

## QUESTION TAKEN ON NOTICE

### ADDITIONAL BUDGET ESTIMATES HEARING: 13 FEBRUARY 2012

#### IMMIGRATION AND CITIZENSHIP PORTFOLIO

#### **(AE12/0305) Program 1.1: Visa and Migration**

Senator Cash asked:

With reference to an article in the West Australian Newspaper dated November 26<sup>th</sup> 2011, please outline the steps undertaken during the investigation. What was the outcome of the investigation? Did the investigation find that workers were being paid in Euros? Did the investigation find that workers were being brought in on incorrect visas? What did the investigation show in relation to the wages received by these workers as compared to Australian industry rates of pay? Was there a report into this matter? If so, provide a copy to the Committee.

*Answer:*

The Department's investigation involved determining the location of the Highland Navigator vessel and crew, monitoring their movements and visa status and referring information relating to employment conditions to the Fair Work Ombudsman (FWO).

The Department contacted the Migration Agent (MA) acting for Allseas Global (Allseas), a shipping company contracted by Chevron to install offshore pipelines for the Gorgon natural gas project. The MA provided information about the Highland Navigator crew's occupations, job descriptions and shifts. The MA also provided details about the location of the vessel. The evidence provided by the MA supported Allseas's claim that the workers were on the appropriate visas as they were not undertaking work in the migration zone or any work undertaken in the migration zone was very short term and of a highly specialised nature, consistent with the conditions of their visas.

The Department also interviewed four crew members of the Highland Navigator upon arrival at Perth Airport in November 2011. No breaches of migration law were identified and no further compliance action was undertaken. The Department has not prepared a report on this matter.

During the airport interviews in November 2011, the Department was advised that the salaries of the crew interviewed ranged from 50 000 Euros to 95 000 British pounds. The Department does not have any further wage details. Information on all known overseas crew on the Highland Navigator was referred to the FWO for their consideration about employment conditions. The Department understands that the FWO is conducting an investigation into this matter.