No implications for PM&C.

PM&C CONTACT: s 22(1)(a)(ii)

s 22(1)(a)(ii)

s 22(1)(a)(ii)

COVID19 – GOVERNMENT REPONSE

LAW ENFORCEMENT

Proposed/existing measures

- AFP & State police can enforce measures under [Biosecurity Act 2015](#) as well as significant [state powers](#)
 - draft [operational handbook for police agencies](#)
 - Returned travellers: All must self-isolate in designated facilities (hotels etc.). ABF and ADF being used to ensure compliance (not enforcement) – quarantine is a biosecurity issue but BSLEP briefed for **s 34(3)**

s47C, 47E(d)

- HA have established the Supermarkets Taskforce (Tiger Team?) which includes all relevant federal departments and major supermarkets [\(20/03\)](#)
 - The Border Clearances Working Group is a sub-group of the Supermarkets TF
 - The Delivery TF sits under the Supermarkets TF as well

s 34(3)

PROTECTED Cabinet

s47C, 47E(d)

- 24/03 - [PM announced in principal support of measures](#)
- HA MR and TPs in COVID folder - the Customs (Prohibited Exports) Regulations 1958 have been amended with effect from 30 March. The amendments prohibit the export of certain goods by post only.

s47C, 47E(d)

s33(a)(1), 47B

s 47C

Meetings

- MCPEM 20 March

PROTECTED Cabinet

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- NCM Public Safety and Law Enforcement [23 March](#) & [30 March](#) & [6 April](#)

s 47C

Media reporting (including links)


- [VicPol](#) have announced a special TF of 500 police officers to enforce shut down of non-essential venues and businesses
- NSW Police intimated that they are looking into [using people's mobile phone data to ensure compliance with self-isolation](#)
- [AFP deployed to the NT](#) to help manage the NT's borders and biosecurity zones – the AFP is sending 102 police and protective service officers to protect remote and vulnerable communities
- [AFP recruits under investigation](#) for throwing a party at a residential college in Canberra in breach of social distancing rules
 - Some of the recruits now [face expulsion](#)
- [New Daily reports](#) privacy fears as governments use phone data to track coronavirus rule-breakers. PMC mentioned specifically
 - [The app](#) hits the news. It notes that the use of metadata collected by the Telcos under the Telecommunications Data Retention 2015 is a possible next step and that telcos are prepared to make adjustments to data they normally retain, to enable better contact tracing
 - [Barnaby](#) undermining the government's message; however representative of larger public mistrust
- Slippage towards [martial law](#)
- [Global child exploitation](#) ring busted by police. Op Walwa - joint operation involving AFP, S+T police and Joint Anti-Child Exploitation teams. The intelligence had been channelled to the AFP from the US through the ACCCE. Mentions that Kershaw warned of a spike in traffic across the dark web since the COVID-19 outbreak
- Dark web criminal activity also includes the sale fake drugs said to cure COVID-19
- [Sewage](#) could be used to test for coronavirus – note that the ACIC also mentioned that national wastewater could be tested for coronavirus

s 33(a)(i) , s 33(a)(iii)

PROTECTED Cabinet

PROTECTED Cabinet


s 33(a)(i) , s 33(a)(iii)



International developments

- US National Center for Missing and Exploited Children in the United States has shut down; the AFP is working with the eSafety Commissioner to mitigate any impact (particularly given school closures)
- US authorities are cracking down on a rise in scams ranging from cyber-fraudsters using COVID-19-related email phishing to other criminals offering fake treatments. (Cyberscoop The Guardian)

s22(1)(a)(ii)



- s 47E(d) the Philippines Supreme Court is urging the judicial system to release prisoners to mitigate the COVID-19 threat in overcrowded prisons

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BORDER SECURITY

Proposed/existing measures

- 20/03 - Australian border closed to all non-citizens and non-residents (with minor exemptions)
- 25/03 – [All Australians in country banned from travelling overseas](#)
- Norfolk Island and the Indian Ocean Territories (Christmas Island and Cocos (Keeling) Islands) have both declared a state of emergency and imposed travel bans. The travel bans apply to all non-residents and non-essential staff and 14-day isolation requirements apply to all arrivals.

