

QUESTION TAKEN ON NOTICE

ADDITIONAL ESTIMATES HEARING: 13 February 2006

IMMIGRATION AND MULTICULTURAL AFFAIRS PORTFOLIO

(87) Output 2.1: Settlement Services

Senator Hurley asked:

According to DIMA annual report p.176, proposers of these entrants are also eligible for proposer support.

- What is the level of proposer support that exists at the moment considering that under the SGP refugees are expected to deal with migration agents to propose for their relatives?

Answer:

The proposer's role is to assist in the settlement of the entrant they have proposed. This includes:

- meeting the entrant at the airport;
- providing accommodation for the entrant on arrival;
- assisting the entrant to find permanent accommodation; and
- providing information and orientation assistance to the entrant, including assistance to access services.

However, many proposers are themselves recently arrived humanitarian entrants and may not be in a position to provide all necessary support to their entrants.

Integrated Humanitarian Settlement Strategy (IHSS) service providers assess the capacity of proposers to support their entrants. The assessment identifies what support needs to be provided to proposers to assist them to help their entrants and limitations in supporting their entrants and as a result, what IHSS services the entrants may need.

According to assessed need, service providers make available to proposers information and guidance on:

- issues proposers may face in assisting entrants to settle;
- realistic expectations in relation to assisting entrants; and
- how proposers can assist entrants to access services, eg income support, Medicare, English language tuition through the AMEP, financial services, budgeting advice, community services, housing, childcare and immigration advice.

In addition, where necessary, service providers work intensively with proposers and their entrants to assist entrants to access services.

The objective of the support offered under IHSS is to help proposers assist their entrants after

the entrants have arrived in Australia. IHSS is not intended to assist Australian citizens or permanent residents to propose visa applicants and therefore does not cover provision of migration advice by migration agents.

Proposers who are themselves humanitarian entrants, who arrived in the last five years and who are proposing family members can receive assistance from migration agents working with organisations funded under the Settlement Grants Program (SGP).

In 2004-05, 7,838 Special Humanitarian Entrants were assisted under IHSS.