

QUESTION TAKEN ON NOTICE

BUDGET ESTIMATES HEARING : 26 May 2015

IMMIGRATION AND BORDER PROTECTION PORTFOLIO

(BE15/087) - Rohingya refugees - Programme 1.3: Compliance and Detention

Senator Hanson-Young, Sarah (L&CA 76) asked:

Senator HANSON-YOUNG: Okay. Can I go on to the humanitarian program. I would like to know how many Rohingya refugees Australia has resettled in the last financial year?

Mr Pezzullo: I am not sure if we have ready to hand the breakdown of ethnicities, but I will see if Ms Noble has relevant information.

Ms Noble: Since 2008, there have been 412 people identifying themselves as Rohingya referred to us and granted humanitarian visas via the UNHCR process.

Senator HANSON-YOUNG: What time frame was that?

Ms Noble: Since 2008.

Senator HANSON-YOUNG: So since 2008 we have had 412?

Ms Noble: Yes, referred to us through the UNHCR process who have been granted humanitarian visas. And there are 1,940 Rohingya here in Australia who arrived as illegal maritime arrivals since 2009.

Senator HANSON-YOUNG: How many Rohingya refugees have we taken in the last 12 months in terms of that figure of 412? We have taken 412 since 2008. I am trying to work out when we actually took them.

Ms Noble: I will have to take that on notice for you and break that number down from 2008 to the present day.

Senator HANSON-YOUNG: Do you think we have taken anybody in the last 12 months referred to us by the UNHCR?

Ms Noble: I do not want to speculate about that. We can provide that answer on notice.

Senator HANSON-YOUNG: In the time frame of this government have there been any Rohingya refugees resettled?

Ms Noble: I would have to take that on notice.

Answer:

Refugees are referred to Australia by the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) where they have been mandated and are in need of resettlement due to their vulnerability. Data on the ethnicity of applicants for a Refugee and Humanitarian visa, including refugees referred to Australia for resettlement by UNHCR, is based on the applicant's self-identification during the visa application process. Based on this self-identification, Departmental data indicates that during the period 18 September 2013 to 26 May 2015, there were 17 visas granted to people in the offshore Humanitarian Programme who were of Rohingya ethnicity.

These visas were granted to persons located in Indonesia, Malaysia and Thailand.

Of these, six were granted in the Refugee stream after referral by the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) and 11 were granted in the Special Humanitarian Programme (SHP) category. Applicants for an SHP visa are proposed by family members or community organisations in Australia and are not referred by UNHCR.