

**QUESTION TAKEN ON NOTICE – LEGAL AND CONSTITUTIONAL AFFAIRS
REFERENCES COMMITTEE**

**INQUIRY INTO AUSTRALIA'S AGREEMENT WITH MALAYSIA IN RELATION TO
ASYLUM SEEKERS: 23 SEPTEMBER 2011**

IMMIGRATION AND CITIZENSHIP PORTFOLIO

(QON 27)

Senator Cash asked (in writing):

[Regarding costs – return of failed asylum seekers] I refer the Department to the statement by the Government that it has committed to pay to the UNHCR the sum of \$76 million over 4 years to support the up to 800 asylum seekers. What is this \$76 million for? Is it for building another UNHCR health clinic? Is for building another school? Is it for employing teachers?

Answer:

The total funding of \$75.928 million over four years was included in the 2011-12 Budget for the transfer of up to 800 Irregular Maritime Arrivals (IMAs) to Malaysia.

The funding announced in the 2011-12 Budget was for a range of activities which included funding for the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR).

The funding allocation of \$75.928 million was based on estimated costs covering:

- Expenses associated with the Department's staffing and supplier costs to support the implementation of the arrangement. The estimate reported in the DIAC 2011-12 Portfolio Budget Statements page 18 totals \$10.247 million; and
- Expenses associated with the provision of support and maintenance of IMAs in Malaysia through various partner bodies, such as the International Organization for Migration (IOM) and UNHCR. There are also expenses associated with resettlement and return/reintegration services following the UNHCR refugee assessment processes. The estimate reported in the DIAC 2011-12 Portfolio Budget Statements on page 17 totals \$65.681 million.

DIAC has not at this stage allocated or committed funding to UNHCR for any specific building project or the employment of teaching staff.

The final detailed costs of the program will depend on the number of IMAs sent to Malaysia, the mix of families, singles and minors and any special individual requirements. If there was a change in the estimated costs of the program, adjustments would be made via an estimates update at the tabling of the 2011-12 Portfolio Additional Estimate Statements.