s 47C

- 25/03 Singapore agrees to allow Australian repatriation flights to refuel (but not disembark) and British Airways seeks exemptions to travel ban to allow London-Singapore-Sydney flights to continue
- s47C, 47E(d)
- 14/04 – Border update item: s34(3)
- 17/04 – Federal Court hand down judgment in the Bileola family case (XAD v MICMSMA [2020] FCA 495). The applicant was not afforded procedural fairness.
- s34(3)

Media reporting (including links)

- Asylum seeker advocates are calling for asylum seekers to be placed in the community to stop the potential spread of coronavirus in at-capacity detention centres, particularly while courts shut down and their cases are not being heard (link [here](#)).
- 25/03 [Gladys Berejiklian blamed ABF officials](#) for the Ruby Princess cruise ship “disaster”
- 15/04 media reports that the [Caledonia Sky](#) matter was settled in principle

s33(a)(i)



**THE HON PETER DUTTON MP
MINISTER FOR HOME AFFAIRS**

MEDIA RELEASE

31 March 2020

**AUSTRALIAN GOVERNMENT IMPLEMENTS BORDER CONTROL TO TARGET PROFITEERING
ON EXPORTS OF ESSENTIAL GOODS TO PREVENT THE SPREAD OF COVID-19 IN AUSTRALIA**

The Australian Government's first priority is the safety and welfare of the Australian community.

Following an announcement by the Prime Minister on 24 March 2020, a new temporary measure to restrict individuals from hoarding and profiteering from the export of personal protective equipment and other items needed to help combat the spread of COVID-19 is now in place.

The full list of items covered by the new measure include the following:

- Personal protective equipment in the form of disposable face masks, disposable gloves, disposable gowns, protective eye wear in the form of goggles, glasses or visors, which can be worn by individuals to limit the transmission of organisms; and
- Alcohol wipes and hand sanitizer.

The changes follow an amendment to the Customs (Prohibited Exports) Regulations 1958.

"The Amendment limits the means by which goods essential to preventing the spread of the COVID-19 virus can be exported from Australia," Minister for Home Affairs Peter Dutton said.

"This is a targeted measure to stop exploitative practices and profiteering, while safeguarding legitimate trade."

The Amendment prohibits the export of the listed items by post, however it remains possible to export the goods by courier services or cargo in the following circumstances:

- for personal use by a passenger or crew member in their accompanied personal or household effects;
- by a person to a relative of the person, for the relative's personal use;
- by a humanitarian organisation for non-commercial purposes;
- by an Australian manufacturer of the goods; or

- by a person or business who exported those types of goods in the course of their ordinary business, and is registered for Australian Goods and Services Tax and has an Australian Business Number.

“The exemptions to the export controls ensure that legitimate exporters can continue to trade in goods essential to combatting the pandemic, including commercial trade,” Minister Dutton said.

“These exemptions importantly reflect the Government’s commitment to maintaining an open global trading system and preserving legitimate supply chains to support the response to COVID-19.”

The *Customs (Prohibited Exports) Amendment (COVID-19 Human Biosecurity Emergency) Regulations 2020* takes effect immediately. The Amendment prohibits the export of the goods for the period that the *Biosecurity (Human Biosecurity Emergency) (Human Coronavirus with Pandemic Potential) Declaration 2020* is in force.

The maximum penalty for breaching the Regulations is 1,000 penalty units (or \$210,000).

For further information, contact the: Minister’s Office – s47F

Cleared by	Title	Time/Date cleared
s 22(1)(a)(ii)	Public Affairs Officer, ABF Media	11:00 31 March 2019
s 22(1)(a)(ii)	A/g Director ABF Media and Comms	31 March 2019
Matthew Duckworth	Assistant Secretary, Customs and Border Revenue Branch, Customs Group	31 Month 2019

s 22(1)(a)(ii)

From: s 22(1)(a)(ii)
Sent: Tuesday, 24 March 2020 2:30 PM
To: s 22(1)(a)(ii)
Cc: s 22(1)(a)(ii)
Subject: RE: NCM Public Safety and Law Enforcement [SEC=PROTECTED, CAVEAT=SH:CABINET]

PROTECTED//CABINET

From: s 22(1)(a)(ii) >
Sent: Tuesday, 24 March 2020 12:43 PM
To: s 22(1)(a)(ii)
Cc: s 22(1)(a)(ii) >
Subject: RE: NCM Public Safety and Law Enforcement [SEC=PROTECTED, CAVEAT=SH:CABINET]

PROTECTED//CABINET

H s 22(1) ,

Yep, looks like it – would you like me to try to follow up? I can contact s 22(1)(a) and potentially NCM TF to try to get more detailed minutes?

