

QUESTION TAKEN ON NOTICE

ADDITIONAL ESTIMATES HEARING : 23 February 2015

IMMIGRATION AND BORDER PROTECTION PORTFOLIO

(AE15/087) - Mental Health screening - Programme 3.1 Compliance, Detention and Status Resolution (Administered)

Senator Hanson-Young, Sarah (L&CA 126) asked:

Senator HANSON-YOUNG: I want to know why the department has directed IHMS to stop asking about torture and trauma issues in the initial mental health screening. My understanding is that happens at the initial stage. Of the 157 who arrived last year—that is the boatload of people who were transferred to Curtin and then to Nauru—how many of those people were referred to torture and trauma counselling once they were sent to Nauru? Take that on notice, please.

Mr Pezzullo: We will.

Answer:

In June 2013 the former Immigration Health Advisory Group (IHAG) recommended that the question regarding torture and trauma history not be asked immediately upon arrival, as part of the public health screening questionnaire. IHAG considered it was more appropriate to ask the question later in the Health Induction Assessment, where more comprehensive mental health screening occurs.

All of the 157 individuals who arrived on the boat in question were asked about any history of torture and trauma before their transfer to Nauru. Of these:

- 30 reported a history of torture or trauma and accepted referral.
- 77 reported a history of torture or trauma and declined referral.
- 50 did not report a history of torture or trauma.