

QUESTION TAKEN ON NOTICE

BUDGET ESTIMATES HEARING: 27-28 May 2013

IMMIGRATION AND CITIZENSHIP PORTFOLIO

(BE13/0461) PROGRAM – 4.3: Offshore Asylum Seeker Management

Senator Cash (Written) asked:

Is the department aware of the recent efforts by the UN to repatriate and resettle Tamils? Is this information available to decision makers? Does this indicate to the department that perhaps their acceptance rates of Sri Lankans is too high?

Answer:

The Department has many sources available to decision makers which refer to the UNHCR facilitating repatriation of Sri Lankan Tamils who have sought asylum in other countries and who have approached UNHCR for assistance to return to Sri Lanka.

This information in itself is not a direct indicator of the appropriateness of acceptance rates. The UNHCR repatriation program is only for those who are voluntarily wishing to return to Sri Lanka and who approach the UNHCR for assistance to return.