Let me know!
Kind regards,

s 22(1)(a)(ii) | Adviser
Border Security and Law Enforcement Policy | Home Affairs Branch
National Security Division | Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet
p: s 22(1)(a)(ii)
e: s 22(1)(a)(ii) | w: www.pmc.gov.au
One National Circuit BARTON ACT 2600 | PO Box 6500 CANBERRA ACT 2600

The Department acknowledges the Traditional Custodians of Country throughout Australia and their continuing connection to land, waters and community. We pay our respects to their Cultures, Country and Elders both past and present.

From: s 22(1)(a)(ii)
Sent: Tuesday, 24 March 2020 12:39 PM
To: s 22(1)(a)(ii) >
Cc: s 22(1)(a)(ii)
Subject: FW: NCM Public Safety and Law Enforcement [SEC=PROTECTED, CAVEAT=SH:CABINET]

PROTECTED//CABINET

s47C, 47E(d)

From: Colquhoun, Lachlan <Lachlan.Colquhoun@pmc.gov.au>

Sent: Tuesday, 24 March 2020 8:51 AM

To: Millar, Caroline <Caroline.Millar@pmc.gov.au>

Cc: s 22(1)(a)(ii) Burke, Michael <s 22(1)(a)(ii)>; s 22(1)(a)(ii)

Subject: FW: NCM Public Safety and Law Enforcement [SEC=PROTECTED, CAVEAT=SH:CABINET]

PROTECTED//CABINET

Caroline

s47C, 47E(d)

Lach

From: s 22(1)(a)(ii)

Sent: Monday, 23 March 2020 7:39 PM

To: s 47E(d)

Subject: NCM Public Safety and Law Enforcement [SEC=PROTECTED, CAVEAT=SH:CABINET]

PROTECTED//CABINET

NCM Public Safety and Law Enforcement Outcomes:

s37, 47C, 47E(d)

s37, 47C, 47E(d)

s 22(1)(a)(ii) | Plans and Correspondence
Disaster Preparedness and Response Branch
National Security Division
Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet

+s 22(1)(a)(ii)
s 22(1)(a)(ii)
PO Box 6500 Canberra ACT 2600

s 22(1)(a)(ii)

From: s 22(1)(a)(ii)
Sent: Wednesday, 8 April 2020 2:40 PM
To: s 22(1)(a)(ii)
Cc: s 47E(d)
Subject: RE: VIP corro s45, 47C, 47E(d)
 [SEC=OFFICIAL]
Attachments: Inc s45, 47C, 47E(d) 1-.pdf; s 33(a)(i)
 MC20-053878 Draft reply.docx; 200403 PM letter to states and territories
 .pdf

OFFICIAL

s 22(1)(a)(ii)

Proposed response for Assistant Minister to send s47G attached. Let me know what you think and any additional text you can add by lunchtime tomorrow if possible.

I also intend to reach out to s47F to see if they have any views or updates and we will send a copy to s47E(d) to close the loop.

I think we can get away with not doing a cover brief, but will provide the PM's letter to States and Territories s 33(a)(i) as context, given the text mirrors that.

s 22(1)

s 22(1)(a) | Adviser
 Naval Shipbuilding and Defence Industry | Defence and Intelligence Branch
 National Security Division | Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet
 s 22(1)(a)(ii)

From: s 22(1)(a)(ii)
Sent: Monday, 6 April 2020 12:26 PM
To: s 22(1)(a)(ii)
Cc: s 47E(d)
 ; Fell, Anthea
 < s 22(1)(a)(ii) >; s 22(1)(a)(ii)
Subject: RE: s45, 47C, 47E(d)
 [SEC=OFFICIAL:Sensitive]

OFFICIAL:Sensitive**OFFICIAL:Sensitive**

s 22(1)(a) attached and below email chain. Can you let me know if you think the corro best sits with II&E or NSD?

- Has your team (or s22(1)(a)(ii) replied to s47F
- Has anyone heard any further developments on this issue s 33(a)(i)

s 22(1) FYI as the letter is about s 33(a)(i).

