

**From: The World Today**

## **Shift in focus to maritime security**

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**Reporter: Julia Limb interviews Paul Trebilcock**

HAMISH ROBERTSON: From Iraq, to potential threats at home. Yesterday a conference on the level of terrorist threat to Australia's sea ports heard that the Indonesian Islamic terrorist group Jemaah Islamiah is interested in acquiring maritime strike capabilities, and that a number of our ports are especially vulnerable to any such attack.

Well, today the same conference which is being held in Sydney heard a more optimistic view that Australia's ports are well on the way to being secure from terrorist threat.

Julia Limb reports.

JULIA LIMB: In just three months Australia's ports must have completed risk assessments and implemented security measures to avert terrorist threats. Unlike many experts, risk assessment consultant Paul Trebilcock told a maritime security conference in Sydney today that most ports will in fact meet that deadline.

And he says many of our ports are already in good shape.

PAUL TREBILCOCK: I believe they are very secure at the moment, particularly as a result of the new IMO requirements and the work that's being done both in major ports and regionally.

JULIA LIMB: Have we seen a real increase in the level of security in the lead up to the changes to legislation?

PAUL TREBILCOCK: Yes, absolutely, I mean we've got the 1 July deadline that's coming up but admittedly there will be some of the regional ports, I believe, that will have some difficulties meeting their deadline in terms of the capital expenditure that will be required for them to implement appropriate measures.

JULIA LIMB: And in the cities, the problems are made more complex because many ports are in the centre of busy and highly populated areas.

PAUL TREBILCOCK: I'll give you an example of the overseas passenger terminal

in Sydney and the difficulties of securing something like that in close proximity to Circular Quay, and the tourist precinct.

JULIA LIMB: And how do you deal with those sorts of problems?

PAUL TREBILCOCK: I think the key is to stakeholder input during the whole process, and to gain their feedback as part of a consultative approach, is the best way.

JULIA LIMB: Paul Trebilcock says training people working at the ports is the key to greater security, but that must be combined with the introduction of new technology.

Much of that new technology is coming from the United States, and Douglas Brown is hoping that his company's newly developed systems for detecting terrorist threats in cargo containers will be used here.

He says the technology is an extension of what was originally developed for airline security in the late 1960s and is now being implemented around the world.

DOUGLAS BROWN: For smuggling you were looking for definitive shapes, now you're looking for terrorist threats that may not have a shape. In response to that there have been a series of technologies developed that will automatically detect concealed weapons of mass destruction, explosives, chemical threats, things of that nature. And those technologies are now getting traction in the community.

HAMISH ROBERTSON: Cargo security expert Douglas Brown.