

Senate Community Affairs Legislation Committee

SUPPLEMENTARY ESTIMATES - 18 OCTOBER 2012 ANSWER TO QUESTION ON NOTICE

Human Services Portfolio

Topic: Flood event assistance – 2012 Victorian floods - ex-gratia payments

Question reference number: HS 11

Senator: McKenzie

Type of question: Hansard page 102

Date set by the committee for the return of answer: 7 December 2012

Number of pages: 1

Question:

Senator McKENZIE: The disaster assist website says that fewer than 20 people were granted ex-gratia payments in relation to the North-eastern Victoria flooding event in early 2012. These payments totalled less than \$20,000. Were these ex-gratia payments for New Zealanders resident in North-eastern Victoria?

Mr Tidswell: Ex gratia payments are generally for New Zealanders who are resident. As of 5 October 2012, over 100 claims for ex-gratia payment have been paid to New Zealanders in the non-protected special category visa holders. Over \$129,000 has been paid into people's bank accounts. You were after Northern Victoria particularly?

Senator McKENZIE: North-eastern Victoria.

Mr Tidswell: I do not think I have those figures here.

Senator McKENZIE: You can take that on notice.

Answer:

An ex-gratia payment was activated by the Prime Minister to assist New Zealand 'non-protected' special category visa holders (sub-class 444) who were adversely affected by the Northern Victoria flooding event in early 2012 in the Local Government Areas of Indigo, Moira, Towong and Greater Shepparton.

In total less than 20 claims were granted and less than \$20,000 was paid into people's bank accounts under this package of assistance.¹

¹ The Department classifies data that is *less than 20* in claim numbers and *less than \$20,000* in value confidential in order to meet its obligations under the *Privacy Act 1988* and the confidentiality or secrecy provisions in the legislation it administers. This includes not releasing information in small data-sets that may lead to an individual's identity being ascertained.