

QUESTION TAKEN ON NOTICE

SUPPLEMENTARY BUDGET ESTIMATES HEARING: 19 OCTOBER 2010

IMMIGRATION AND CITIZENSHIP PORTFOLIO

(253) Program 4.3: Offshore Asylum Seeker Management

Senator Cash asked:

- (1) How many members are currently on the Independent Merits Review panel?
- (2) How many additional members of the Panel have been appointed during 2010?
- (3) Who employs them?
- (4) Who are they accountable to?
- (5) What are the terms and lengths of their contracts?
- (6) How much are they paid?
- (7) Has the department provided serviced offices or other accommodation for them? Where? At what cost?
- (8) Who oversees their decisions?

Answer:

- (1) There are currently 22 IMR reviewers.
- (2) 21.
- (3) The reviewers are employed by Wizard People Pty Ltd.
- (4) The reviewers are accountable to the Head of Independent Merits Review, Mr John Lynch.
- (5) The remuneration and related conditions of independent reviewers is similar to those set by the Remuneration Tribunal for 'public offices' performing similar work (i.e. part-time members of the RRT).

The reviewers are appointed for two years.

- (6) Reviewers are working part-time and are currently receiving a per diem fee of \$700 which is under review to align it with current rates set by the Remuneration Tribunal for RRT part-time Members.
- (7) Yes.

There are offices for reviewers and staff in the Sydney CBD and in Belconnen, Canberra.

The Sydney premises' lease was signed in July 2010. Its rent is \$440,000 p.a., with a set rent increase of four per cent in forward years 2011 and 2012.

The rent for the Canberra office is \$140,000 p.a., with a set rent increase of four per cent in forward years 2011 and 2012.

- (8) The recommendations of IMR reviewers are currently examined by the Head of IMR.

A senior reviewer, whose role will include mentoring, skills enhancement and quality assurance of reviewers and their recommendations is currently being recruited.