

**HOME AFFAIRS PORTFOLIO
AUSTRALIAN BORDER FORCE**

PARLIAMENTARY INQUIRY WRITTEN QUESTION ON NOTICE

Select Committee COVID-19

QoN Number: CV19-367

Subject: Evacuation of Australians from Wuhan and the Diamond Princess - ABF

Asked by: Kristina Keneally

Question:

Please provide a detailed explanation of the measures take to evacuate Australians from Wuhan and the Diamond Princess, and your agency's role. Please include the following information:

- a) How many Australians were evacuated and placed in quarantine in each facility?
- b) What were the total costs to Government for the evacuation?
 - i. What was the cost to your agency for the evacuation?
- c) Please provide a detailed outline of the legislative framework/Act used to implement quarantine for these evacuations, and your agency's involvement in implementing quarantine.
- d) Please provide any details of cooperation with States/Territories to implement these evacuations and quarantine by your agency.
 - i. Please include details of any contracts / costs that your agency commissioned the State / Territory to deliver.
- e) Please indicate which agency was responsible for the following – and your agency's relationship / work with these agencies on these topics:
 - i. Managing repatriation flights
 - ii. Managing quarantine facilities
 - iii. Managing the public health aspects of quarantine
- f) Please provide a list of any private contractors, consultants or service providers that were used by your agency to facilitate the evacuation and quarantine of these Australians. Please include the following information:
 - i. Nature of the service being provided

- ii. Value of the contract
- iii. Name of the private contractors, consultants or service provider
- iv. Date the contract between the private contractor, consultant or service provider was signed

Answer:

- a. 710 Australians were evacuated
 - 278 entered North West Point Quarantine Facility
 - 430 entered Howard Springs Quarantine Facility
 - Two passengers from Wuhan transited Learmonth to Perth then Melbourne and did not enter North West Point Quarantine Facility.
- b. The total cost of the evacuation to the Department was \$4.3 million
 - The ABF cannot comment on the costs to other agencies or the Government overall.
- c. Overall, ABF and Home Affairs Legal Division provided support to ensure the implementation of biosecurity legislative instruments, which was led by Department of Health and Department of Agriculture, Water and the Environment.
 - 3 February 2020 - legislative instrument issued by Chief Medical Officer (CMO) Brendan Murphy determining a human health response zone at North West Point and Royal Australian Air Force Base Learmonth under subsection 113(1) of the Biosecurity Act 2015.
 - 7 February 2020 - legislative instrument issued by CMO Brendan Murphy determining a human health response zone at Howard Springs under subsection 113(1) of the Biosecurity Act 2015.
- d. Christmas Island:
 - 29 January 2020 ABF Commissioner contacted Christmas Island (CI) Mayor, 30 January 2020 ABF Op Commander liaised with CI Administrator and 31 January 2020 a fact sheet was distributed to the CI community.
 - Forward Commander worked closely with CI Administrator each day.

Howard Springs:

- The Department as part of a WoG response liaised with NT Government to obtain permission to use the Howard Springs facility. On the 10 February 2020 and 24 February 2020, fact sheets were provided to the Howard Springs community coinciding with the arrival of evacuee flights.
- Joint quarantine and repatriation meetings with NT Police and NT Health on a daily basis.
- i. The Department of Home Affairs was invoiced by Northern Territory Government an amount of \$1.2 million for the use of the Howard Springs Quarantine Facility.
- e. The ABF played a coordination role across the Commonwealth agencies and with States/Territories to deliver operational outcomes involving incident response, repatriation and border processes.
 - Managing repatriation flights:
 - i. The ABF actively supported the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT) as the operational lead for the assisted departure of Australians from Wuhan, China and from the Diamond Princess cruise ship in Japan.
 - ii. ABF officers were positioned on all repatriation flights to undertake immigration and customs clearance formalities prior to arrival in Australia.
 - Managing quarantine facilities: Broadspectrum was engaged at Howard Springs. Defence managed the support services to the North West Point Quarantine Facility. Facilities maintenance carried out by Defence.
 - i. State and Territory Health agencies in conjunction with the relevant State or Territory authorities: NT Health
 - Managing the public health aspects of quarantine: AUSMAT on CI, NT Health at Howard Springs.

- f. Neither the Department of Home Affairs nor the Australian Border Force entered into any agreements with private contractors or service providers for the purposes of repatriation and/or quarantine of Australians returning from Wuhan and the Diamond Princess Cruise ship.

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PARLIAMENTARY INQUIRY WRITTEN QUESTION ON NOTICE

Select Committee COVID-19

QoN Number: CV19-372

Subject: Citizens and Residents - Returned to Australia

Asked by: Kristina Keneally

Question:

Please provide monthly data for the number of Australian citizens and permanent residents who have departed Australia from 1 April 2020 to 25 September after receiving an exemption from the Australian Border Force and have returned to Australia.

a. Please provide this data on a monthly basis if possible

Answer:

Table A includes **departures** of Australian citizens and permanent residents during the period of 1 April 2020 to 25 September 2020. This data excludes departures by sea and crew.

Table A:

Traveller Category	April	May	June	July	August	September	Total
Australian citizens	4673	6303	8309	13437	15298	10630	58650
Permanent residents	1199	1611	1982	3189	3963	3244	15188
Total	5872	7914	10291	16626	19261	13874	73838

Table B includes **arrivals** of Australian citizens and permanent residents during the period of 1 April 2020 to 25 September 2020. This data excludes arrivals by sea.

Table B:

Traveller Category	April	May	June	July	August	September	Total
Australian citizens	16185	12340	15133	11834	9756	8267	73515
Permanent residents	3612	3872	5232	2930	2458	2309	20422
Total	19806	16212	20365	14764	12214	10576	93937

It is not possible to provide data on the number of Australian citizens and permanent residents who have departed Australia after receiving an exemption, and have returned. Collating an accurate answer to this question would involve an unreasonable diversion of resources.