

QUESTION TAKEN ON NOTICE

BUDGET ESTIMATES HEARINGS: 24 MAY 2011

IMMIGRATION AND CITIZENSHIP PORTFOLIO

(BE11/0596) Program 4.3: Offshore Asylum Seeker Management

Senator Cash asked:

I refer to the answer given to QoN 205 from the February Additional Estimates, which states that the Melbourne Immigration Transit Accommodation Centre houses 124 male detainees. Of that 124, 58 are 17 years of age, compared to five 15 year olds, and one 19 year old, and two 20 year olds.

What processes and procedures does the department use to verify the ages of detainees?

Answer:

Where it is not clear whether a client is over or under 18 years of age, the Department seeks to establish this by taking into account a range of information, including information provided in client interviews, any documents or reports a client might provide, advice from family members and so on. Checking of claims is undertaken in accordance with the Department's obligations under the *Privacy Act 1988*. The Department also works with clients to locate any documentation which may be relevant to establishing their identity.