

QUESTION TAKEN ON NOTICE

ADDITIONAL ESTIMATES HEARING: 13 FEBRUARY 2012

IMMIGRATION AND CITIZENSHIP PORTFOLIO

(AE12/0413) Program 4.3: Offshore Asylum Seeker Management

Senator Wright asked:

In February 2011, the Government allocated \$107.7 million over four years to support the new process for determination of refugee status for “offshore entry persons”. How has this funding been allocated – i.e. who received it and what programs were funded by it?

Answer:

In response to the High Court decision in November 2010 that confirmed the availability of judicial review for offshore entry persons, a measure was announced in the 2011-12 Budget which provided \$107.7 million over four years to assist in the implementation of changes to the refugee determination process for irregular maritime arrivals necessitated by this decision. The measure “Refugee Status Determination for Offshore Entry Persons” provided:

- \$26.1 million over two years to the Department of Immigration and Citizenship for internal and external legal expenses associated with anticipated judicial reviews of refugee status determinations;
- \$73.4 million over two years to the Department of Immigration and Citizenship for the Independent Protection Assessment Office to expedite the processing of refugee status applications under the Protection Obligation Determination process which has been developed in response to the High Court decision; and
- \$8.2 million over four years to the Federal Magistrates Court for two additional Federal Magistrates and their support staff to assist with the increased workloads as a result of this decision.