

QUESTION TAKEN ON NOTICE

SUPPLEMENTARY BUDGET ESTIMATES – 20 OCTOBER 2014

IMMIGRATION AND BORDER PROTECTION PORTFOLIO

(SE14/116) PROGRAMME – Australian Customs and Border Protection Service

Senator Carr (Written) asked:

What questions do ACBPS officers ask of arrivals suspected of carrying Ebola?

Answer:

Australian Customs and Border Protection Service (ACBPS) officers question all relevant travellers to establish whether they may have arrived into Australia from an Ebola affected country. Questions asked relate to the travellers' itinerary within the previous 21 days. All Entry Control modules have been stocked with aids, including maps of Africa with Ebola countries highlighted, to assist with communication with travellers who do not speak English.

The introduction of the Travel History Card (THC) on 14 November 2014, which will be available in a further 11 different languages by 28 November 2014, assists and informs this process. The THC specifically requires an answer to the question:

“Have you been in Africa in the past 21 days?”

Where the answer is “Yes”, the traveller must then identify the country visited on the THC.

The THC is then assessed by ACBPS officers at the Entry Control Point during initial border clearance processing, and travellers who have visited an Ebola risk country within 21 days are referred direct from that point for secondary health screening by officers of the Department of Agriculture.