

QUESTION TAKEN ON NOTICE

SUPPLEMENTARY BUDGET ESTIMATES HEARING : 17 October 2016

IMMIGRATION AND BORDER PROTECTION PORTFOLIO

(SE16/032) - protection transfer arrangement in Central America - Internal Product (DIBP)

Senator Carr, Kim (L&CA 87/88) asked:

Mr Pezzullo: I think the officer has made clear that these discussions were ongoing with the US government for a period of time prior to the relevant summit that Prime Minister Turnbull attended with Minister Dutton and Foreign Minister Bishop, if I recall correctly, and that engagement with relevant US authorities had proceeded in the lead up to that summit for the best part of the year in question—2016, I think I heard the offer to say. But she wishes to check records.

Senator KIM CARR: So you are pretty confident, Ms Noble, that this is a conversation which started prior to the government going into caretaker?

Ms Noble: I would like to check my facts on that, but my personal recollection is that we have been working on this for the best part of a year. I also think that it was our idea, from our department, to have this arrangement with United States around the protection transfer arrangement in Central America, but I would like to check my facts on that.

Senator KIM CARR: But you think it was your idea?

Ms Noble: Our department's.

Senator KIM CARR: Not your personal idea. You think it is an initiative that has come from this department to have an agreement with the United States in regard to taking refugees from Central America—is that correct?

Ms Noble: That is right, but I would like to check my facts.

Mr Pezzullo: Subject to checking the relevant chronology, Senator.

Answer:

See response to SE16/031.