

## QUESTION TAKEN ON NOTICE

### SUPPLEMENTARY BUDGET ESTIMATES HEARING: 17 OCTOBER 2011

#### IMMIGRATION AND CITIZENSHIP PORTFOLIO

#### **(SE11/0361) Program 4.2: Onshore Detention Network**

Senator Cash asked:

In relation to the Darwin detention centre fire and riot on 31 August 2011. Media reports indicated that the riot and fire arose because of a dispute over Ramadan. Is that true? What damage was done to the centre and how much did or will it cost to repair? Was anyone charged in relation to the incident? Was anyone moved to the correctional centre? How many? Where are they now?

*Answer:*

The fire was not related to a dispute over Ramadan as suggested in some media reports. Arrangements had been made for 53 clients to attend the mosque to commemorate Eid al Fitr however this did not include any of the Indonesian clients at the Northern Immigration Detention Centre (NIDC).

Arrangements had been made a number of weeks prior to the event for Consular officials and religious leaders of the Indonesian community in Darwin (qualified to lead prayers and deliver a sermon) to visit the NIDC on the morning of 31 August, with special food, to commemorate Eid with the Indonesian clients. This was confirmed several times (including by Consular officials) in meetings with all the clients. Fifty clients subsequently attended the mosque.

The costs of replacement/repair to the buildings, electronic data delivery system and security camera replacement are estimated to be \$630 905 which include:

- Replacement of 6 transportable buildings;
- Repairs to the ablution building;
- Removal of the existing fire damaged buildings;
- There are also costs around disruption to the recreation area in South 3.

An insurance claim has been lodged under the department's Comcover insurance arrangements and is expected to be settled less the \$50 000 insurance deductible.

No person has been charged in relation to the fire. The AFP continues to investigate the incident.

Due to a loss of infrastructure, a total of 56 clients were transferred to the Darwin City Watch House on 31 August 2011. The group consisted of Irregular Maritime Arrival clients and crew as well as Illegal Foreign Fishers (IFFs).

Twenty of the group returned to Immigration detention on 1 September 2011 and a further 33 on 2 September 2011.

Three IFFs with outstanding warrants for other matters were transferred to Berrimah Corrections on 1 September 2011 and have since been removed from Australia.