

## QUESTION TAKEN ON NOTICE

SUPPLEMENTARY BUDGET ESTIMATES HEARING: 1 November 2005

IMMIGRATION AND MULTICULTURAL AND INDIGENOUS AFFAIRS PORTFOLIO

### (167) Output 1.3: Enforcement of Immigration Law

Senator Ludwig asked:

What sort of considerations are taken into account when deciding whether to allow debt repayments by instalment on a case by case basis?

- (a) How many repayments by instalment have been requested?
- (b) How many have been granted?
- (c) Of those that have not been granted, why have they not been granted?

*Answer:*

The main factors taken into consideration when assessing whether to allow repayments of debts by instalment, on a case by case basis, are:

- whether the debtor can maintain a reasonable standard of living while repaying the debt; and
- whether the debt can be repaid within a reasonable timeframe.

Debtors must agree, in writing, to the repayment rate. Repayment arrangements are also reviewed biannually by the Department to ascertain if there has been a change in financial circumstances of the debtor.

- (a) Currently the Department has 121 requests under consideration from clients wishing to repay their debts for immigration detention costs by instalments.
- (b) Ninety-eight debtors have already entered into agreements to repay their immigration detention debts to the Department by instalments.
- (c) No requests to repay by instalment have been rejected by the Department. In cases where clients have been assessed as unable to commence repayment of their debt, they are granted a three month deferral.