

QUESTION TAKEN ON NOTICE

SUPPLEMENTARY BUDGET ESTIMATES HEARING: 20 October 2014

IMMIGRATION AND BORDER PROTECTION PORTFOLIO

(SE14/192) PROGRAMME – Operation Sovereign Borders

Senator Hanson-Young (Written) asked:

What was the total cost to the government in detaining the 157 Tamil asylum seekers at sea for 4 weeks on the Ocean protector?

- (a) How many staff were on the boat at any one time?
- (b) What were the staff costs associated with detaining the 157 asylum seekers on the Ocean protector? Please include number of overtime and the associated costs?
- (c) What were the costs associated with sending officials to Cocos Islands?
- (d) What were the costs associated with flying asylum seekers to Perth and then Nauru?
- (e) So far what has been the cost defending the 157 case

Answer:

The cost of suspected illegal entry vessel (SIEV) operations cannot be individually broken down, as the costs for responding to SIEV operations are not individually funded.

- (a) 36 personnel were assigned to the vessel during this patrol.
- (b) Crew costs of Australian Customs and Border Protection Vessels during suspected illegal entry vessel (SIEV) operations are not individually measured.
- (c) Costs associated with sending six departmental staff to Cocos Islands for the purpose of this operation totalled around \$13,600. This included commercial flights, accommodation and standard travel allowances.
- (d) No asylum seekers were flown from Perth to Nauru. Detainees were flown from Curtin IDC to Nauru over three (3) operations arriving in Nauru on 2nd August 2014. The charter costs were:

Charter Operator	Nauru Costs
Adagold Aviation	\$220,046
Skytraders (P2)	\$258,885
Skytraders (P1)	\$267,113
Total air charter costs¹	\$746,044

- (e) Costs in relation to individual legal matters are considered commercial-in-confidence and, accordingly, not appropriate to disclose.

¹ These costs do not include daily standing charges (contractual obligation) – they reflect the actual costs associated with the movements.