

QUESTION TAKEN ON NOTICE

ADDITIONAL BUDGET ESTIMATES HEARINGS: 21 FEBRUARY 2011

IMMIGRATION AND CITIZENSHIP PORTFOLIO

(223) Program 4.2: Onshore Detention Network

Senator Cash asked:

- 1) When did the government decide to utilise the air force base at Scherger to house asylum seekers?
- 2) How much has it cost to make that facility useable as a short term detention centre?
- 3) When was work begun to make the facility ready?
- 4) When were contracts signed?
- 5) Who are the contracts with?
- 6) When did the department begin discussions with the contractor about the work that was required?

Answer:

- (1) Minister Bowen announced on 17 September 2010 that Scherger would be used for immigration purposes.
- (2) As at 1 March 2011, the cost is \$1.65 million for the set-up of ICT Services, fencing, temporary structures, external lighting, furniture and equipment.
- (3) Work began on 14 October 2010 to erect secure fencing. Minor work followed to provide ICT services, external lighting, installation of marquees on site for prayer rooms and recreation purposes, and other temporary structures.
- (4) No contracts were let directly by DIAC for the immediate preparation of the facility. The Department of Defence assisted with the preparation by using their contractors. DIAC reimbursed Defence for the works. Contracts were directly let by DIAC for the leasing of marquees on 20 October 2010 and for external lighting on 22 November 2010.
- (5) Current agreements directly let by DIAC are with:
 1. Weipa Hire
 2. PDL Toll
 3. Inglis Electrical
- (6) There were no direct discussions held with contractors for the initial preparation because this was facilitated by the Department of Defence.