

QUESTION TAKEN ON NOTICE

SUPPLEMENTARY BUDGET ESTIMATES – 20 OCTOBER 2014

IMMIGRATION AND BORDER PROTECTION PORTFOLIO

(SE14/124) PROGRAMME – Operation Sovereign Borders

Senator Carr (Written) asked:

How is it determined that it is ‘safe’ to turn a boat back? Or place people on a lifeboat to be sent back?

- a. Is there a checklist or guidelines?
- b. Who is consulted? (e.g. is the Minister notified when a turnaround/turn back occurs)?
- c. Who makes the final decision?

Answer:

The safety of potential illegal immigrants, SIEV crew and Commonwealth staff is always of paramount operational consideration.

- a) The Australian Customs and Border Protection Service and the Royal Australian Navy are experienced and highly trained mariners, well-practiced and prepared in safely undertaking the removal of vessels from Australian waters.
- b) The Minister is notified of actions taken throughout operations.
- c) The commander at sea is responsible for making determinations regarding questions of safety.