

**JOINT SELECT COMMITTEE ON AUSTRALIA'S
IMMIGRATION DETENTION NETWORK**

Q290

Question: In terms of that processing, do you have an estimate of cost? How much might that save the taxpayer?

Answer: The department has modelled that the Bridging Visa E process will be less expensive for the taxpayer, both initially and in the longer term, when compared to alternative forms of detention. The forecast lower cost relates to Bridging Visa E holders not being held in high security detention facilities. The medical and mental health costs of people being held in long term detention may also be expected to reduce as the length of detention time decreases. Additionally, Bridging Visa E holders have the opportunity to sustain themselves and become self sufficient through work rights which will reduce their dependence on other forms of assistance.

While there are strong evidence based reasons to support the assumption that costs will be lower for clients on Bridging Visa E, the implementation of the movement of clients into the community is a new program for DIAC. Following a period of full operation of the new arrangements, and after the program numbers stabilise, we will have sufficient program data to undertake a detailed calculation of a cost savings comparison to other forms of IMA care and management.