

## QUESTION TAKEN ON NOTICE

### SUPPLEMENTARY BUDGET ESTIMATES – 27 NOVEMBER 2014

#### IMMIGRATION AND BORDER PROTECTION PORTFOLIO

#### (SE14/399) PROGRAMME – 3.1 and 3.2: Compliance Detention and Status Resolution

Senator Carr (Written) asked:

Can the Government please outline in more detail the ‘new measures’ that will enable children to be released from detention on bridging visas?

How are these new measures different from the previous Labor government measures?

How will the new measures ‘protect and support’ young children in the community?

How will these new measures save taxpayers \$50 million?

Over what time frame will the \$50 million savings occur?

*Answer:*

The enhanced support arrangements for families with children aged 10 and under have been developed as a step-down model. The step-down includes:

1. up to 12 weeks of transitional accommodation and intensive case worker support to give families with young children more support to secure independent accommodation of their own and register with essential services on grant of a Bridging E visa (BVE) from immigration detention, followed by
2. up to 12 weeks of intensive case worker support to assist families once they are in independent accommodation with orientation support, followed by
3. general ongoing support (except in exceptional circumstances where intensive case worker support is still required).

This differs from the standard service delivery model for BVE holders, which is:

1. up to six weeks of transitional accommodation and intensive case worker support, followed by
2. either intensive case worker support (on an exceptional basis) or general ongoing support.

The aim is to make a greater investment in support during the transitional period to help families with children to identify and address issues of concern to reduce the risks of homelessness and destitution. Further, service providers are required to ensure the transitional accommodation used is of a standard appropriate for families with young children.

## **Other enhanced supports**

### **Emergency Accommodation extended support**

In addition, the enhanced support arrangements adjust the settings for emergency accommodation. Emergency accommodation is separate to the transitional accommodation that is delivered on exit from immigration detention. The purpose of emergency accommodation is to manage issues of homelessness when they arise. That is, when a family who has been in the programme for some time (and is no longer in transitional accommodation) faces homelessness. Emergency accommodation is already a feature of the programme. The difference is an extension of eligibility from two weeks to up to six weeks. This extension recognises the difficulties families experience in securing suitable, sustainable accommodation and reduces the stress associated with finding accommodation within short timeframes.

### **Additional orientation support**

The enhanced support package has clearly articulated a requirement that service providers ensure families with children are able to access additional orientation support on:

- parenting in Australia
- managing family conflict, and
- child protection and domestic violence legislation.

Further, it clearly outlines a requirement that where service providers identify issues of concern, they must re-refer service recipients to these courses for additional support. As was the case previously, service providers must report concerns to relevant authorities (e.g. Child Protection) and report incidents.

### **Transport**

The enhanced support package includes some funding for transport assistance, to be delivered on a needs basis to promote participation and address issues of isolation. Transport assistance focuses on helping children to travel to school and will help adults meet the transport costs associated with attending English classes.

### **English language tuition**

The department is currently working with the Department of Industry to improve English language tuition for families with young children. Currently adult BVE holders have access to 45 hours of English-as-a-second-language (ESL) tuition.

### **Savings**

These arrangements are estimated to deliver a saving to taxpayers of more than \$50 million over the forward estimates by no longer having to meet the higher costs of held and community detention.