

2.16 The Deputy of St. Martin of the Minister for Home Affairs regarding the impact of the rift between Customs Officers and the Police upon the amount of successful drugs seizures in 2007:

What steps, if any, has the Minister taken to heal the rift between the customs officers and police which allegedly impacted upon the amount of successful drug users last year and will she assure Members that morale among customs staff is sufficiently high to ensure that our courts shall make an efficient barrier to drug importers?

Senator W. Kinnard (The Minister for Home Affairs):

Yesterday, I met Customs and Immigration staff and this was a valuable opportunity to brief them and have a full and frank discussion. Talk of rifts is overstating the issue. Customs and Police continue to work co-operatively in the Joint Financial Crimes Unit, together at the port on importations, and of importations of pornography which might indicate paedophile activity, *et cetera*. This co-operative working did indeed carry on throughout the period of the criminal investigation. Having said that, it is true that relations have been strained by the investigation principally for those members of the J.I.B. (Joint Intelligence Bureau). The relationship is not one that will be repaired easily overnight and steps are being taken to improve matters.