

QUESTION TAKEN ON NOTICE

ADDITIONAL BUDGET ESTIMATES HEARINGS: 21 FEBRUARY 2011

IMMIGRATION AND CITIZENSHIP PORTFOLIO

(222) Program 4.2: Onshore Detention Network

Senator Cash asked:

Please provide a full list of sites investigated by the department as suitable sites or facilities for asylum seeker accommodation? Has the Minister been briefed on any of these possible locations? Has a short list of viable sites been drawn up?

Answer:

The Department has received offers or approaches from a number of individuals and organisations identifying potential sites around the country. Most of these are not suitable and were not given detailed consideration.

Primarily, the Department has worked closely with the Department of Defence and with the Department of Finance and Deregulation's Commonwealth Land Register to identify Commonwealth property. Many sites were unsuitable and so were not considered in detail.

Sites considered and accepted include:

- Leonora in Western Australia;
- Darwin Airport Lodge, Darwin;
- Asti Hotel, Darwin;
- RAAF Base Scherger in Queensland;
- Virginia Palms Hotel in Queensland;
- Northam Training Camp in Western Australia;
- Inverbrackie Defence Housing in South Australia;
- 11 Mile Antenna Farm in the Northern Territory (former contingency); and
- land adjacent to the existing Melbourne Immigration Transit Accommodation facility (contingency);
- Pontville in Tasmania;
- Wickham Point in the Northern Territory;
- Jandakot Airport Chalets in Western Australia.

The Department inspected the following sites but decided not to proceed:

- Tardun in Western Australia;
- Dalby in Queensland;
- Buckland Defence facilities north-west of Hobart;
- A former hotel at Kooralbyn in Queensland;
- A former nursing home at Redland Bay in Queensland;
- The former Kenmore Hospital at Goulburn in NSW;
- Vacant land at Palmerston in Darwin; and
- The former St Christopher's Hostel in Northam, Western Australia.

The Minister has been briefed on some of these possible locations.

There is no further short list of properties.