

QUESTION TAKEN ON NOTICE

BUDGET ESTIMATES – 26 – 27 MAY 2014

IMMIGRATION AND BORDER PROTECTION PORTFOLIO

**(BE14/301) PROGRAMME – 3.3 and 3.4: Illegal Maritime Arrival (IMA)
Onshore Management**

Senator Carr (Written) asked:

What are the details surrounding Australia's 'positive voluntary removal program'?
What does this program involve? How does it work?
What are the costs associated with running this program?

Answer:

The International Organization for Migration (IOM) works in partnership with the Australian Government to provide returns services to those non-citizens who want to voluntarily return from the Australian mainland and Christmas Island but require assistance to do so. These services consist of Assisted Voluntary Return (AVR), Reintegration Assistance (RA) and Post Arrival Reintegration Assistance (PARA), for those leaving from detention.

The IOM does not facilitate involuntary returns of IMA clients. Assistance available to IMA clients returning from the Australian mainland, including Christmas Island:

- plane ticket
- reception assistance in the country of return
- travel assistance to final destination
- reintegration assistance.

Assistance available to IMAs who choose to return from detention on the Australian mainland and Christmas Island are able to access PARA and this is delivered in the form of RA. This comprises of cash and in-kind assistance up to USD 4 000 for Afghan returnees and USD 3 300 for all other returnees. The maximum cash allowance provided is up to 49 per cent of the total package that is, USD 1 960 for Afghan returnees and USD 1 617 for all others.

IOM staff and office costs for provision of AVR and RA onshore services at 31 May 2014 was \$1.7m.