

QUESTION TAKEN ON NOTICE

BUDGET ESTIMATES HEARINGS: 21-22 MAY 2012

IMMIGRATION AND CITIZENSHIP PORTFOLIO

(BE12/0024) Program: Internal Product

Senator Furner (L&CA 28) asked:

What are the individual costs of the parliamentary and agency inquiries that DIAC has responded to - at this time of 2011-12 - in relation to the AHRC, the Ombudsman, the Information Commissioner, Comcare and parliamentary inquiries and joint committees on Australia's immigration and detention network. Include the resources involved, staffing (categories, hours of work, expenditure) and those sorts of areas.

Answer:

The very detailed information sought is not readily available in consolidated form and it would be a major task to collect and assemble it. The considerable resources required to collate the information cannot be justified.

However, the recent Joint Select Committee (JSC) Inquiry into Australia's Immigration Detention Network provides an example of the considerable departmental resources involved in responding to parliamentary inquiries.

For this inquiry, the Department prepared over 4,000 pages of written material in support of committee hearings and terms of reference. We also lodged a comprehensive written submission including five issues papers. In addition:

- The Committee asked 1,310 questions of the Department over nine hearings.
- The Department has responded to 306 Questions on Notice.
- 26 departmental witnesses have attended hearings to respond to the Committee's questions.
- The Department also facilitated hearings for the Committee across the department's detention network. This has included hearings and/or visits to Christmas Island; Curtin; Darwin; Sydney and other detention facilities around Australia.