

QUESTION TAKEN ON NOTICE

SUPPLEMENTARY BUDGET ESTIMATES HEARING: 19 November 2013

IMMIGRATION AND BORDER PROTECTION PORTFOLIO

(SE13/0029) PROGRAMME – 2.1: Refugee and Humanitarian Assistance

Senator Rhiannon (L&CA 60) asked:

Senator Rhiannon: How many people have sought protection at the Australian High Commission since 2009 on the basis that they have a well-founded fear of prosecution of for another humanitarian reason, and how many Sri Lankan people have been provided a humanitarian visa through the Australian high commission in Colombo in the last four years? Mr Bowles: I would have to take that on notice and refer to my colleague in Foreign Affairs to see from their perspective as well as ours.

Answer:

Sri Lankans in Sri Lanka may apply at the Australian High Commission in Colombo for an In-country Special Humanitarian visa (subclass 201). The Special In-country Special Humanitarian visa is for applicants living in and subject to persecution in their home country and who have not been able to leave their country to seek refuge elsewhere.

Table 1: In-country Special Humanitarian visa (subclass 201) applications lodged at Colombo post:

2009–10	2010–11	2011–12	2012–13 ¹	2013–14 ²	Total
242	25	6	11	21	305

The majority of Humanitarian visas granted at Colombo post were to Sri Lankans who were the immediate family members of people previously granted visas under the Humanitarian Programme.

Table 2: Humanitarian visas granted to persons born in Sri Lanka at Colombo post from 2009–10 to 19 November 2013

2009–10	2010–11	2011–12	2012–13 ¹	2013–14 ²	Total
165	195	69	3	20	452

Notes:

1. Data for 2009–13 was extracted from Departmental systems on 30 June 2013.
2. Data for 2013–14 was extracted from Departmental systems on 10 December 2013.