

## QUESTION TAKEN ON NOTICE

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

IMMIGRATION AND MULTICULTURAL AND INDIGENOUS AFFAIRS PORTFOLIO

### **(195) Output 2.1: Settlement Services**

Senator Hurley asked:

Submission from the Migrant Resource Centres Forum of New South Wales in the Report of the Review of Settlement Services for Migrants and Humanitarian Entrants 2003, states that 'management members should also be compensated for out of pocket expenses and be paid sitting fees'

- The Settlement Grant Policy did not mention incentives or a structured system on which leaders of the various community groups will rely upon whilst helping new arrivals, can the Minister elaborate on this issue taking into consideration that if there is no compensation in the pipeline community leaders will prioritise their jobs over community activities.

*Answer:*

The *Report of the Review of Settlement Services for Migrants and Humanitarian Entrants* discussed the matter of sitting fees for members of management committees. The Review determined that paying sitting fees would not be appropriate for the following reasons -

- If management committees were to be paid sitting fees, this would be at the expense of funding other activities.
- Sitting fees usually apply to advisory and regulatory bodies in which the agency directly using the advice recompenses members for their attendance and their time in providing the advice. These do not apply to grants recipients who have sought funding in order to deliver a service to clients.
- It is doubtful that payment of sitting fees would attract more qualified or skilled management committee members. Management committees should have internal policies about reimbursement of out-of-pocket expenses.

The Government endorsed the findings of the Settlement Services Review and there are no plans to pay sitting fees or out-of-pocket expenses under the Settlement Grants Program.