

QUESTION TAKEN ON NOTICE

ADDITIONAL ESTIMATES HEARING: 13 February 2005

IMMIGRATION AND MULTICULTURAL AFFAIRS PORTFOLIO

(37) Output 1.3: Enforcement of Immigration Law

Senator Nettle (L&C 62) asked:

Do you know the difference in cost between holding someone in an immigration detention facility and a residence determination? Can you provide a figure for how much DIMA has paid to agencies assisting with residence determinations?

Answer:

The legislative requirements and practical arrangements for a residence determination do not require “holding” of the person concerned.

As such, the two situations are not directly comparable. They relate to very different forms of immigration detention for cases with different requirements.

Holding people in immigration detention facilities requires a level of security to ensure that they are “held”. Also, there are costs in relation to ensuring that facilities are operational and that detention capacity is available regardless of how many detainees reside there at any given time. For 2004-05, \$75M was paid under the contract to the service provider for managing immigration detention facilities.

In relation to residence determinations, people under these arrangements may move about the community without being accompanied or restrained, but must reside at a specified address subject to reporting and other conditions set to meet their individual circumstances. The Department works with non-government organisations (NGOs) to make sure that clients in residence determination arrangements are properly supported. The Department funds NGOs to source and pay for housing, allow payment of the clients’ bills and other living expenses, provide case officer support and arrange appropriate medical care. The costs associated with each client will vary depending on many factors, such as the number of persons in each household or family and their particular care needs. Invoices received covering July 2005 (when residence determination arrangements were first introduced) to end-January 2006 total \$676,000.