

QUESTION TAKEN ON NOTICE

ADDITIONAL BUDGET ESTIMATES HEARINGS: 21 FEBRUARY 2011

IMMIGRATION AND CITIZENSHIP PORTFOLIO

(231) Program 4.2: Onshore Detention Network

Senator Cash asked:

- 1) How many external trips “excursions” are made by clients from Australia’s metropolitan immigration detention facilities each year?
- 2) How are clients supervised on these trips?
- 3) What measures are put in place to prevent escapes during these trips?
- 4) What are the locations that have been used for these excursions (aquarium, bowling alleys)? What risk assessments are made of these locations before undertaking such excursions? How is security of the locations assessed and what risk assessment is undertaken on the clients before arranging such excursions?
- 5) Are these excursions provided for only those clients under assessment or are they also provided to those who have had claims rejected and awaiting removal?
- 6) What are the costs involved in admission fees, etc for those excursions? Is there a budget for these types of expenses incurred and what is the total annual expenditure on these excursions?

Answer:

- 1) In the period 1 July 2010 to 4 February 2011 there were 18 745 structured programs/excursions across the network. This includes escorts to schools as well as recreational excursions.
- 2) The level of supervision on escorted trips varies depending on the circumstances of the clients and the particular excursion.
- 3) An operational order is put in place for every excursion. Each operational order is unique and takes into account a client’s circumstances very carefully. In making a decision on what supervision arrangements would be appropriate for an excursion Serco must;
 - undertake a risk assessment;
 - consider current security and flight risk assessments;
 - consider advice of medical professionals who may be treating the client in immigration detention;
 - determine the number and gender of drivers and escorts required for each escort task;

- develop an operation plan considering the needs and well-being of the clients in immigration detention, integration with other service providers, and contingency situations and related risks;
- take reasonable measures to ensure that clients in immigration detention are not placed in situations that threaten their personal safety or security;
- monitor and manage at all times the behaviour of clients in immigration detention to ensure their well-being and safety is maintained.

4) Some examples of the locations that have been approved for excursions are: swimming centres, parklands with BBQ facilities, beach/fishing areas, scenic lookouts, soccer and volleyball facilities, bowling centres, aquariums, golf courses, museums and film cinemas.

A risk assessment must be undertaken before an excursion can be approved. The risk assessments for locations identify line of sight, exit points, the locality of nearby public transport and other factors that may facilitate abscondments.

Each client in immigration detention also has their own security risk assessment which is regularly reviewed. A client's current risk rating, as well as the site assessment, is considered before an excursion is approved.

5) All clients in immigration detention are able to apply for, or be offered the opportunity to participate in, an excursion outside of their normal immigration detention arrangement no matter whether they are on a migration or removal pathway.

6) It is not possible to disaggregate the cost of excursions as Serco cover this cost from the detention services contract fees.