

QUESTION TAKEN ON NOTICE

ADDITIONAL BUDGET ESTIMATES HEARING: 9 FEBRUARY 2010

IMMIGRATION AND CITIZENSHIP PORTFOLIO

(125) Program 3.1: Border Management

Senator Humphries asked:

- (1) How much of the Department's interviews of unauthorised arrivals and protection visa applicants both onshore and at offshore places, constitute "intelligence" gathering and analysis?
- (2) What happens to that information?
- (3) What sort of information is gathered?

Answer:

- (1) Departmental interviews are primarily to establish a client's claims for protection, identity and reasons for travel to Australia. They are not intelligence interviews but information provided at interview may be of assistance in the intelligence effort against people smuggling. If other agencies need to interview a client for 'intelligence purposes' then officers of those agencies will conduct the interviews.
- (2) Information provided at departmental interviews can be accessed by a range of agencies involved in whole-of-government efforts to prevent people smuggling, including intelligence, border control, health, security and law enforcement agencies.
- (3) Information sought by the Department in its interviews include the client's identity, where they have lived, why they left their country of citizenship or habitual residence, arrangements for their travel to Australia, the route used to travel to Australia, contacts in Australia and membership of any political, social or religious group.