

QUESTION TAKEN ON NOTICE

SUPPLEMENTARY BUDGET ESTIMATES HEARING: 15 October 2012

IMMIGRATION AND CITIZENSHIP PORTFOLIO

(SE12/0311) PROGRAM – 2.1: Refugee and Humanitarian Assistance

Senator Cash (written) asked:

Could the Department advise whether any request has been made by the Australian Government on their behalf to the Government of Malaysia to gain access to biometric records of persons entering Malaysia for the purpose of cross checking with the biometric information collected from persons who have entered Australia as IMAs? If so when was the request made, and what has been the response? If access has commenced, when did it commence?

Answer:

As we do with all regional partners, the Department has had discussions with the Government of Malaysia regarding border control and options for expanding the use of biometrics.

An agreement for a limited pilot project involving biometrics with Malaysia was endorsed at the 6th Malaysia-Australia Immigration Cooperation Working group meeting on 10 December 2012 in Malaysia. Results from the pilot project will inform future bilateral discussions on use and potential of the technology.