

QUESTION TAKEN ON NOTICE

ADDITIONAL ESTIMATES HEARING: 13 FEBRUARY 2012

IMMIGRATION AND CITIZENSHIP PORTFOLIO

(AE12/0443) Program 5.1: Settlement Services for Migrants and Refugees

Senator Cash asked:

Richmond Review of HSS: At Page 10 of the Report, Embedded Program Risks it is stated: Overall the Review's major concern for future management and achievement of HSS or similar objectives is the cumulative impact of the current Irregular Maritime Arrival surges with their associated cohort changes. These changes are already embedded in the pipeline from detention to community for at least the next 18 months. At the level of day to day operations each surge requires a process which expedites placement but which provides the time and capacity to ensure a sound and effective referral and placement which facilitates client wellbeing. (a) What stock requirements for community housing have been identified for the next 18 months and beyond? (b) Please provide a list of these properties, by state and postcode. (c) Are HSS clients and community detention persons competing for the same housing? (d) Is there a priority or hierarchy of access? (e) Do HSS clients or community detention person get priority? (f) Are they sharing accommodation? (g) What is the process for identifying and securing a property? (h) Who undertakes this role?

Answer:

- (a) The department has no information from service providers indicating their stock requirements. Humanitarian Settlement Services (HSS) accommodation requirements are in response to client arrival numbers and these fluctuate regularly. The timing of visa grants is another factor that determines accommodation requirements.
- (b) Where possible, clients are placed by HSS service providers in locations where they have community links. When placing clients, factors such as proximity to medical and schooling facilities and public transport are taken into consideration, as well as availability of accommodation.
- (c) The department is not aware of any instances of direct competition between HSS and community detention (CD) service providers over the same housing.
- (d) Refer to the response above (c).
- (e) Refer to the response above (c).
- (f) HSS clients may temporarily share accommodation with CD clients when a CD client is granted a visa and is in the process of transitioning into HSS-sourced accommodation, or when not all members of a family have been granted a visa and the department approves they remain in the CD property until the remaining family members' circumstances have been resolved.
- (g) Accommodation is sourced that provides value for money, reflects market rates, meets any relevant State and Territory legislated requirements and meets all relevant requirements for accommodation as detailed in the HSS contracts and HSS Policy and Procedures Manual.
- (h) The HSS service providers.