

QUESTION TAKEN ON NOTICE

SUPPLEMENTARY BUDGET ESTIMATES HEARING: 30 October 2006

IMMIGRATION AND MULTICULTURAL AFFAIRS PORTFOLIO

(229) Output 2.1: Settlement Services

Senator Hurley (L&CA 114) asked:

Which areas have had arrivals that have been higher than anticipated?

Answer:

Arrivals for the program year since 1 October 2005 have, on a pro-rata basis, been consistent with expected numbers.

The department is able to direct the settlement location of around only 30 percent of the total refugee and humanitarian entrant caseload. The balance settle near family, friends or proposers.

The notional distribution of entrants for planning purposes is conducted in consultation with state and territory governments. Allocations for each state/territory are based on past settlement pattern of refugee and humanitarian entrant arrivals. Following agreement on notional allocations, the department's State and Territory Offices consult with the IHSS Service Providers on notional settlement locations and arrival dates.

Service providers nominate preferred arrival periods (with the exception of entrants who arrive independently under the Special Humanitarian Program). This allows service providers to anticipate the number of arrivals in advance and plan for accommodation and other services.

Notwithstanding advance planning and consultation, there are monthly fluctuations which Service Providers manage with support from the department's State and Territory Offices.

Generally July and August are two of the busiest months for arrivals and December, January and February have lower numbers of arrivals.