

QUESTION TAKEN ON NOTICE

ADDITIONAL BUDGET ESTIMATES HEARING: 21 FEBRUARY 2011

IMMIGRATION AND CITIZENSHIP PORTFOLIO

(106) Program 2.1: Refugee and Humanitarian Assistance

Senator Hanson-Young asked:

How many people currently awaiting the outcome of their PV applications have already been assessed by the UNHCR?

Answer:

The Department does not maintain records on the overall number of Protection visa applicants who have been “assessed” by the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR).

A departmental officer asks all arrivals seeking protection whether they have had contact with UNHCR.

Where an applicant informs the Department that they have been registered by the UNHCR, or mandated as a refugee, the Department contacts the UNHCR office in Canberra to request further details. Information about assessments carried out by the UNHCR is noted on the applicant’s file.

To produce a report on the number of Protection visa applicants who have been assessed by the UNHCR would involve manually extracting data from each individual applicant’s file. Collation of this data would be a substantial and unreasonable diversion of departmental resources.