PDMS item is MC20-053878 due with PMO on next Monday 13 April. I've added you to PDMS access for this item. s22(1) suggested it may be one for II&E but DLOs allocated it to us. No other handling advice from the DLOs.

Happy to discuss.

s 22(1)

s 22(1)(a) | Adviser
Naval Shipbuilding and Defence Industry | Defence and Intelligence Branch
National Security Division | Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet
s 22(1)(a)(ii)

From: s 22(1)(a)(ii)
Sent: Tuesday, 31 March 2020 1:17 PM
To: s 22(1)(a)(ii)
Subject: RE: s47C, 47E(d) [SEC=OFFICIAL:Sensitive]

OFFICIAL:Sensitive

s 22(1) we have the VIP corro on this one in Defence branch. Would you be best to take the lead with our support as needed? If so just let me know and we can send your way.

s 22(1)(a)(ii) | Senior Advisor Shipbuilding and Defence Industry
Defence and Intelligence Branch
s 22(1)(a)(ii)

From: s 22(1)(a)(ii)
Sent: Monday, 30 March 2020 1:32 PM
To: s 22(1)(a)(ii) s22(1)(a)(ii)
Subject: RE: Qld Government closure of supply lines s 33(a)(i) [SEC=OFFICIAL:Sensitive]

OFFICIAL:Sensitive

Thanks s 22(1)

My team leads from a defence industry perspective (in consultation with NSD – s 22(1)(a)(ii) cc'd).

This is really an essential vs non-essential question though. I'll defer s22(1) – but happy to make some calls.

s 33(a)(i)

Cheers

s 22(1)

[REDACTED] | Senior Adviser (A/g)

Industry, Innovation, Science and Technology Section | Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet
s 22(1)(a)(ii)

From: s 22(1)(a)(ii)

Sent: Monday, 30 March 2020 1:19 PM

To: Fell, Anthea < s 22(1)(a)(ii) >

Cc: s 22(1)(a)(ii)

Subject: FW: Qld Government closure of supply lines s 33(a)(i) [SEC=OFFICIAL:Sensitive]

OFFICIAL:Sensitive

Hi s22(1)(a)(ii)

Can you or s [REDACTED] get in touch with s22(1)(a)(ii)
22(1)

I haven't got much to say about defence industry,

Cheers

From: Fankhauser, Daniel MR 1 s 22(1)(a)(ii) >

Sent: Sunday, 29 March 2020 2:32 PM

To: s 22(1)(a)(ii) >

Subject: FW: s47C, 47E(d) [SEC=UNCLASSIFIED]

UNCLASSIFIED

Hi s [REDACTED],
22(1)

s22(1) suggested I reach out to you on this issue s47G It would also be good to have a more
detailed chat with you on essential services s 33(a)(i)

Please let me know if you are available to discuss further.

s 22(1)

Dan

Dan Fankhauser

Assistant Secretary – Industry Support Cell
COVID-19 Task Force

Department of Defence

R2-G-Russell Conference Centre Hub | PO Box 7904 | CANBERRA ACT 2610

s 22(1)(a)(ii)

IMPORTANT: This email remains the property of the Department of Defence. Unauthorised communication and dealing with the information in the email may be a serious criminal offence. If you have received this email in error, you are requested to contact the sender and delete the email immediately.

From: s22(1)(a)(ii)
Sent: Sunday, 29 March 2020 2:14 PM
To: Fankhauser, Daniel MR s22(1)(a)(ii)
Subject: s47C, 47E(d) [SEC=UNCLASSIFIED]

s22(1)(a)(ii)

Thanks for the email. Try s 22(1)(a)(ii) or s 22(1)(a)(ii) at pmc.

They can help with restrictions and essential services.

Regards

s22(1)(a)(ii)

Sent from my iPhone

On 29 Mar 2020, at 2:11 pm, Fankhauser, Daniel MR 1 <s 22(1)(a)(ii)> wrote:

UNCLASSIFIED

s22(1)(a)(ii)

I note you are offline leading COVID-19 related tasks at PM&C. s 33(a)(i)

Just wanted to see whether you'd be the right person to discuss s45, 47C, 47E(d), 47G
note the issue has been raised with the PMO and that Home Affairs is also following up.

