

QUESTION TAKEN ON NOTICE

BUDGET ESTIMATES HEARING: 21-22 MAY 2012

IMMIGRATION AND CITIZENSHIP PORTFOLIO

(BE12/0455) Program 4.3: Offshore Asylum Seeker Management

Senator Cash asked:

New single assessment regime: Has the department prepared plans for the closure of detention centres? If so, which ones will be closed and when? How many detention places will the department keep open for new arrivals? At what projected cost? Isn't this an admission that the government's policy is now to accept unlawful arrivals as a permanent part of the migration program?

Answer:

The immigration detention network is used to manage risks to the community for a variety of client groups, including some unauthorised air arrivals, people who overstay their visas or breach visa conditions, illegal foreign fishers and irregular maritime arrivals.

At this time the capacity of the immigration detention network is appropriate for current and anticipated needs and there are no plans to close any immigration detention facilities. Accommodation capacity is continuously monitored and adjustments will be made as required.

The estimate for the 2012-13 financial year for the care and management of Irregular Maritime Arrivals (IMA), as shown on page 57 of the 2012-13 Portfolio Budget Statements, is \$1 003 million, including depreciation of \$28.256 million for which the department does not receive funding. This estimate is based on detailed, complex financial models. The estimate of costs to manage immigration facilities utilised for IMAs are a component of these complex models.