

QUESTION TAKEN ON NOTICE

BUDGET ESTIMATES HEARING: 28 MAY 2009

IMMIGRATION AND CITIZENSHIP PORTFOLIO

(37) Program 4.3 - Offshore Asylum Seeker Management

Senator Fierravanti-Wells (L&CA 45) asked:

How many of the unauthorised arrivals since August last year who presented without documentation have been released into the Australian community, either on some form of visa or into community detention arrangements? Do we have a figure for those? I think you said it was almost all of them, so give me the figure.

Answer:

As outlined in evidence provided to the committee by Mr Correll and Mr Frew on 28 May 2009, the Department does not maintain data on clients who have documents on arrival. Where clients may have held documents on arrival, Mr Correll outlined that it is the exception for unauthorised boat arrivals to have documents.

As at 21 May 2009, of the unauthorised boat arrivals who have arrived since August 2008, 150 had been granted visas and 31 were in community detention arrangements while processing of their cases continued.

All those granted visas have been assessed against mandatory public interest criteria which include health, identity and security checks, which have been conducted since the 1994 reforms to the *Migration Act 1958*.