

QUESTION TAKEN ON NOTICE

SUPPLEMENTARY BUDGET ESTIMATES – 20 OCTOBER 2014

IMMIGRATION AND BORDER PROTECTION PORTFOLIO

(SE14/180) PROGRAMME – Internal Product

Senator Rhiannon (Written) asked:

Are you aware of any new allegations of mistreatment of asylum seekers from Sri Lanka that have been sent back to Sri Lanka.

- a. If so can you detail these allegations?
- b. How did you come to hear about them?
- c. When were you first notified about the allegations?
- d. When did you first tell DFAT about these allegations?
- e. Where are your investigations up to?
- f. What has the Australian Government done in an attempt to substantiate these claims?
- g. Has any representative of the Australian government spoken with any of the complainants?

Answer:

Yes.

- a. The department is aware of four further allegations in relation to three people (bringing the total to eight allegations).
- b. The information was passed to the Department of Immigration and Border Protection (DIBP) by third parties.
- c. We were notified about the first of the more recent allegations in June 2013. We were notified of subsequent allegations in September 2013, November 2013 and February 2014.
- d. DIBP informed DFAT of the first of the more recent allegations in June 2013. DIBP informed DFAT of the other allegations in September 2014.
- e. The allegations have been followed up by Australian authorities in Colombo and found to be unsubstantiated.
- f. DIBP has followed up allegations of mistreatment with Australian authorities in Colombo for their investigation. Where appropriate, and provided that no unfavourable attention is drawn upon the complainant, Australian embassy staff in Colombo will contact returnees and investigate allegations of mistreatment. DFAT are also notified of the outcome of any investigation.
- g. Yes.