

QUESTION TAKEN ON NOTICE

ADDITIONAL ESTIMATES HEARING: 13 FEBRUARY 2012

IMMIGRATION AND CITIZENSHIP PORTFOLIO

(AE12/0441) Program 5.1: Settlement Services for Migrants and Refugees

Senator Michaelia Cash asked:

Richmond Review of HSS: At page 6 of the Richmond Review, it is stated: "Overall the Review has concluded that DIAC's management and oversight of HSS is adequate but there are significant gaps including in areas such as Quality Assurance and Risk Management. HSS, however, is a program under stress." What is the Department's response to this view?

Answer:

Implementing the Richmond Review's recommendations provides a useful opportunity to further safeguard the Humanitarian Settlement Services (HSS) program against the ongoing challenges associated with successful settlement, including changes in cohorts and greater client complexity.

We are focused on achieving sustainable, systemic enhancements to the program to ensure the department continues to meet its obligations to clients. In particular, as recommended by Mr Richmond, we are developing a risk management framework to assess and mitigate client risk, taking into account provider capability and performance and location specific issues. We are also revising the quality assurance framework to enhance controls, such as client contact visits, to assess provider performance and enable the department to have a real time quality focus.

These frameworks will ensure a stronger risk-based approach to the delivery of quality services to HSS clients. It is anticipated that these frameworks will be completed within the first half of 2012.