

QUESTION TAKEN ON NOTICE

ADDITIONAL BUDGET ESTIMATES HEARING: 19 FEBRUARY 2008

IMMIGRATION AND CITIZENSHIP PORTFOLIO

(67) Output 1.2: Refugee and Humanitarian Entry and Stay

Senator Ellison asked:

Has any cuts or changes to the administrative costs of intergovernmental consultations been made? (The IGC currently comprises 15 participating states in Western Europe, North America and Australasia, The European Commission (EC), International Organization for Migration (IOM) and the Office of the United Nations High Commission for Refugees.)

Answer:

No.

Portfolio Additional Estimates Statements, February 2008, under Administered Appropriation for Outcome 1 includes a budget estimate 2007-2008 of \$134,000 and a revised estimate 2007-08 of \$134,000 for the Secretariat for Intergovernmental consultations on asylum, refugee and migration policies – membership contribution.

The Secretariat, based in Geneva, is currently funded by an annual contribution of CHF120,000 paid by all participating states. This amount was agreed by all participating states in late 2004. The European Commission (EC), International Organization for Migration (IOM) and the Office of the United Nations High Commission for Refugees do not pay a contribution.

This estimate has not varied since *Portfolio Budget Statements 2005-2006* (May 2005). As the contribution has to be paid in Swiss Francs (not Australian dollars) the estimate has to cover potential fluctuations in currency exchange rates. The actual amount paid in 2007 – as stated in the DIAC Annual Report - was AUD127,632.