

QUESTION TAKEN ON NOTICE

BUDGET ESTIMATES HEARING: 22 May 2006

IMMIGRATION AND MULTICULTURAL AFFAIRS PORTFOLIO

(235) Output 1.3: Enforcement of Immigration Law

Senator Nettle asked:

1. Last estimates you informed us that no one on a residence determination had absconded. Is this still the case?
2. How many residence determinations have been made?
3. Is the residence determination program considered a success?
4. How much has the residence determination program cost to date?
5. Is there any plan to expand the program?
6. If the program was expanded would it result in savings to have fewer people in immigration detention and more living in the community under a 'determination'?
7. Provide a comparison of average costs per day for detention and residence determinations in the community?

Answer:

1. Yes.
2. During the period July 2005 to March 2006, 119 people have been placed in residence determination arrangements.
3. The Department has been working with non-government organisations to ensure that when a person is placed in residence determination arrangements in the community, they are properly supported. While it is envisaged that the Department will undertake a formal evaluation of the program, indications are that client needs are being met by the current program.
4. To date, as at 27 June 2006, the residence determination program has cost some \$2.079m, which comprises payments to relevant NGOs and departmental administrative cost.
5. There are no current plans to expand the program.
- 6.-7. The legislative requirements and practical arrangements for a residence determination do not require "holding" the person concerned. As such the two situations are not directly comparable. They relate to very different forms of immigration detention for cases with different requirements.

Holding people in immigration detention facilities requires a level of security to ensure that they are "held". Also, there are costs in relation to ensuring that facilities are operational and that detention capacity is available regardless of how many detainees

reside there at any given time. For 2004-05, \$75M was paid under the contract to the service provider for managing immigration detention facilities.

In relation to residence determinations, people under these arrangements may move about the community without being accompanied or restrained, but must reside at a specified address subject to reporting and other conditions set to meet their individual circumstances. The Department works with non-government organisations (NGOs) to make sure those clients in residence determination arrangements are properly supported. The Department funds NGOs to source and pay for housing, allow payment of clients' bills and other living expenses, provide case officer support and arrange appropriate medical care. The costs associated with each client will vary depending on factors, such as the number of persons in each household or family and their particular needs.