

QUESTION TAKEN ON NOTICE

ADDITIONAL ESTIMATES HEARING: 13 FEBRUARY 2012

IMMIGRATION AND CITIZENSHIP PORTFOLIO

(AE12/0376) Program 4.3: Offshore Asylum Seeker Management

Senator Cash asked:

Leonora: Why are these asylum seekers not going to the public school in Leonora when both the state and federal government have spent money to expand its capacity? How much has been spent?

Answer:

In late 2011, the Western Australian Government advised that it would not provide asylum seekers accommodated at the Leonora Alternative Place of Detention (APOD) with access to education at the local public school in 2012.

On that basis, the department has been working with its detention services providers to investigate alternative options and ensure the unaccompanied minors residing at the facility have access to an education program that is in line with community standards.

The department has also continued to work with the Western Australian Government, and as at 13 March 2012 has brokered an agreement for a limited number of younger clients to attend the local school from Term 2.

In terms of costs, the Western Australian Government was funded by the Commonwealth for the provision of education services to minors residing at the Leonora APOD throughout 2011. All invoices received from the Western Australian Government for the 2011 calendar year have been paid by the Commonwealth.

In 2011, \$1.8 million was paid to the Western Australian Government for provision of education services. (This does not include costs for capital works for classroom facilities or teacher accommodation.)