

QUESTION TAKEN ON NOTICE

SUPPLEMENTARY BUDGET ESTIMATES HEARING: 20 OCTOBER 2009

IMMIGRATION AND CITIZENSHIP PORTFOLIO

(77) Program 2.1: Refugee and Humanitarian Assistance

Senator Fierravanti-Wells asked:

Outline the process by which UNHCR refers UNHCR registered asylum seekers for resettlement to Australia.

Answer:

As the UN body mandated to protect refugees, UNHCR is responsible for the registration of refugees and for the assessment of refugee claims overseas. UNHCR also makes an assessment of whether resettlement is the best solution for each refugee, and if so, which country would be most suitable. UNHCR then selects the most appropriate resettlement country (such as Australia) and refers individuals for resettlement consideration.

UNHCR provides Australian missions overseas with a formal referral, including details of the refugee's bio-data (name, date and country of birth etc.), claims and dependent family members. Applicants are then assessed by Australian immigration officers under legislative criteria contained within the Migration Regulations 1994.