

QUESTION TAKEN ON NOTICE

BUDGET ESTIMATES HEARING: 23-24 MAY 2011

IMMIGRATION AND CITIZENSHIP PORTFOLIO

(BE11/0645) Program 4.3: Offshore Asylum Seeker Management

Senator Cash asked:

With reference to the statement by an Immigration Department spokeswoman reported in the West Australian newspaper on 16 May 2011, where she stated "from time to time" asylum seekers who had not completed their full health checks for diseases such as TB were taken to the mainland": How many asylum seekers have been transferred to the mainland who have not completed their full health checks for diseases such as TB?

Answer:

Fourteen clients have been transferred to the mainland without chest x-ray results. These 14 clients displayed no signs or symptoms of active TB, and had completed all other aspects of their health checks.

The decision to move these clients was made following the March 2011 incident on Christmas Island, where extraordinary client movements were required to respond to acute accommodation shortages on Christmas Island.