

## QUESTION TAKEN ON NOTICE

### BUDGET ESTIMATES HEARING: 27 – 28 May 2009

#### IMMIGRATION AND CITIZENSHIP PORTFOLIO

##### **(64) Program : MRT-RRT**

Senator Hanson-Young asked:

##### Source country of refugee claim appeals

(1) Is it still the case that the People's Republic of China still produces the largest number of appeals to the RRT?

(2) Is this trending up or down?

(3) Are there any particular common themes in these appeals - e.g. Falun Gong practitioners?

(4) Is the main issue for such claims a dispute about the severity or reality of persecution of Falun Gong practitioners; or is there a general acceptance that Falun Gong practitioners are at real risk of serious persecution and the main cause of dispute is the credibility of a person's claim to be a practitioner?

*Answer:*

(1) The largest number of applications for review received by the Refugee Review Tribunal (RRT) is from nationals of the People's Republic of China (PRC).

(2) The number of review applications received from PRC nationals to 31 May 2009 has increased by 50 applications during 2008-09, compared with the previous financial year figure.

A table below provides an overview of lodgements from PRC nationals during the last four financial years.

<b>Refugee Review Tribunal</b>	<b>2008-09*</b>	<b>2007-08</b>	<b>2006-07</b>	<b>2005-06</b>
China (PRC)	940	890	1,081	1,035

\*As at 31 May 2009

(3) The most common Refugee Convention grounds claimed by PRC nationals are: religion, political opinion and membership of a particular social group. A large number of applicants claim persecution arising out of adherence to Christianity or Falun Gong.

(4) The RRT recognises that genuine Falun Gong practitioners are at risk of persecution in China. Credibility issues arise in many reviews in which PRC nationals claim that they are Falun Gong practitioners.