

QUESTION TAKEN ON NOTICE

SUPPLEMENTARY BUDGET ESTIMATES HEARING: 19 November 2013

IMMIGRATION AND BORDER PROTECTION PORTFOLIO

(SE13/0067) PROGRAMME – 4.3: Offshore Asylum Seeker Management

Senator Macdonald (L&CA 121) asked:

CHAIR: In Western Australia, where you say that some go to Catholic schools and some go to Islamic schools, are they all paid exactly the same fees?

Ms Pope: They are not exactly the same.

CHAIR: Why not?

Ms Pope: Because it is negotiated with the particular schools. I could take that on notice if you want more detail.

CHAIR: I would be interested to know what you pay per student at Catholic schools and if it is the same for every Catholic school, and what you pay for every student at every Islamic school and if it is the same for every Islamic school. If there are differences between this Catholic school and that Catholic school, could you identify that as well, within reason.

Ms Pope: I will certainly attempt to. I will take it on notice.

CHAIR: If there are a lot of differences, you might give me the ranges and a couple of examples in between.

Ms Pope: Certainly.

Answer:

In Western Australia (WA), children living in community detention can access Catholic and Islamic schools. There is currently no access to WA public schools.

The fees paid for access to the Catholic and Islamic schools in WA vary slightly between schools but are in line with the national average of \$3 700 per child per term. In addition to WA, access to Catholic schools for children living in community detention has been arranged in Queensland, Tasmania and Victoria. The fees paid to the Catholic schools in Queensland and Victoria are matched to fees paid for public school access. The fees paid in Tasmania vary slightly as there is a flat rate for public schools and sliding scale for the Catholic school system. In all cases, the fees paid are in line with the national average.

Arrangements are also in place with two Islamic schools, one in Perth and the other in Brisbane. The fees paid at each school are based on their standard school fees and vary by the year level the child is enrolled in and if there is a need for access to specialist services. Islamic school fees are lower than the national average in the early years of school and slightly higher than the national average for the final years of school.