

QUESTION TAKEN ON NOTICE

SUPPLEMENTARY BUDGET ESTIMATES HEARING: 19 November 2013

IMMIGRATION AND BORDER PROTECTION PORTFOLIO

(SE13/0083) PROGRAMME – 2.1: Refugee and Humanitarian Assistance

Senator Hanson-Young (Written) asked:

How many applications have been received under the Community Proposal Pilot? Does the Department expect that all 500 places will be taken up? As the Approved Proposing Organisations which are coordinating the application process are based in NSW and Victoria, what access to this program will there be for communities in other states? With the recent increases in visa application charges for many visas, what were the increases in visa application charges for refugees coming to Australia under the Community Proposal Pilot? Can you give a breakdown of the visas application charges and the others costs you anticipate applicants will need to pay? As refugee community groups are being encouraged to put forward the names of particular refugees to come to Australia under this pilot program, does the Government believe there is the possibility that communities will be divided over who should be proposed for resettlement? If so, what strategies are being used by the Government to avoid the possibility that this will occur?

Answer:

Applications

At 19 November 2013, 13 applications had been received, comprising 66 people. Up to 500 places have been allocated to the Community Proposal Pilot (the Pilot) in the 2013–14 Humanitarian Programme.

It is too early to estimate the number of visas that will be granted.

Approved Proposing Organisations

Approved Proposing Organisations (APOs) are able to work with interstate communities to propose people under the Pilot.

In addition to the two APOs each in Victoria and New South Wales, a fifth organisation, the Migrant Resource Centre of South Australia, has signed an agreement with the Department to become an APO.

Costs

The Department expects that APOs and supporting communities in Australia will pay the costs, including the visa application charge, associated with an application under the Pilot.

The visa application charge for applications is the amount charged at the commencement of the Pilot on 1 June 2013. These amounts are:

- \$19 124 for the primary applicant
- \$2 680 for each secondary applicant

Identification of applicants

APOs will work with community groups to propose applicants, who need to have humanitarian claims and meet health, security and character requirements.