

QUESTION TAKEN ON NOTICE

SUPPLEMENTARY BUDGET ESTIMATES HEARING: 30 October 2006

IMMIGRATION AND MULTICULTURAL AFFAIRS PORTFOLIO

(215) Output 1.3: Enforcement of Immigration Law

Senator Bartlett asked:

Can details be provided in relation to the public consultation process for the proposed immigration transit centre at Pinkenba:

- a. How widely has consultation taken place?
- b. How many briefings have been done?
- c. What the feedback of residents have been?
- d. What the capacity of the centre will be?
- e. What is the maximum length of time a person can be detained in the centre?
- f. What the accommodation setup is like, room structure and whether there is designated area set aside for minors or if there are rooms for families?
- g. When is this intended to be built?
- h. What are the estimated costs?
- i. Who will be running the centre?
- j. What facilities will there be ie. recreation, health etc?

Answers:

a. Following the Government's announcement to develop the Brisbane Immigration Transit Accommodation (BITA) in Budget 2006, members of the Pinkenba community were consulted. Based on this consultation, an information session for residents was planned for a later date when design work for the BITA was sufficient to provide an overview of what the facility could look like. Three (3) information sessions were subsequently held on 26 October 2006:

- Closed information session was held for key external stakeholders, at 3pm and included a visit to the BITA site;
- Information session for the Pinkenba Community Association was held at 5.30pm in the village of Pinkenba; and
- Public Information session at 7.00pm at the Hamilton Hotel.

In total, 8 members of the Brisbane community attended the public information session.

The Department has undertaken to meet again with the Pinkenba Community Association and the Brisbane Airport Corporation to further inform them of the development work.

- b. See above, three major (3) briefings and a number of minor discussions have been conducted since the Government's announcement in May 2006.

- c. During the information sessions the priority issues discussed included the location of the BITA on the site; the size of the facility; the flight path to Brisbane Airport, traffic congestion along Sugarmill Road; the amenities to be provided to DIMA clients and the potential for the BITA to attract demonstrators. Assurances were also sought that a full IDC would not be built on the site in the future.
- d. The maximum accommodation capacity will be 30 persons.
- e. Clients will generally only stay at the accommodation for a short time, typically less than a week while departure arrangements are made. If they cannot be removed or their immigration status regularised within this time, they will be considered for alternative accommodation arrangements.
- f. The facility will be purpose designed and built as 3 clusters of 10 person accommodation blocks, supported by administration and recreation/dining facilities. Each cluster contains 5 ensuited bedrooms (with 2 single beds in each room), a kitchenette, communal undercover recreation area and a laundry. Some bedrooms are interconnected with secure doorways which provide the capacity to accommodate related people and/or friends in close proximity with each other.
- g. The facility is scheduled to be fully operational in late 2007/early 2008.
- h. Budget 2006 allocated \$5.4 million for the construction of the facility.
- i. The Department's contracted Detention Service Provider will manage the centre.
- j. The following services will be provided at the facility;
 - Reception (collection, recording and storage of personal information, belongings and records, including biometrics information);
 - Induction and orientation;
 - Access to Health services;
 - Facility management;
 - Facility security;
 - Self-Catering;
 - Cleaning and laundry;
 - Programs and activities – including access to religious and cultural services;
 - Contact and visitor access;
 - Access to diplomatic, consular and legal representatives; and
 - Telephones; computers, including internet.