Regards,

Dan

Dan Fankhauser

Assistant Secretary – Industry Support Cell
COVID-19 Task Force

Department of Defence

R2-G-Russell Conference Centre Hub | PO Box 7904 | CANBERRA ACT 2610

s 22(1)(a)(ii)

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From: Fraser, Tony MR <[REDACTED] s 22(1)(a)(ii) >
Sent: Sunday, 29 March 2020 12:37 PM
To: CASG Division Heads [REDACTED] s 47E(d)
Subject: FW: [REDACTED] s47C, 47E(d)
[REDACTED] EC=UNCLASSIFIED]

UNCLASSIFIED

Team

For awareness of rapidly changing environment

[REDACTED] s47C, 47E(d)

Tony

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[REDACTED] s33(a)(i), 45, 47E(d), 47G

s 22(1)(a)(ii)

From: s 22(1)(a)(ii)
Sent: Tuesday, 31 March 2020 1:23 PM
To: s 22(1)(a)(ii)
Cc: Border Security Policy; s22(1)(a)(ii)
Subject: s47C, 47E(d)
Attachments: s47C, 47E(d)

PROTECTED

Good afternoon s
22(

Yes, s47B, 47C, 47E(d)

I hope that's helpful, and happy to discuss,

s 22(1)(a)(ii)
Director
COVID-19 Task Force
Department of Home Affairs
s 22(1)(a)(ii)
s 22(1)(a)(ii)

PROTECTED

From: s 22(1)(a)(ii) >
Sent: Tuesday, 31 March 2020 11:57 AM
To: s 22(1)(a)(ii)
Cc: s 47E(d)
s47C, 47E(d)

PROTECTED//CABINET

H s22(1)(a)(ii)

Thank you for your time on the phone earlier. As mentioned, we dialled into the Community Safety and Law Enforcement NCM yesterday, s33(a)(i), 47C, 47E(d)

Grateful if you could provide us with any further info on developments in this space, and if possible, a copy of the discussion paper for visibility.

Kind regards,

s 22(1)(a)(ii)

Border Security and Law Enforcement Policy

Home Affairs Branch | National Security Division | Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet

s 22(1)(a)(ii)

w. www.pmc.gov.au

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NCM Public Safety and Law Enforcement 6 April 2020

Outcomes:

- Discussion of possibility of nationally consistent messaging to 'stay home' this Easter. The DPRB branch (PM&C) has subsequently provided existing PM statements/messaging to 'stay home this Easter' that will be circulated to states and territories as a note to the official meeting record.

Notes:

- Possibility of moving the Public Safety and Law Enforcement NCM to a fortnightly meeting raised by HA
- Follow up on action items from last meeting:

s33(a)(i)

- Took on notice a range of different action items on PPE equipment – HA is working

s47B, 47C

s47B, 47C

s33(4), (5), (6)

- Online child exploitation – states and territories rolling out awareness campaigns for parents, teachers and communities
- Profiteering, price gouging and export
 - Exporting essential items offshore (carries 5 year penalty)
 - A Commonwealth taskforce has been formed (including Austrack, ABF and ACIC)
 - compliance checks are being carried outside

s47C, 47E(d)

NCM Public Safety Law Enforcement 30 March 2020:

Outcomes:

s47B, 47C, 47E(d)




Notes:

- Law Enforcement – movement control:
 - Significant work done on this and circulated to all agencies over the weekend
 - Hotel accommodation for people in quarantine
 - ABF assisting

Issues:

s47B, 47C, 47E(d)



s47B, 47C, 47E(d)

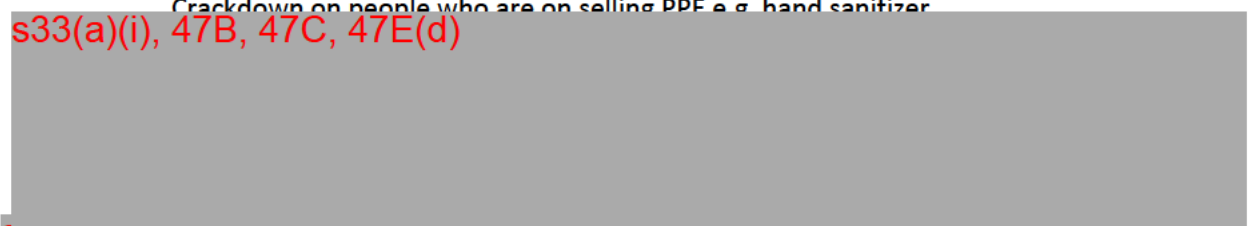


s47B, 47C, 47E(d)



