

# From the CEO



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Security is a major concern for Australians and Customs is playing its part in helping to protect Australia's borders. In this issue of *Manifest* we document a number of Customs initiatives that will help improve security and provide a stronger defence against the possibility of harmful goods or unauthorised people crossing our borders.

In particular in this issue of *Manifest* there are accounts of the opening of the first of four container examination facilities. The new facility, located adjacent to the Melbourne port, was opened by the Prime Minister, Mr Howard. In his speech at the opening ceremony, Mr Howard paid tribute to Customs officers "in making our borders and therefore our country, safer and more secure".

In another article in this issue there is an account of the official launching of the Customs Coastwatch real-time satellite communication technology, by the Minister for Justice and Customs, Senator Ellison. The new technology is the first civilian use of such a system and it enables live video pictures to be relayed from a patrolling aircraft direct to the Customs National Surveillance Centre in Canberra.

Customs role in working with our neighbours to provide better border security is highlighted in a major article chronicling a joint Australia-Papua New Guinea cross border patrol. The strategic advantage provided by Australian Customs making its marine and airborne resources available for such patrols is highlighted in the article.

An article detailing Customs role in the aftermath of the tragic Bali bombings provides an emotional account of the human side of Customs officers having to perform essential entry formalities efficiently in the face of such human tragedy. The personal account written by a Customs officer who assisted with the processing of passengers at Perth Airport the night following the bombings in Bali, is a salient reminder of the ongoing impact of such an event.

Other articles in this issue of *Manifest* detail Customs operations in some unusual locations – security measures on board ships and in air cargo points of entry – as well as a review of highlights from the 2001-02 year.