

QUESTION TAKEN ON NOTICE

ADDITIONAL ESTIMATES HEARING : 23 February 2015

IMMIGRATION AND BORDER PROTECTION PORTFOLIO

**(AE15/028) - Checks for working with Children in Detention - Programme 3.1
Compliance, Detention and Status Resolution (Administered)**

Senator Hanson-Young, Sarah (L&CA 56) asked:

Senator HANSON-YOUNG: Given the serious nature of the allegations that have been raised over recent months, has there been any review of staff and their relevant working with children checks?

Mr Painting: There are reviews regularly.

Senator HANSON-YOUNG: But you cannot tell me whether everybody there has them.

Mr Painting: It is something we would have to take on notice for sure. I think that is the case, but to give you an absolute guarantee right here—

Senator HANSON-YOUNG: When was the last time that you asked for a guarantee from your contractors that that was the case?

Mr Painting: I would have to take that on notice.

Answer:

Service providers are required under their contract to ensure that all Australian based personnel have a current working with children check (WWCC) or equivalent certificate from an Australian jurisdiction. All service provider staff are required to have completed an Australian Federal Police check or, in the case of any Papua New Guinea or Nauru locally engaged personnel, similar check or certificate.

The portfolio conducts regular reviews as part of the contract auditing and quality assurance activities.

In January 2014, the portfolio received confirmation as part of a review from service providers that all staff who were required to hold a WWCC or equivalent did so.

The most recent review of service provider personnel WWCC was initiated by the department on:

- 1 February 2015 for Save the Children Australia (SCA); and
- 24 February 2015 for Transfield Services (Australia) (TSL).

The TSL review is ongoing and is expected to be completed by 31 March 2015. This review will cover all current TSL personnel.

The review of WWCC for SCA personnel is complete. It identified that all personnel hold current WWCCs unless:

- personnel reside in a State, Territory or country where WWCCs are not required under legislation, including locally engaged personnel. These personnel have undergone a police check;
- exempt such as personnel that hold a teachers' registration which is inclusive of a WWCC and therefore not required to hold a separate WWCC licence;
- personnel are employed in a position that does not interface with children.