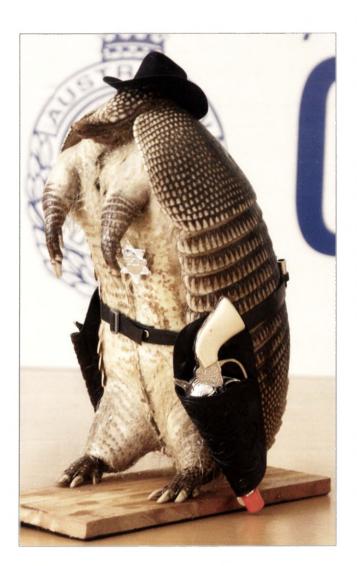
GUN-TOTING ARMADILLO REFUSED ENTRY



Customs officers seized a unique item of wildlife which breached both the laws of good taste and international wildlife protection.

While screening international air cargo in Sydney, Customs officers found the unique item in a package from Texas, USA, destined for an Adelaide address.

The stuffed armadillo was complete with toy pistols, cowboy hat and sheriff's badge.

While bad taste should have been enough of a reason not to attempt to bring the armadillo into the country, it is also illegal to import the item without a permit.

Customs Regional Director for South Australia Virginia Lynch said, "Armadillos are a protected species listed under the Convention for the International Trade of Endangered Species (CITES). Australia supports the convention".

CITES protects over 30,000 species of animals and plants worldwide.

In this case the item was being imported as a gift. Customs seized the armadillo and issued a warning to the addressee.

The import and export of wildlife into and out of Australia is regulated under the Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999.