

**QUESTION TAKEN ON NOTICE**

**BUDGET ESTIMATES HEARING: 27-28 May 2013**

**IMMIGRATION AND CITIZENSHIP PORTFOLIO**

**(BE13/0175) PROGRAM – 4.1: Visa Compliance and Status Resolution**

Senator Cash (L&CA 101) asked:

Senator CASH: The information that I had been given was that the escape from Scherger by the seven Vietnamese nationals occurred at approximately five am on the Thursday morning and the Queensland police, either at Cairns or Weipa, were not informed until three pm, some 10 hours later.

Mr Cahill: I would have to check the timing. It would relate to the timing of the identification notification and when we told the AFP and in what order. I will take that on notice.

*Answer:*

On Thursday 23 May 2013, a head count of all clients held at Scherger IDC was completed shortly before 5 am. All clients were present and accounted for.

Following the regular lunch time welfare (face to photo) check, the location of the seven clients could not be established and they were presumed to have escaped. The officer in charge of Weipa police station was advised of this at 3 pm, immediately after completion of a further check of all clients at Scherger IDC.