

QUESTION TAKEN ON NOTICE

ADDITIONAL ESTIMATES HEARING: 13 FEBRUARY 2012

IMMIGRATION AND CITIZENSHIP PORTFOLIO

(AE12/0439) Program 5.1: Settlement Services for Migrants and Refugees

Senator Michaelia Cash asked:

At the October Senate estimates, Dr Southern spoke about improvements in providing information about tenant's rights. What has been done to address this?

Answer:

The Humanitarian Settlement Services (HSS) program that commenced in April 2011 contains a number of enhancements, including a new onshore orientation program. The objective of the orientation program was not to simply provide information to clients, but to build their skills and competencies in the initial settlement period. Clients cannot be exited from the HSS until they have displayed these competencies.

The onshore orientation program has a module specifically devoted to renting and tenancy issues. This module facilitates training on tenancy rights and responsibilities, such as the paying of rent and bond, property condition reports, home maintenance and the general responsibilities of both landlords and tenants.