

QUESTION TAKEN ON NOTICE

SUPPLEMENTARY BUDGET ESTIMATES HEARING: 19 OCTOBER 2010

IMMIGRATION AND CITIZENSHIP PORTFOLIO

(287) Program 4.3: Offshore Asylum Seeker Management

Senator Cash asked:

- (1) What is the roll-out plan for acquiring housing and other accommodation and timing?
- (2) How much will it cost?
- (3) How many places is the government planning to find by Christmas; by April 2011; by June 2011?
- (4) Where will these places be located?
- (5) What kind of accommodation have the churches and charity groups identified as being suitable?
- (6) What budget has been set aside to pay for these alternatives?

Answer:

(1) The Department is utilising existing contractual arrangements with the Australian Red Cross and Life Without Barriers as the current service providers for the Residence Determination program. As lead agency for the roll-out of the expanded Residence Determination program, the Red Cross will be engaging with sub-contracted service providers as required.

(2) As accommodation is continuing to be sourced and contracts are still being finalised with the various service providers, it is not possible to advise of final costs. However, the operational costs of detaining people in the community are anticipated to be generally comparable to the costs for facility-based detention.

(3) The Government has announced that a significant number of children and families would be progressively moved into community-based accommodation. The eventual number of places will depend on the availability of appropriate housing and support services.

(4) Community detention placements will be dispersed across the country. Places are expected to be located in capital cities and possibly larger regional centres but the actual locations will depend on availability of housing and proximity to services and support networks.

(5) The Australian Red Cross is working with the Department to identify appropriate housing and is working through responses to their expression of interest regarding accommodation and services.

(6) See answer to question two.