

QUESTION TAKEN ON NOTICE

BUDGET ESTIMATES HEARING : 05 May 2016

IMMIGRATION AND BORDER PROTECTION PORTFOLIO

(BE16/009) - Funding for regional processing arrangements - Programme 1.6: Regional Cooperation

Senator Gallacher, Alex (L&CA 110) asked:

Senator GALLACHER: Hopefully some of us will be here in the out years and we will be able to check whether those savings were achieved. Turning to Supporting Regional Processing Arrangements, there is an additional \$61 million for 2016-17.

Mr Pezzullo: I might ask Mr Groves to speak to the budget measure and then I think it will be Deputy Commissioner Briscoe who will assist with the content.

Senator GALLACHER: What regional processing centre is that for?

Mr Groves: This relates to both regional processing centres. It is a top-up to a MYEFO measure that was agreed as part of the 2015-16 MYEFO process and is a continuation of that program into 2016-17.

Senator GALLACHER: That is for Nauru and Manus?

Mr Groves: Both, yes.

Senator GALLACHER: The question on the street is: if you have stopped the boats, why do we need to spend this money now? What is it being spent on?

Mr Pezzullo: I will take that. We still have an ongoing obligation under the two agreements struck, initially by the Gillard and Rudd governments and continued under the Abbott and Turnbull governments, to assist both jurisdictions with ongoing support. That relates to both support around asylum seekers who are yet to be determined, you heard some evidence on that before; support for those pending voluntary removal, which we discussed before; and then of course those to be resettled, who we talked about earlier, who have been found to be refugees. I might just ask Ms Briscoe to give you a sense of the ongoing support that we provide. It will not take her more than a minute to do it, perhaps in the area of, say, mental health support and additional resources we have put into Nauru to assist with mental health risk management there. Ms Briscoe, just to give the senator a flavour of what the money is being used for.

Ms Briscoe: The major service division contracts that we have to support both governments are with our supplier of garrison welfare and security services, settlement services and health services. The secretary referred to our health services. We have significant services provided in both of the RPCs in a clinic. In the case of Nauru we also provide services through the Republic of Nauru hospital. I think the number is in the order of 60 health professionals on Nauru, of which just short of 25, I think the number is, are mental health professionals. That is in the case of Nauru; I can also get you the number for Manus.

Senator GALLACHER: Can I get a split between Nauru and Manus on the dollars?

Mr Pezzullo: That can be done this evening. I am sure that it is readily done.

Senator GALLACHER: If you want to get that a bit later.

Mr Pezzullo: We will do it on notice otherwise.

Ms Briscoe: I can certainly provide the expenditure for this financial year. In Nauru, it has been \$301 million For the operation and support services around the RPC and \$68 million to support the settlement process. On Manus for the same period—this financial year to date—it has been

\$336.9 million and \$40.8 million for the settlement costs.

Senator GALLACHER: Is this \$61 million in addition to that or is it part of it? How does it work?

Mr Groves: The \$61 million relates to 2016-17. What Ms Briscoe was referring to was the actual spend for 2015-16. The \$61½ million that is in the budget papers was, like I said, a continuation of a measure that was funded as part of MYEFO, and thus would have been part of the costs that Ms Briscoe was referring to.

Answer:

Ms Briscoe responded on the night with –

In Nauru, it has been \$301 million for the operation and support services around the RPC and \$68 million to support the settlement process. On Manus for the same period—this financial year to date—it has been \$336.9 million and \$40.8 million for the settlement costs.