

Plan to Replace Customs Patrol Vessels for Customs Administration, Ministry of Finance

I. Plan Purpose

According to Article 6 of the Customs Anti-smuggling Act, “the enforcement of suppressing smuggling shall be conducted at the commercial ports of the Republic of China, in the waters within 24 nautical miles from shore and in the areas or places where as otherwise provided in this Act or other laws.” Customs patrol vessels are necessary tools for Customs to execute the task of sea patrolling in accordance with the law.

The establishment of the Coastal Guard Administration set its scope of investigation mainly in non-commercial ports, while Customs was mainly responsible for the investigation of commercial ports including harbor anchorages and nearby waters.

The current deployment of patrol vessels are as follows: four in Keelung Customs, one in Taichung Customs, and three in Kaohsiung Customs. All have reached the end of their service lifetime. To strengthen offshore law enforcement, the seven-year project expects to build four 100-ton patrol vessels, 1 of which will be allocated to Keelung Customs, 1 to Taichung Customs, and 2 to Kaohsiung Customs. The new vessels will improve the efficiency of sea patrolling and reduce on-duty risks.

II. Implementation Content

- A. Determine the requirements, design, and specifications of patrol vessels.
- B. Conduct the public bidding and contract signing for the planning, design and supervision of four 100-ton patrol vessels.
- C. Conduct the public bidding and contract signing of construction and completion of four 100-ton patrol vessels.
- D. Conduct testing of four 100-ton patrol vessels and deliver to the service.

III. Expected Result

A. Improve investigative performance

There are many rivers and fishing ports near the commercial ports in Taiwan. In recent seizure cases, smugglers anchor foreign vessels and use fishing boats and rafts to unload the smuggled goods.

Using high speed patrol vessels to check or pursue suspicious ships, which will improve the efficiency of investigation by sea.

B. Improve on-duty safety

The replacement of old patrol vessels in a timely manner can reduce the number of navigational incidents arising from issues such as aging of the hull structure or mechanical failure, and can effectively improve the on-duty safety of Customs officials.

C. Reduce budget spending

New patrol vessels would only require basic maintenance every year. Furthermore, new engines are designed for low fuel consumption, and parts are easily available on markets. Both fuel and maintenance costs can be significantly reduced every year.

D. Protect marine ecology and resources

Coastal countries are increasingly aware of the importance of protection of the marine environment, and it is forbidden for seafaring vessels to discharge pollutants in their waters.

As a hub of East Asian shipping routes, there are many foreign vessels sailing in Taiwan's waters. In order to prevent them from discharging pollutants, high-speed patrol vessels are involved in law enforcement to ensure the sustainable development of marine resources.

E. Enhance the image of our country

Taiwan has signed a Customs Mutual Assistance Agreement or Memorandum of Understanding on Cooperation with many countries. When Customs officials visit from various countries, sea patrol is one of the focus of their observations.

The use of modern and efficient patrol vessels is an important tool for upholding the image of our country and earning the respect of international friends.