

Major events: all in a day's work



Inspecting cargo at the air show (left to right) are Rebecca Goss and Eva Kutka, of Customs, and Fiona Ostoja of Schenker, the logistics provider company

By Rebecca Goss

Jet fumes, engine oil and the roar and screech of planes and tyres. The stuff of petrol heads but all in a day's work for the Customs Events Officer and Temporary Imports team in Melbourne. March was a particularly busy month with the Australian Formula One grand prix and the Australian International Airshow at Avalon Airport both requiring Customs time and attention in terms of cargo clearance.

Under an international convention, Customs grants temporary duty-free admission to goods imported for use at approved events. As part of this process, Customs works closely with the event organisers, appointed freight forwarders and other stakeholders such as Australian Quarantine and Inspection Service to ensure international events such as the grand prix run smoothly while also complying with Customs legislation and regulations.

To do this, Customs grants 'event status' to the organisers, inspects cargo and import/export documentation and organises the streamlining of cargo-clearance procedures.

Fun aspects to the job include inspecting the famous grand prix cars themselves (and nearly losing one's hearing in the process), walking pit lane, climbing into the bellies of Antonov aircraft and examining everything from aircraft models to dummy weapons management systems.

Through all this, Customs deals with many professional and hardworking people whose passion and commitment to their respective events is evident. Customs plays a small but essential part in ensuring the Australian community can attend and enjoy these wonderful events.