

QUESTION TAKEN ON NOTICE

ADDITIONAL BUDGET ESTIMATES HEARING: 9 FEBRUARY 2010

IMMIGRATION AND CITIZENSHIP PORTFOLIO

(132) Program 4.1: Visa Compliance and Status Resolution

Senator Humphries asked:

How much has it cost to remove failed asylum seekers? From Christmas Island?
From the Mainland?

Answer:

The cost of removing a person varies widely, depending on the number of escorts used, if any; the final destination country; cost of airfares on commercial flights; level of any post return support; and whether or not a charter was used.

The total supplier costs for removing a non-citizen for the 2008-09 Program Year was \$12 543 million, representing an average cost per person of \$5155. It is not possible to further disaggregate these costs by failed asylum seekers removed from either the Mainland or Christmas Island.

It should be noted, however, given limited international flight options out of Christmas Island, most Irregular Maritime Arrivals removed on commercial flights have been transferred to the mainland for removal, using existing charter flights. In these instances, there is no significant difference between the cost of removing an IMA client compared to removing a comparable client whose protection claims were processed on the mainland.