

QUESTION TAKEN ON NOTICE

SUPPLEMENTARY BUDGET ESTIMATES – 27 NOVEMBER 2014

IMMIGRATION AND BORDER PROTECTION PORTFOLIO

(SE14/333) PROGRAMME – 3.2 Compliance, Detention Status Resolution

Senator Carr (Written) asked:

- How does the Government monitor the welfare of asylum seekers who have been involuntarily returned from Australia to - their countries of origin?
- How many asylum seekers have been removed to Syria and Iraq in the past six months?
- What is the age and gender breakdown of these groups?
- What is the cost per person of DIBP's independent repatriation scheme for Syrian asylum seekers?

Answer:

Australia is bound by the customary international law principle of non-interference in the internal affairs of other sovereign states. Australia's consular obligations and entitlements under international law do not extend to monitoring the welfare of non-nationals offshore. However any reports of harm befalling individuals following their removal from Australia are taken seriously and are followed-up where appropriate.

Between 27 May 2014 and 27 November 2014, one Iraqi Illegal Maritime Arrival (IMA) has been involuntarily removed from Australia. To date, there have been no Syrian IMA involuntary removals from Australia. The Iraqi national was male and 52 years of age.

Syrians who elect to voluntarily return to Syria from RPCs are eligible for up to USD 2,310 under the Department of Immigration and Border Protection's Voluntary Departure Assistance (VDA) service. For those Syrians who request voluntary removal from Australia, the department is able to provide Post Removal Support assistance to meet their immediate or short-term post-removal needs, including welfare assistance.