

QUESTION TAKEN ON NOTICE

ADDITIONAL ESTIMATES HEARING : 08 February 2016

IMMIGRATION AND BORDER PROTECTION PORTFOLIO

**(AE16/057) - Average length of stay in Australia for medical treatment -
Programme 1.4: IMA Onshore Management**

Senator Bilyk, Catryna (L&CA 90) asked:

Senator BILYK: How long would the average length of stay in Australia for medical treatment be? Do we know that?

Ms Briscoe: I do not have that.

Mr Pezzullo: Again, I think we have taken that on notice in the context of the aggregate number, how long they have been here and what their conditions are. It might be best to now add the average length of stay as a subelement of that question. I think that is the best way to handle that.

Senator BILYK: How much does it cost to transport detainees between Nauru and Australia for treatment?

Mr Pezzullo: They are transferees; they are no longer detainees. I might see if Ms Briscoe has some information.

Ms Briscoe: It will depend on the way in which they are transferred. I do not have the numbers for either, but there is air ambulance, if it is an emergency, or a regular charter. That charter could be being used for multiple purposes, so I do not have a figure for an individual.

Senator BILYK: Are you able to work out a figure?

Mr Pezzullo: We will look at that, as best we can, on notice, noting that the rate of returns is reducing because of the enhancement of the medical amenity on the island. That will be further improved when both stages of the current redevelopment project that was mentioned earlier today—and I apologise, Senator; I cannot recall whether you were in the room or not. That will significantly enhance the organic medical capacity on the island, so over time the rate of transfers to Australia will reduce even further.

Answer:

It is not possible to provide an accurate average length of stay for this cohort as the ability to return a person to a Regional Processing Country, following medical treatment, is contingent on a number of factors, including the status of any pending legal matters and the health status of any accompanying family members.

The cost to transfer individuals between Nauru and Australia will depend on the mode of transport used. As a combination of charter aircraft and commercial airlines are used for the purpose of transferring people for medical reasons, as well as other non-medical reasons, it is difficult to determine an average cost of transfer on a per person basis.