- Increase in cyber crime
- concerns about online activity and online sexual predators
 - Need to increase communication around community online safety
- Fake COVID-19 test kits
- Yesterday GG signed off on a new regulation to allow ABF to redistribute seized PPE being exported– will be able to intercept and redistribute to health networks
- Crackdown on people who are on selling PPE e.g. hand sanitizer

s33(a)(i), 47B, 47C, 47E(d)



s47B, 47C, 47E(d)



s33(a)(i), 47B, 47C, 47E(d)





****Please update the classification of the document if information provided in the background is above FOUO****

TALKING POINTS

Subject	Border controls on exports of essential goods to prevent COVID-19		
Date	30 March 2020		
Type	Ministerial		
Media Officer:	s 22(1)(a)(ii)	Media Ph:	s 22(1)(a)(ii)

ISSUE

Tomorrow (check) the Minister will announce the new temporary measures to restrict individuals from hoarding, non-commercially exporting and profiteering on certain products that are essential to help combat the pandemic, including personal protective equipment and disinfectant products (media release provided separately).

TALKING POINTS UNCLASSIFIED

- The Australian Government's first priority is the safety and welfare of the Australian community.
- As foreshadowed by the Prime Minister on 24 March, the Government is responding promptly to concerns about people hoarding and profiteering on certain products that are essential to combatting the pandemic.
 - This includes cases of people collecting large quantities of protective equipment and disinfectants in Australia to export overseas.
- This is a targeted measure to stop exploitative practices and profiteering, while safeguarding legitimate trade.
- The Amendment limits the means by which goods essential to preventing the spread of the COVID-19 virus can be exported from Australia.
- The following goods are now controlled on export:
 - Personal protective equipment in the form of disposable face masks, disposable gloves, disposable gowns, protective eye wear in the form of goggles, glasses or visors, which can be worn by individuals to limit the transmission of organisms; and
 - Alcohol wipes and hand sanitizer.
- The Amendment prohibits the export of these goods by post absolutely. However, it remains possible to export these goods by other means, such as courier services or cargo, in the following circumstances:
 - for personal use by a passenger or crew member in their accompanied personal or household effects;
 - by a person to a relative of the person, for the relative's personal use

- by a humanitarian organisation for non-commercial purposes;
 - by an Australian manufacturer of the goods; or
 - by a person who exported those types of goods in the course of their ordinary business, and is registered for Australian Goods and Services Tax and has an Australian Business Number.
- The exemptions to the export prohibition ensure that legitimate exporters can continue to trade in goods essential to combatting the pandemic, including commercial trade.

If asked: Has the reported export of valuable equipment led to shortages in Australia?

- Profiteering and hoarding of goods prevents those goods being available for vulnerable members of our community
 - As the PM has said before, this type of behaviour is very disappointing
 - These measures are part of the Government's targeted response to stop these exploitative practices.
 - These measures will not prevent legitimate trade in these goods.
- The Government is taking action to ensure it won't happen again.

If asked: Will the Government be investigating the reports of export of equipment as possible breaches of foreign interference laws?

