

QUESTION TAKEN ON NOTICE

ADDITIONAL BUDGET ESTIMATES HEARINGS: 21 FEBRUARY 2011

IMMIGRATION AND CITIZENSHIP PORTFOLIO

(123) Program 2.1: Refugee and Humanitarian Assistance

Senator Cash asked:

On what date was the Department made aware that there was a problem with the number of accredited interpreters on Christmas Island, and that asylum seekers were being assigned interpreters who do not speak their language? Please provide statistics relating to the number of appeals that have arisen as a direct result of this issue?

Answer:

The Department of Immigration and Citizenship maintains sufficient interpreters at all times to manage operational requirements.

No client is assigned an interpreter who does not speak their language. The Department is not aware of any appeals under the Independent Merits Review process on the grounds that interpreters did not speak a client's language.