

QUESTION TAKEN ON NOTICE

BUDGET ESTIMATES HEARING: 27-28 May 2013

IMMIGRATION AND CITIZENSHIP PORTFOLIO

(BE13/0180) PROGRAM – 4.2: Onshore Detention Network

Senator Cash (L&CA 106) asked:

Senator CASH: That is okay. In terms of the current capacity, is the activity program on CI still being maintained?

Mr Cahill: It has been upscaled and increased commensurate with the increased numbers we have there recently. So we are in the process of being proactive in ensuring that access to programs and activities is made available to all clients in detention, regardless of population size. So we have been increasing those programs, and we have agreed to the deployment of an additional 21 program and activity officers by the service provider.

Senator CASH: And they will be flown from the mainland up to CI?

Mr Cahill: It is up to the service provider how they are actually bringing them to bear.

Senator CASH: Was the service provider given additional funding for those 21 activity officers?

Mr Douglas: We have agreed for them to employ another 21 people. In time they will invoice us for the costs of those additional workers.

Senator CASH: Okay. What period of time are they given to employ the additional 21 activity officers? Twelve months?

Mr Douglas: We need to take that on notice. Usually it is for a month or three months at a time, pending further information. We would obviously keep a close eye on the population on Christmas Island. If the number decreased then we would seek to terminate that arrangement.

Answer:

The level of programs and activities provided on Christmas Island is adjusted to meet client demand. Should there no longer be a requirement for the additional programs and activities officers then this arrangement will cease.