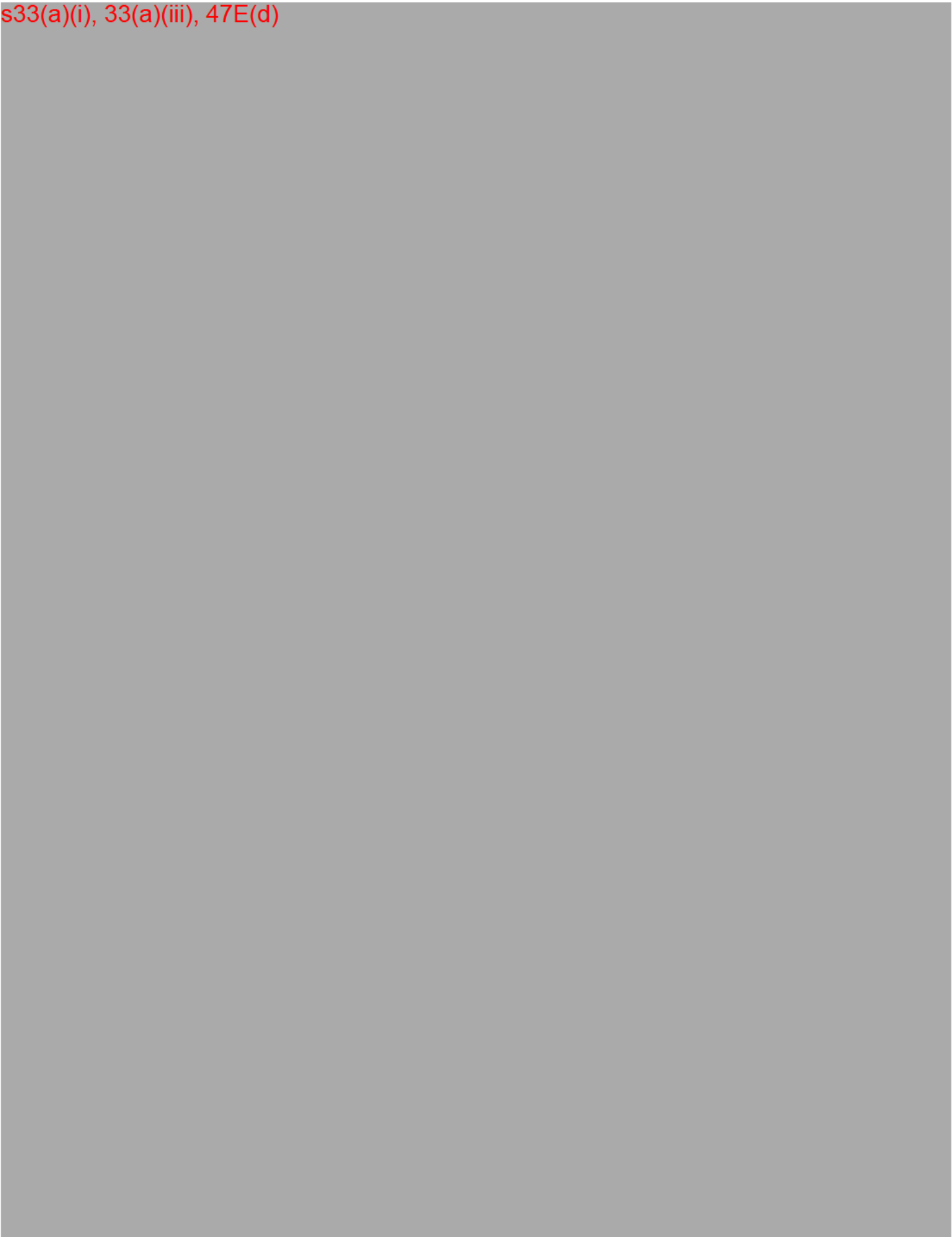
- As per long standing practice, the Government will not provide ongoing commentary on operational matters.

If asked: What is the Government doing about foreign interference?

- The Australian Government has taken significant steps to strengthen Australia's capacity to protect us from foreign interference.
- As the Prime Minister said previously, Australians can be assured that the resources have never been stronger, the laws have never been tougher and the Government has never been more determined to keep Australians free and safe from foreign interference.
- The Prime Minister announced the establishment of a Counter Foreign Interference Taskforce on 2 December 2019, to disrupt and deter anyone attempting to undermine our national interests.
 - The operational taskforce is led by a senior ASIO officer, with representatives from ASIO, the AFP, the Australian Transactions Report and Analysis Centre, the Australian Signals Directorate and the Australian Geospatial Intelligence Organisation all contributing to its work.

BACKGROUND NOT FOR PUBLIC RELEASE

s33(a)(i), 33(a)(iii), 47E(d)



s33(a)(i), 33(a)(iii), 47E(d)

CLEARANCE

Drafted by	Title	Time/Date drafted
Various	Consultation: s47E(d)	Time DD Month 2018

Cleared by	Title	Time/Date cleared
Neil Hawkins	A/S, Countering Foreign Interference	30 March 2020
Matthew Duckworth	A/S, Customs and Border Revenue	30 March 2020
s 22(1)(a)(ii)	A/g Director, Media Coordination	30 March 2020

MO noted	Sent to MO	Noted by MO
Full Name	Time DD Month 2018	Time DD Month 2018