

## Rescue in Southern Ocean

The Customs and Fisheries patrol vessel *Oceanic Viking* rescued a critically ill Portuguese fisherman from the Southern Ocean in late December.

The *Oceanic Viking* was on its inaugural armed patrol of the Australian Exclusive Economic Zone around remote Heard Island and McDonald Islands when it responded to a call from a fishing vessel, the *Arnela*, operating legally in international waters approximately 200 nautical miles south of the Australian fishing zone.

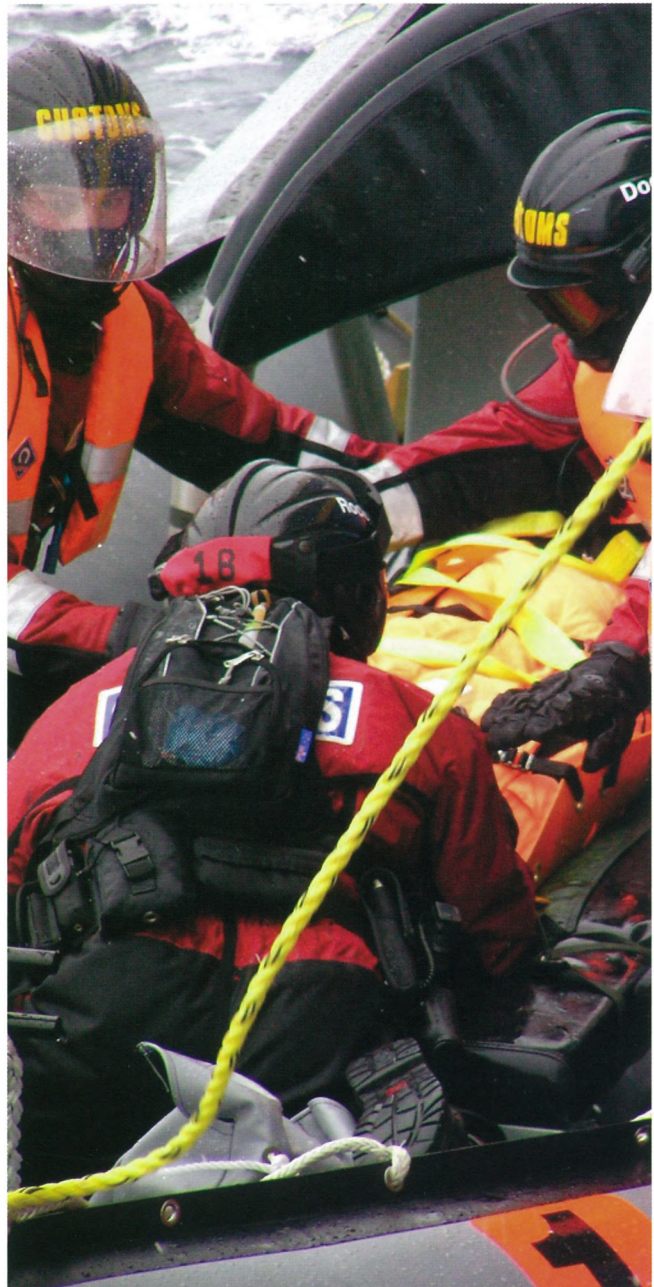
A 46-year-old fisherman had a burst duodenal ulcer with numerous complications.

The master of the *Arnela* notified Spanish authorities of the emergency. They requested assistance from Australian Search and Rescue (AUSAR) in Canberra and the *Oceanic Viking* was notified.

In relatively calm sea conditions, a Customs boarding team, including a paramedic-trained Customs officer, transferred to the *Arnela* to assess and stabilise the man. He was moved to the *Oceanic Viking* using the ship's tender and returned to Fremantle in the care of an Australian Antarctic Division doctor who was on the patrol.

Customs and Fisheries officers and the civilian crew on board the *Oceanic Viking* donated blood to assist in the treatment of the man.

The man was later repatriated to his home country.



top: The Australian Customs medical team transfers the sick man onto the *Oceanic Viking* mid-Southern Ocean

bottom: The ill Portuguese fisherman is lowered from the *Arnela* into a Customs tender for transfer to the *Oceanic Viking*