

QUESTION TAKEN ON NOTICE

BUDGET ESTIMATES HEARINGS: 24 MAY 2011

IMMIGRATION AND CITIZENSHIP PORTFOLIO

(BE11/0710) Program 4.3: Offshore Asylum Seeker Management

Senator Cash (L&CA 74) asked:

In relation to the Christmas Island disturbance, there was a media report at the time that departmental officers were following a group of the detainees around, offering them food and a ride back to the centre. Is that true?

Answer:

Departmental staff did not play any formal role in providing food or drink to the escapees or transporting them back to the facility. Australian Federal Police and Serco officers performed this role. However, on several occasions, departmental staff who were driving to work were approached by clients who sought assistance to return to the centre, and this assistance was provided.