

QUESTION TAKEN ON NOTICE

BUDGET ESTIMATES HEARING: 24 MAY 2011

IMMIGRATION AND CITIZENSHIP PORTFOLIO

(BE11/0518) Program 4.3: Offshore Asylum Seeker Management

Senator Cash (L&CA 106) asked:

In relation to the cost of running Scherger, what is the anticipated cost till the end of June 2011 and what is the budget for the next financial year?

Answer:

It is anticipated that the operational costs for the Scherger facility for the 2010-11 financial year will be \$50 million. This figure will be confirmed once the Department's financial statements have been finalised and signed off by the Australian National Audit Office.

It is anticipated that in the 2011-12 financial year Scherger will only be operational for six months as it is due to be returned to the Department of Defence in December 2011. The current estimated running costs of this facility for the six months are approximately \$30 million, with an average occupancy of 417 clients at the centre during that period. This expense estimate could vary depending on dynamic factors such as the number of clients, the mix of the client caseload, specific client needs, processing times and any change to operational requirements that may be necessary.