

## **QUESTION TAKEN ON NOTICE**

### **ADDITIONAL ESTIMATES HEARING: 13 FEBRUARY 2012**

#### **IMMIGRATION AND CITIZENSHIP PORTFOLIO**

#### **(AE12/0452) Program 5.1: Settlement Services for Migrants and Refugees**

Senator Cash asked:

At page 25, the Richmond Report identified that “Premature client exit from a range of HSS program activities particularly in relation to specific cohorts is a problem”. What has been done to prevent these cohorts from exiting HSS programs? What happens to them if they exit early? Have any other groups been identified that are exiting HSS programs early? If so what are they?

*Answer:*

No specific groups have been identified as exiting the Humanitarian Settlement Services (HSS) program prior to meeting the program’s objectives. While individuals choose, from time to time to leave the program, a number of procedures have been put in place to safeguard them.

Where a client exits HSS early, the service provider needs to make reasonable efforts to encourage the client to engage with support services.

The service provider is required to conduct a pre-exit interview, to consider and document the client’s circumstances, such as:

- the length of time the client has been in Australia;
- whether all essential registrations have been actioned;
- whether the client understands the HSS support available to them;
- whether the client is residing in short-term or long-term accommodation;
- whether the client has a health undertaking or health needs;
- whether the Orientation Program or parts of it have been completed;
- whether any links have been established with friends, other service providers or community groups;
- the level of involvement of the client with the local community;
- the client’s level of English proficiency; and
- the client’s reasons for exiting the program.

Service providers must conduct a follow-up interview with clients approximately one month after the pre-exit interview. The service provider will consider whether the client is coping independently, and no longer requires settlement assistance. Clients who are not able to demonstrate that they have achieved the required settlement outcomes are offered additional support through the Settlement Grants Program and other settlement support programs.