

QUESTION TAKEN ON NOTICE

BUDGET ESTIMATES HEARING: 27-28 May 2013

IMMIGRATION AND CITIZENSHIP PORTFOLIO

(BE13/0048) PROGRAM – 2.1 Refugee and Humanitarian Assistance

Senator Furner (L&CA 89) asked:

Senator FURNER: Right. The refugee and humanitarian passage program includes among its objectives the medical screening of eligible applicants under the offshore humanitarian program, and the portfolio budget statement details that the health screening program covers the full costs of medical examinations, airfares and related expenses. What are those related expenses provided for?

Mr Bowles: I do not know, to be honest. You have got me at a level of detail that I have not quite got in my head.

Senator FURNER: We will put that one on notice, then.

Answer:

Related expenses refers to the cost of services specified in section 1.2 of Attachment A1 ('Services') of the Assisted Passage Agreement. These may include, but are not limited to:

- negotiating with overseas governments to facilitate the movement of refugees as agreed to by DIAC;
- arranging appropriate interpreters where necessary;
- supplying route officers and escorts where appropriate and as agreed to by DIAC;
- receiving visa applications for forwarding to posts;
- undertaking character clearances of Refugee and Special Humanitarian Program visa applicants which may involve police checks and other suitable forms of character clearance; and
- assisting the Australian overseas mission with form filling in relation to refugee visa applications.