

## QUESTION TAKEN ON NOTICE

**SUPPLEMENTARY BUDGET ESTIMATES HEARING: 1 November 2005**

IMMIGRATION AND MULTICULTURAL AND INDIGENOUS AFFAIRS PORTFOLIO

### **(101) Output 1.3: Enforcement of Immigration Law**

Senator Kirk asked:

According to evidence given to the Migration Inquiry by Mr Bill Gerogiannis of the Legal Aid Commission of New South Wales (LACNSW), a duty solicitor used to attend Villawood Detention Centre every Wednesday, and there were signs that indicated to detainees that there was a duty solicitor every Wednesday. It is now, in his words “very hit and miss”. In the wake of the Cornelia Rau affair, and the Palmer Report, is DIMIA looking to reinstate the policy of having duty solicitors?

*Answer:*

DIMIA previously facilitated a duty solicitor program at the Villawood Immigration Detention Centre run by the Legal Aid Commission of New South Wales (LACNSW). This program ceased approximately 5 years ago.

Detainees have, however, continued to have access to assistance in visa matters via the Immigration Advice and Applications Assistance Scheme (IAAAS), which assists people who are unable to pay for immigration advice. This scheme is funded by the Australian Government at no cost to the applicant, and is delivered by service providers throughout Australia to detainees and other visa applicants in need.